

A photograph of a woman wearing a blue hijab and a red shawl, looking down at a stack of money she is holding in her hands. She is wearing a white wristband on her left wrist. The background shows a brick wall.

Summative Evaluation of the **AFGHAN WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE** **(AWLI) in Support of** **Adolescent Girls**

**AUGUST 2021
FINAL**

**Summative Evaluation of the
AFGHAN WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP
INITIATIVE (AWLI) in Support of
Adolescent Girls**

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ACRONYMS

ALCs	Accelerated Learning Centers
AGE	Anti-Government Elements
AWLI	Afghan Women's Leadership Initiative in Support for Adolescent Girls
C4D	Communication for Development
CBE	Community-based education
CEFM	Child, Early, and Forced Marriage
CO	Country Office
CPC	Country Programme of Cooperation
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRIN	Child Rights International Network
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DHS	National Demographic and Health Survey
DMoYA	Deputy Minister for Youth Affairs
DoWA	Department of Women's Affairs
ECE	Early childhood education
ECW	Empowerment Centre for Women
EFM	Early and forced marriage
GEEW	Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
GEROS	Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System
GNI	Gross National Income
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IP	Implementing Partner
KEQs	Key Evaluation Questions
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoLSAMD	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Martyrs and Disabled
MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
MoWA	Ministry of Women Affairs
NAP	National Action Plan to Eliminate Early and Child Marriage in Afghanistan
NCE	No Cost Extension
NRVA	National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
NSIA	National Statistics and Information Authority
OECD/ DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Assistance Committee
OHW	Organisation for Humanitarian Welfare
OoS	Out of School
PWDs	Persons with a disability
ROSA	Regional Office South Asia
SBC	Social and Behaviour Change
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
S/GWI	Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
VAC	Violence Against Children
VAW	Violence Against Women
WASSA	Women Activities and Social Services Association

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Team Leader, Tristi Nichols, Ph.D.

DEFINITIONS

	Violence Against Women and Children
Advocacy	Advocacy supports interventions designed to ensure that the concerns and voices of communities, including those marginalised, are reflected in the decision making at the community level or higher.
Child marriage	From Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is any human being under the age of 18 unless, under state law, majority is attained earlier.
Early marriage	“Early marriage” is often used interchangeably with “child marriage” and refers to marriages in which one or both spouses are under 18 years old. However, early marriage is also sometimes used to describe marriages in which one or both spouses are 18 or older, but with a compromised ability to grant consent. ¹
Forced marriage	A forced marriage is any marriage which occurs without the full and free consent of one or both of the parties and/or where one or both of the parties is/are unable to end or leave the marriage, including as a result of duress or intense social or family pressure. ²
	Social Mobilization
Behaviour change communication (BCC)	An approach designed to enhance awareness, knowledge, perceived susceptibility, perceived severity, and attitudes and provides the skills needed to change harmful behaviours (i.e., early marriage) or to adopt beneficial behaviours (i.e., extend girls education). ³
Community engagement	An approach used to share information and engage with people in local communities.
Communication for social change	Seeks to strengthen community capacity to advocate for change and create linkages among partners and networks to influence and reinforce social norms and cultural practices to create an environment that supports long-term, sustainable change.
Social mobilisation	Social mobilisation is a process that engages and motivates a wide range of partners and allies at the provincial and community levels to raise awareness of and demand for a particular development objective through dialogue.
Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) communication which is often combined with BCC	Another approach designed to enhance interpersonal interactions and support within informal networks of relations (i.e., family, friends, peers, neighbors). Uses positive normative pressures through training [peer education, life skills education, reflect circles] to assist in adopting or reinforcing a new behaviour.

¹ Rangita de Silva de Alwis, “Child marriage and the law”, Legislative Reform Initiative Paper Series (UNICEF, New York, January 2008), p. 37.

² A/HRC/26/22. (2 April 2014) Preventing and eliminating child, early and forced marriage, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Human Rights Council.

³ UNICEF. (2013). Concept Note: The Rationale and Recommendation for C4D Indicators in National Surveys.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This UNICEF-commissioned Summative Evaluation of the Afghan Women's Leadership Initiative in Support for Adolescent Girls (AWLI) in Afghanistan covered programme implementation from 2015 through 2020. The AWLI programme was originally a three-year programme, from 30 September 2015 through September 2018 and had a budget of **USD 6,949,735.23**. However, the programme underwent a no cost extension, which essentially resulted in a five-year implementation period.

The programme objectives were to:

- Change perceptions on the acceptability of early and forced marriage and mobilize communities to delay marriage by raising awareness of adolescent girls' rights, the laws in place to protect them, the negative consequences of early marriage, and the importance of educating girls;
- Empower adolescent girls to make informed life choices through education, vocational and life skills training, and peer support networks; and
- Map and document the status of adolescent girls in Afghanistan.

In response to the Pandemic, a fourth objective was added, "to provide key supplies to adolescent girls affected by COVID-19 to prepare them to return to schools when schools are reopened and to have continued access and quality education. The AWLI programme completed all implementation on 31 December 2020.

AWLI's outreach extended to five provinces, (1) Nangahar, (2) Samangan; (3) Ghor; (4) Herat; and (5) Farah, and within each province, four districts were prioritized (totaling 20 districts). The AWLI programme delivered an ambitious range of seven interventions designed to reach the most vulnerable adolescent girls. They include: 1. Community Dialogues; 2. Reflect Circles; 3. Safe Spaces and formal and informal networks; 4. Mini Media Clubs; and 5. Community-Based Life Skills Training (for girls only). A sixth intervention, Unconditional Cash Grant, and a seventh activity, Community-Based Livelihood Training for adolescent girls, were only undertaken in Herat and Samangan provinces, respectively. Through a Programme Cooperation Agreement with ActionAid, and a Consortium of three different non-governmental organizations, Empowerment Centre for Women, the Organisation for Humanitarian Welfare, and Women Activities and Social Services Association, the UNICEF Afghanistan Country Office (ACO) effectively leveraged their influence, innovations, and expertise to realize women and children's rights in Afghanistan.

EVALUATION PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

As per the Terms of Reference (ToR), the **purpose** of this evaluation is to contribute to:

- (i) evidence-based and risk-informed programming on increasing access of out-of-school (OoS) adolescent girls to secondary education;
- (ii) programming on changing societal perceptions about: (a) child marriage practices; and (b) girls' empowerment in Afghanistan; and
- (iii) institutional learning about the complex relationships linking financial incentives, education, and perceptions on child marriage/girls' empowerment.

As there is limited global evidence connecting these variables (i.e., school attendance, perceptions on child marriage, and girl's empowerment), the results from this evaluation are also expected to add value to the global movements to end child marriage and promote girl's education.

This summative evaluation's **objectives** are to:

- Measure the relevance, effectiveness, cohesion, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the AWLI programme in regard to increasing school enrolment of adolescent girls and stimulating social behaviour change related to perceptions of child marriage and girls' empowerment; and
- Identify [and confirm] gaps in the programme results chain/Theory of Change (ToC), lessons learned, and provide recommendations on how to design, implement, and scale up similar programmes in the rest of Afghanistan.

The intended **audience** is UNICEF, the United States Government (Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues), and practitioners dedicated to the movement to end early marriage.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

This evaluation employs a combination of a theory-driven approach and utilization-focused approach and relies heavily on a ToC in order to understand better the degree to which programme participants have been impacted by the programme. The overall design of this study is mixed methods, leveraging both qualitative and quantitative evidence to answer the Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) (see below). The main information sources collected and used were:

1. **Documents** which included pre-existing qualitative and quantitative information based on the existing logframe activity, outputs, and baseline data;
2. Primary data **from key informant interviews** (KIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) at community levels; and
3. Existing **M&E data**, including Post Distribution Monitoring and UNICEF's Results Assessment Module.

The Team Leader traveled to Afghanistan and consulted with stakeholders (n=54), and roughly a one-half of the sample was female. **Although the programme covers five provinces, only three, provinces were selected** for primary data collection, including Herat, Nangarhar, and Samangan. Nine districts were sampled with a total of 162 persons interviewed and an additional 11 people from focus group discussions with Implementing Partners (IPs). The entire sample is 67% female.

KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation adhered to the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and therefore responded to the following questions:

Relevance: Assessment of alignment of the AWLI interventions to the local context as well as national strategies and policies of Afghanistan and UNICEF, especially among the most deprived sections of the population, including validating existing adolescent programming ToC.

- To what extent does the programme design and implementation fit the local context, including the conflict context, and what measures were taken to adapt to changes in the context?
- Is the programme aligned with the national strategies and policies of Afghanistan and the UNICEF Global Strategic Plan 2018-2021?
- To what extent does the programme address and meet the needs of adolescent girls and their families, especially those that are OoS?

Effectiveness: The extent to which the programme's intended results were achieved at the output level.

- To what extent did UNICEF deliver on its intended outputs?
- What were the major factors influencing the successful delivery of outputs?
- To what extent were the programme interventions taken up by target programme beneficiaries?
- Which factors impeded programme delivery and take-up and how could these have been overcome?
- Did the programme effectively manage conflict-related risks?

Efficiency: The extent to which the programme's outputs were delivered in a timely and cost-efficient manner:

- Were the programme outputs achieved according to the work plan and timeline?
- Were the programme outputs achieved according to the budget and cost-efficiently?
- What were the major factors influencing the efficient delivery of outputs?

Sustainability: the extent to which the AWLI interventions can be scaled up, and the capacity of Government partners to assume the responsibility of carrying these initiatives forward:

- What strategies and interventions of the programme are most likely to be scaled up or sustained after the implementation of the programme?
- What would facilitate or impede the scale-up of the AWLI intervention?
- Have beneficiaries indicated any interest in seeing the programme scaled?

Coherence: The extent to which other interventions with similar objectives complement or contradict the programme and vice versa.

- How compatible was the AWLI programme with other interventions aimed at:
 1. achieving girl's empowerment?
 2. increasing school attendance?
 3. reducing child marriage?

Please include internationally-led, nationally-led, and local grassroots interventions. What synergies, linkages, contradictions, duplications, exist?

Impact: The extent to which the project has increased secondary school enrolment of out of school adolescent girls and changed social behaviours and attitudes towards child marriage:

- What difference has the project made in changing perceptions of the target groups on child marriage? Have they delayed marriage by raising awareness on the rights of adolescent girls to education, or for other reasons?
- Has the project made a difference in adolescent girls' lives by increasing their ability to make life choices?
- How successful has the combination of social mobilization activities and cash transfers been on increasing secondary enrolment rates of adolescent girls and changing social behaviour towards child marriage vis-à-vis social mobilization interventions alone?
- What were the effects, intended or unintended, that the programme had on sources of tension and sources of cohesion in the 20 districts where it worked, and how were these monitored over time?

Findings

Relevance

AWLI's design emanates from an evidence-based assessment of national priorities at the provincial levels, regional research trends, and a thorough alignment with both national strategies and UNICEF's Strategic & Action Plans. Frequently, prevention programmes which seek to fulfill a gender inequality goal isolate women and girls and fail to recognize the interconnected nature of the linkages among gender inequality, limited access to education, and small enterprise. However, AWLI is unique, in that it applied a multi-sectoral approach to promote girls' education and reduce early marriage by recognizing the social, economic, political, cultural, and religious drivers of child marriage. It also targeted the needs of vulnerable, out of school girls in conflict and hard-to-reach contexts with the promotion of education. Findings illustrate, however, that AWLI could have been more inclusive, focusing on girls and boys, as the inclusion of men and boys tends to result in greater programme sustainability with longer lasting behavior change.

Effectiveness

The AWLI programme delivered almost all of its planned outputs. While the number of adolescents that the programme reached **exceeded its target**, the number of girls directly experiencing the programme was only **82 percent** (or 164,207 out of 200,000) of its target. Stakeholders reported that a strong feature of the programme was the premise of solving one's own problems within the community, which may have contributed to the unanimous request for the programme to continue. The positive reflections about AWLI do not imply that there were no challenges. Indeed, there were many factors which impeded programme delivery. For example, IPs initially experienced verbal and physical resistance from communities, because talking about early marriage and the promotion of girl's education were, and continue to be, very sensitive topics. However, five key innovations laid the foundation for attitudinal and behaviour change at the community level (see text box).

FIVE INNOVATIONS USED TO CHANGE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

- Having a clear message.
- Involving male messengers who are respected and trusted;
- The IP employed knowledgeable staff who both knew the Quran and worked with powerful community actors;
- The IPs leveraged female community champions and government officials who wanted to help; and
- Ensured that a literate person took part in the Reflect Circles, so that they could follow up on the results from the Problems and Solutions Tree.

While it is recognized that Community-based Livelihood Training was only implemented in Samangan, and Unconditional Cash Grants were only distributed in Herat, the Mini Media Clubs, Safe Spaces, Community-based Life Skills Training were implemented equally to all provinces. The uptake, however, varied remarkably in each province. For example, in Samangan, the adolescent girls who were exposed to "tailoring" through the Community-based Livelihood Training continue to engage in this activity. All recipients of an Unconditional Cash Grant reported spending funds on education, although some mentioned spending funds on other items. The Mini Media Clubs also had good uptake, as IP service providers in Nangahar and Herat noted that the children share the messages discussed at the club with their families when they go back home. The use of Safe Space facilities was variable. For example, in Samangan and Nangahar, the communities in these provinces are more traditional, and so the Safe Spaces, functioned more like venues for awareness raising meetings. The demand for the Safe Space services in Herat, however, exceeded supply. Through the Community-based Life Skills Training, programme participants were exposed to hygiene practices, and, unlike the other provinces a set of beneficiaries in Samangan opened as small shop which sells hygiene products and offers consultations to women. Finally, several factors limited the effective delivery of programme services, including: (1) partner capacity limitations; (2) government policies on Community -based Livelihood Training; and (3) insecurity.

Efficiency

In spite of established procedures and practices guiding implementation processes, it was noted that there were multiple changes in key leadership positions within UNICEF Afghanistan. The ACO is categorized as a Non-Family Duty Station, which means that staff are allowed Rest and Recuperation (R&R) travel to support a work-life balance. Evaluation findings indicate that there were three different country representatives over five years and three different AWLI programme managers during the same period. The change in leadership adversely affected the efficiency of programme management. Other factors hindering the efficient delivery of outputs and reducing the programme's ability to fully meet its targets included: (1) capacity limitations of the consultants who experienced significant challenges conducting the baseline assessment, and (2) movement restrictions linked to the Pandemic. Moreover, though monitoring data was gender disaggregated, some data was not consistently separated by age, which is a critical gap when managing a programme that focuses on adolescents. UNICEF has used a mix of strategies to implement AWLI, and one of the most cost-efficient ones was during the Pandemic. Findings show that the procurement of recreation and hygiene kits and handwashing stations (the fourth objective) was successful, as this component not only expended a preexisting surplus of funds, but it also exceeded the planned target.

Sustainability

The Mini Media Clubs are embedded in government schools and are therefore under the management of the government, this activity is not likely to be sustained due to the cessation of instruction because of the Pandemic. Similarly, the Safe Spaces in Nangahar and Samangan are not likely to be sustained despite their management by the Department of Woman's Affairs, as they functioned like venues for other programme activities. While the Community-based Livelihood Training had strong uptake in Samagan, the fact that there were challenges linked to interpretations of government policy on Livelihood Training ***in general*** leads the evaluation to conclude that this activity is also not likely to be sustainable. Finally, given the difficulties with Unconditional Cash Grants in Ghor, it would be necessary for a comprehensive risk assessment in order to continue this intervention. Given that this evaluation has found a positive response to the Community Dialogues, Reflect Circles, and Safe Spaces (in Herat only), targeted funding could facilitate their future continuation. As the ACO's Country Programme of Cooperation (CPC) will be ending in 2021, there is a limited window in which to act before the new CPC begins. Finally, regarding factors which facilitate or impede the scale-up of activities, the evaluation identified: (1) government willingness; (2) community interest; and (3) IP capacity.

Coherence

A review of initiatives designed to reduce child marriage in Afghanistan yielded very limited information, but **the Global Programme to End Child Marriage** is somewhat similar to AWLI's structure. Further, it does not appear that AWLI has any contradictions, and in fact findings indicate **linkages** and **synergies** with ongoing UNICEF programmes in other sectors (i.e., education, gender, and WASH). Since AKF and UNICEF's programmes are located in different geographical areas, there is little duplication in the areas of girl's education and empowerment. However, the Adolescent Portfolio Evaluation observed duplications *within UNICEF's programmes*, which could be remedied with a ToC for adolescent programming. This insightful recommendation has already been included in that report.⁴

Impact⁵

The evidence shows that most interviewed have **gained an awareness of** (experienced a shift in mindfulness) about the harmful effects of early marriage and discontinuing education, but this finding alone **does not confirm** that there was necessarily *an attitude change* from the past compared to the present. Only a small number of participants expressed that after experiencing the programme, their perspectives had **changed**. However, rights holder young males and females and duty bearer parents experienced a raised awareness, through interpersonal communications, and this [reportedly] led to taking some form of action. Specifically, there are countless examples where participants spoke up and took the following action: (i) informed others of the harmful effects of early marriage and discontinuing girls' education; (ii) intervened in a planned marriage with and without success; (iii) convinced a family member to let a girl continue her education. Indeed, this evidence confirms that some stakeholders experienced or and observed changed attitudes within themselves or and their communities. **As this stakeholder group is action-oriented, they would make strong candidates to participate in the Reflect Circles, in the event that this intervention were to be scaled up.**

In spite of these encouraging observations, however, there is only a partial fulfillment of the intermediate outcomes in the Theory of Change. Rights holder adolescents (ages 11-17) and Community and Religious Leaders appear to be less action-oriented for different reasons. Adolescents are not intervening within the family dynamics of others-either indirectly or directly, because they may be still in the process of developing an opinion and may have not reached a point of *exercising a choice regarding marriage or sexual and reproductive health*. Community and Religious Leaders take action and support the promotion of education for many girls, but there are only a few examples where these stakeholders take action by using their power to hold others in the community to account

⁴ Konterra Group (2020). Adolescents in Afghanistan: A Portfolio Evaluation with a Gender Lens (2015–2019) Evaluation commissioned by the UNICEF Afghanistan Country Office, Hermania Majoor (Team Leader) Belén Díaz (International Evaluator) ATR Consulting, pages 36-37.

⁵ While the Impact Section presents data from multiple sources, it should be noted, however, that two KEQs could not be answered comprehensively, and they are "How successful has the combination of social mobilization activities and cash transfers been on increasing secondary enrolment rates of adolescent girls and changing social behaviour towards child marriage vis-à-vis social mobilization interventions alone?" and

for specifically early marriage. **Given this conclusion, AWLI's awareness raising components about the harmful effects of child marriage and discontinuing education are, indeed, effective, but the evidence does not support the programme contributed to the consistent delay in marriages.** Apart from this gap, the notion of whether a holistic and multisectoral approach is even a relevant one is still valid. As seen in the evidence, AWLI attracted males and females.

Moreover, it has been evidenced that an Unconditional Cash Grant helps in purchasing education-related items, but this may not translate into an increased ability to make life choices for the adolescent rights holder. Based on evidence garnered, the circumstances are now distinct that a positive unintended effect was a severe reduction of the dowry in Samangan, yet at the family level, there may be mounting pressures when there is drug addiction or when the matriarch was a victim of early marriage, as she may perpetuate the cycle.

Lessons learned

A few lessons learned are:

- Multi-sectoral programmes help in advancing gender equality, as multiple groups (including men) become attracted to and participated in AWLI.
- Highly skilled and motivated IPs work through initial community resistance by galvanizing male and female community champions.
- Working with men (fathers and uncles) and boys (brothers and nephews) is critical, as they are also part of social norms and harmful practices that limit women's ability to make decisions about education, health, livelihood resources.
- The context is an important factor when developing programmes to reduce early marriage, promote girl's education, and support women's empowerment. As seen the Safe Space in Herat could not keep up with the demand, whereas in Samangan and Nangahar, the Safe Space was not taken up in the same fashion.
- Understanding the underlying requirements for carrying out RCTs helps to minimize costly errors in the end.
- Given the suspension of the Unconditional Cash Grant component in Ghor, it is paramount that upcoming programmes have a comprehensive risk assessment and mitigation strategy.

Key Recommendations

In accordance with the ToR, the recommendations are presented in the order of programme design, implementation, and scale up of similar programmes in Afghanistan. However, it should be noted that the last recommendation is time sensitive. Most of these are to be led by Deputy Representative, Adolescent Programming Manager developing future proposals to support the development of adolescents, and the Gender Advisor.

1. Design-Intended Population-Gender & Equity

Deliberate efforts should be made to focus on girls and boys in future adolescent programmes.

2. Implementation

For higher impact interventions, it is recommended to focus on older girls (aged 17 to 22). The findings have indicated that they have a voice, which enables them to have an instrumental role (in Reflect Circles, community engagement, and Social and Behaviour Change activities). Providing a nominal incentive to them would also motivate them to engage with others.

To maintain efficiencies, UNICEF should position a programme which cuts across multiple sectors under a supervisor who has a holistic and wide view of the ACO portfolio rather than a supervisor who is solely focused on one or two sectors (e.g., education, health, child protection).

To support the establishment and maintenance of a robust management information system, develop stronger cooperation in data sharing between UNICEF and IPs and ensure that sex- and age-disaggregated data collection is consistent.

3. Scale Up

Prior to pursuing scaling up or continuing these recommended interventions, position UNICEF to strategically examine needs, including but not limited to:

- (1) what would entail the expanded/continued coverage;
- (2) what would be the contributions from the government partners' limited infrastructure and capacity to adopt the initiative;
- (3) whether the models for Community Dialogues, Reflect Circles, and Safe Spaces should be further tested, perhaps adding other components to the existing models; and
- (4) potential weaknesses and threats that might have negative (or unplanned) impact as a result of scaling up of these activities.

SECTION A

A. BACKGROUND

A.1 Description of the Programme & Key Milestones

The AWLI programme, with a budget of **USD 6,949,735.23**, was a three-year programme but was executed over five years. Specifically, the programme was originally to be implemented from 30 September 2015 through September 2018. However, the programme underwent a no cost extension (NCE), approved on 20-Feb-2018, which extended it into the second quarter of 2020. When AWLI was first approved, the Country Office was implementing its 2015-2019 Country Programme of Cooperation (CPC)⁶ and was effectively engaging with the relevant ministries, at the central, provincial and district levels in the areas of Health, Nutrition, Education, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Child Protection, and Social Inclusion.⁷ There were five zonal offices and eight outposts, and several modalities were used that supported and focused on adolescents.⁸ During this time, significant efforts were undertaken to advance girl's education through the establishment of 2,504 new community-based schools, and accelerated learning centres (ALCs) (and support to 2,676 existing community-based education centers) in 18 provinces.⁹ It was within this context that the AWLI began with the overall **goal** of "accelerating actions to enable adolescent girls to fully enjoy their childhood and adolescence free from the risk of marriage; experience healthier, safe and more empowered life transitions in control of their own destiny, including decisions about their health lifestyles, relationship formation, marriage and child-bearing, by engaging key actors, including adolescents and young people."¹⁰

Three inter-related programme objectives were intended to be carried out in synergy with other UNICEF programmes focused on health, nutrition, education and child protection. They were:

- **Objective 1:** By end of 2018, elders, parents and influential individuals, including religious leaders in 20 districts of five provinces are equipped with skills and information for increased social action, acceptance, visibility for supporting adolescents and generating shifts in social expectations relating to girls, including through community dialogue, appreciative enquiry and community-based networks;
- **Objective 2:** By end of 2018, government and non-government providers in 20 districts and five provinces are equipped with skills and information to promote access to basic social services with emphasis on life-skills education, sports for development and safe spaces for youth clubs/federations; and
- **Objective 3:** Increased generation and use of real-time data and information using innovative methodologies on adolescent girls and boys for a range of sectors including health, nutrition, education, child protection for advocacy, programming, learning and tracking progress.¹¹

⁶ E/ICEF/2014/P/L.9 of 6 June 2014. Country programme document: 2015-2019.

⁷ Includes: Afghanistan Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Ministry of Education (MoE), the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Martyrs and Disabled (MOLSAMD) and the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD). UNICEF (2015) Annual Report, pages 9-10; and United Nations (2014) United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan 2015-2019.

⁸ Center for Evaluation and Development (2019) Evaluation Of The Programme On Improving Adolescents Lives In Afghanistan Midline Report for UNICEF.

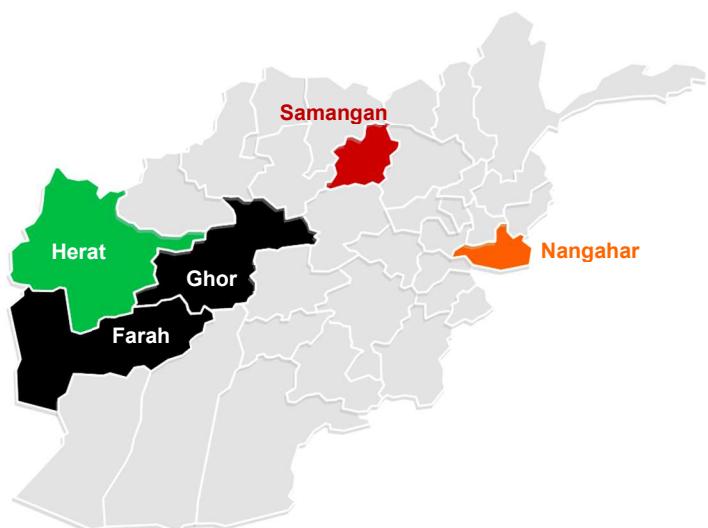
⁹ UNICEF (2016) Annual Report, page 10.

¹⁰ UNICEF (2014) Proposal for S/GWI Funding under the Afghan Women's Leadership Initiative, page 2.

¹¹ UNICEF (2014) Proposal for S/GWI Funding under the Afghan Women's Leadership Initiative.

AWLI's outreach extended to five provinces, (1) Nangahar, (2) Samangan; (3) Ghor; (4) Herat; and (5) Farah, and their selection was based on evidence secured from the 2007–2008 and 2011–2012 National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA). Within each province, four districts were prioritized, totaling 20 districts, and these districts were in some of the most-deprived and remote areas, where the prevalence of child marriage was the highest.¹² Briefly, the activities under each objective included: (a) community dialogues; (b) training community leaders, Maliks, religious leaders; (c) pre-marriage/marriage and post-marriage support to young couples; (d) establishing youth/adolescent clubs; (e) life skills training and other empowerment-related activities; (f) establishing safe spaces and literacy support; (g) vocational training; (h) developing Shura Action plans; and (i) systematic documentation and lessons learned designed to help in influencing advocacy for scaling up, including with government and other donors.

Figure 1: Map of programme provinces in Afghanistan.



In the Donor Report, covering activities from January 31st 2017 to June 1st 2017, UNICEF requested an adjustment due to "a delayed start of actual implementation" (page 10). In early 2018, the Afghanistan Country Office (ACO) embarked upon a redesign of the approach for implementation, "focusing on better linkages between various intervention types (i.e., community mobilization, education interventions, Unconditional Cash Grants, and research and data.)"¹³ To facilitate this process, UNICEF staff from the Regional Office, the provincial offices, and Kabul undertook a comprehensive review process to ensure a more rigorous method of achieving and measuring results for reducing child marriage and education promotion.¹⁴ The result from this review was a **shift** in programme design from a service delivery approach to a community engagement practice. With this programmatic shift, UNICEF created a new partnership with the ActionAid Consortium,¹⁵ which included ActionAid Afghanistan (AAA) as the lead implementing partner, working together with (i) Empowerment Centre for Women (ECW); (ii) Organisation for Humanitarian Welfare (OHW); and (iii) Women Activities and Social Services Association (WASSA). These implementing partners specialized in gender equality concerns and were already working in the five provinces and also in some of the pre-selected 20 districts. The **revised programme objectives** were:

- **Revised objective 1:** Change perceptions on the acceptability of early and forced marriage and mobilize communities to delay marriage by raising awareness of adolescent girls' rights, the laws in place to protect them, the negative consequences of early marriage, and the importance of educating girls;
- **Revised objective 2:** Empower adolescent girls to make informed life choices through education, vocational and life skills training, and peer support networks; and
- **Revised objective 3:** Map and document the status of adolescent girls in Afghanistan.

As a response to insecurity, the limited implementing partner's (IP) access to targeted communities, natural disasters, the effects of COVID-19 Pandemic in 2019, the Country Office sought solutions by requesting re-programming. It was within this context that a second adjustment, issued on 17 July 2020, was extended to the programme up through 31 December 2020. With this reprogramming, **new objective 4** was added, which was "to provide key supplies to adolescent girls affected by COVID-19 to prepare them to return to schools/CBEs when

¹² The National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA). The 2014 estimates from the Afghanistan Living Condition Survey (ALCS) were also consulted.

¹³ H5 Half-Yearly Progress Report June 2018, page 2.

¹⁴ H5 Half-Yearly Progress Report June 2018, page 3.

¹⁵ A Consortium Approach involves implementation with a lead consortium, coordinating across several geographic locations, covering a range of technical expertise for adolescent programming, gender, and cash grants.

schools are reopened and to have continued access and quality education.¹⁶ Under this new reprogramming, there were a total of **seven** interventions designed to reach the most vulnerable adolescent girls in all 20 districts.¹⁷ They included:

1. Community Dialogues;
2. Reflect Circles;
3. Safe Spaces and Formal and Informal Networks;
4. Mini Media Clubs;
5. Community-based Life Skills Training;
6. Unconditional-Cash Grants; and
7. Community-based Livelihood Training.

Overall, these programme components aimed to improve participants' knowledge and skills about the harmful effects of discontinuing the education of adolescent girls and early marriage. By June 2019, the activities from AWLI's early phases were training 2,355 religious leaders about the consequences of child marriage based on Sharia Law and Child Rights in Islam (85 Female religious scholars).¹⁸ Community Dialogue sessions, held in all five provinces, reached 300,000 community members. Parents, teachers, religious leaders, community elders, community shuras, youth, women rights activists as well as available members from female led organizations and groups participated. For the second component, there were 157 facilitators who received training to actively participate in the Reflect Circles.¹⁹ Prior to establishing Safe Spaces, the third component, Adolescent and Youth Networks were established in the five provinces to enable young people, especially girls, to advocate for education and put child marriage on the agenda in their province. During this time, the schools were being selected for the establishment of mini-media clubs, the fourth component, which included the provision of equipment (tape recorders, mini projector, loud speakers, microphones, radio, sound systems, television); and the training package to be used to raise awareness about adolescent girls' rights, needs and interests was also being finalized.²⁰ For the fifth intervention, AAA had finalized the Community-based Life skills training package and initiated preparations for its delivery in all five provinces. The sixth intervention, the Unconditional Cash Grants, was to be implemented in Ghor and Herat. For the seventh activity, Community-based Vocational Training for adolescent girls, the training packages were under development, and the ActionAid Consortium was not only planning to execute the training, but they IPs were investigating links with local business groups and existing civil society organisations.²¹ The programme effectiveness section includes a full description of each programme component as well as the extent to which their targets were met.

Finally, in 2019, the process of mapping and documenting the status of adolescent girls in Afghanistan (the revised objective 3), was in its inception phase. For example, the evaluation consultants, Econometria, were already contracted to carry out this programme component, and they had developed a protocol designed to identify and reach the most vulnerable programme participants to receive an Unconditional Cash Grant (using a randomized control trial (RCT) methodology).²² In support of this process, they were conducting a listing exercise, and then the collection of baseline data would follow. Ultimately, revised objective 3 was only partially completed, and the efficiency section elaborates on the factors linked to a less than expected programme performance. The AWLI programme completed all implementation on 31 December 2020.

¹⁶ UNICEF (2020) Donor Report H9 for the reporting period of 15 May 2020 – 30 November 2020, submitted December 2020.

¹⁷ UNICEF (2018) Donor Report H5 for the reporting period of 31 January 2018-15 June 2018, submitted 15 June 2018.

¹⁸ UNICEF (2019) Donor Report H6 for the reporting period of 15 December 2018-15 June 2019, submitted 15 June 2019, page 4.

¹⁹ Ibid., page 4.

²⁰ H7 Half-Yearly Progress Report December 2019, page 6.

²¹ Ibid., page 6.

²² The unconditional cash grants were designed to support families with adolescent girls who were transitioning from Accelerated Learning Centres (ALCs) to secondary school levels, and so the listing exercise sampled households within three kilometres of the catchment areas of all ALCs in the eight pre-selected districts in Ghor and Herat. After this listing exercise, Econometria would "randomly select ten households to receive cash transfer in treatment ALC catchment areas (from the list of eligible households)." Econometria Consultores (2019). Summative evaluation and Randomized Control Trial of the Adolescent Women's Leadership Initiative Project in Afghanistan Inception report (adjusted), page 39.

A.2 Key Partners

The key stakeholders in this programme are the United States Department of State, the Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI), UNICEF, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (IRoA), four implementing partners (IPs), and multiple programme recipient groups. The number of different direct stakeholders reached (disaggregated by age, gender, and community function) and their roles, are summarized in the table below. The number of indirect adolescents (12-17 year old) and adults (18 to 65 years old) are also noted below.

Table 1: Partners and rights holders' roles and contributions.

	Stakeholder Group	Contributions	Their Role in Programme Implementation	Location and Numbers Reached
ORGANIZATIONS	S/GWI			
	U.S. Department of State: Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues	Financial and technical support in girl's empowerment.	This office financially contributed to the programme. This investment was guided by a global approach to advance girl's education and female rights and empowerment.	This stakeholder is based in Washington, DC.
	UNICEF			
	Afghanistan Country Office (ACO) (duty bearers)	Technical assistance and co-ordination of activities at national level.	This entity was responsible for the country level planning, coordination, and implementation.	The ACO has offices in Kabul and zonal offices in Herat, Mezar-I-Sharif, Jalalabad and Kandahar.
	Implementing Partners			
	ActionAid Afghanistan and Consortium Partners ²³	Technical assistance, imple-mentation, and coordination of AWLI activities at provincial and district levels.	There were three partners: (i) Empowerment Centre for Women (ECW); (ii) Organisation for Humanitarian Welfare (OHW); and (iii) Women Activities and Social Services Association (WASSA). They contributed their expertise, while carrying out the programme activities.	ECW operated in Samangan; OHW operated in Ghor and Nangahar; and WASSA operated in Farah and Herat.

²³ These non-governmental organizations were not identified as "duty bearers", because it is not certain if they subscribe to Child rights programming (CRP).

	Stakeholder Group	Contributions	Their Role in Programme Implementation	Location and Numbers Reached		
STATE ACTORS	IRoA Partners					
	Central, Provincial, and District level partners with the Ministries of Education (MoE), Women Affairs (MoWA), Public Health, Labour, Social Affairs (MoLSA), and Youth Affairs. ²⁴	Coordination management, and follow-up, ensuring policy coherence, responsive action from communities who voice their priorities, and administrative support.	These key partners supported the institutional structure within which the programme was implemented. Their role was also instrumental for the future sustainability of the programme.	Provinces (5)	Districts (20)	
				Nangarhar	Jalalabad, Surkhrud, Kama, Darah-i-noor	
				Samangan	Feroz Nakhcheer, Roi-do-ab, Dara-i-soof-i-payan, Dara-i-soof-i-bala	
				Ghor	Chighcheran (this district was renamed Firozkoh), Dwalatyar, Lal (formerly Sarjangan), Tulak	
				Herat	Herat, Enjil, Karrukh, Zendajan	
RECIPIENTS	Recipients of Programme Services					
	Community level in urban and rural areas (duty bearers and rights holders)	Investment of time, energy to attend training and community-based activities, interpersonal communication, and expression of his/her viewpoints/ opinions.	The primary beneficiaries of the programme, mostly located in rural or peri-urban communities, are divided into several groups <i>within</i> the community: Youth (12-17 years of age): <ul style="list-style-type: none">Adolescent girls and boys (rights holders)²⁵; Adults (18-65 years of age):	Males	Females	Total
				Direct Adolescents (12-17)		
				91,347	164,207	255,554
				Indirect Adolescents (12-17)		
				875,000 adolescents in the remaining 46 districts of the five provinces ²⁷		
ADULTS	Direct Adults (18-65 years of age)					
				186,052	171,327	357,379 ²⁸
	Indirect Adults (18-65 years of age)					

²⁴ These State actors were not identified as "duty bearers", because it is not certain if they subscribe to Child Rights Programming (CRP), although the IRoA ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1994. However, it is acknowledged that duty-bearers may be primarily state actors, which includes all the organs of the state such as parliaments, ministries, local authorities, judges and justice authorities, police, teachers or extension workers. All these are legal duty-bearers.

²⁵ With the application of a Human Rights-based Approach, "rights holders" in this evaluation are the children who are at most risk and vulnerable.

²⁷ Also includes 200,000 adolescent boys in the 20 'project districts' of the five provinces who benefitted from information shared through public fora, media including TV, radio, mobile technology, social media, traditional methods of information sharing, including television spots, street theatre, youth and student forums.

²⁸ The Donor Report submitted in March 2021 indicates a discrepancy of 2,470 people, which is a slightly higher figure for the number of adults directly benefiting from the AWLI project at 359,849 adults; However, this information is not yet gender disaggregated.

	Stakeholder Group	Contributions	Their Role in Programme Implementation	Location and Numbers Reached
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents (duty bearers); • Community Leaders; and • Village Maliks or Mullahs (or religious leaders).²⁶ 	<p>The total population of about 1.3 million, including adults in the five provinces have benefitted from awareness raising activities.</p>

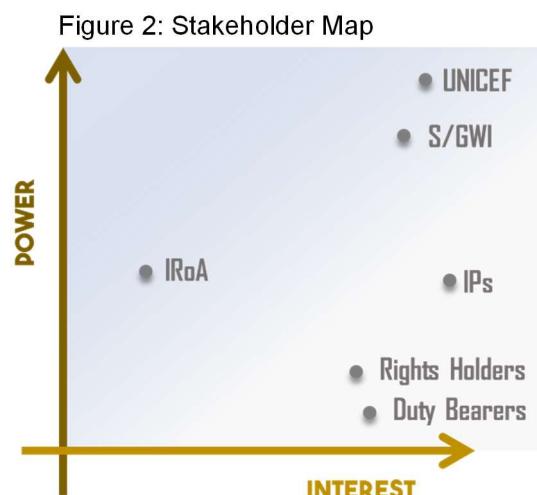
A.2.1 STAKEHOLDER MAP

As noted earlier, the key stakeholders for the Summative Evaluation are the S/GWI Office, UNICEF, the IRoA, programme IPs, programme recipient groups and other stakeholders. The map below outlines each stakeholder's respective role(s), level of power, and interest in this evaluation.

The S/GWI office, focused on female rights and empowerment, has a strong interest in the lessons and recommendations emerging from this evaluation. The evaluation findings not only contribute to accountability, but they also illustrate how the United States Government funding promoted girl's/women's economic empowerment by reducing or eliminating barriers to entry (e.g., early marriage and interrupting girl's education) and expanding overall opportunities.

The UNICEF ACO also has high interest and power in this evaluation. These stakeholders will appreciate the independent evaluation findings and, in turn, formulate and implement the management response. Learning from this evaluation can be incorporated into future adolescent programmes, particularly as it relates to recognizing effective and impactful entry points for adolescent programme modalities within Afghanistan. Similarly, the UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) is keenly interested in this evaluation, as it could inform similar programmes in the region (i.e., Bangladesh and India).

The IRoA ministries at national and provincial levels are powerful key partners, as they support the implementation and sustainability of the programme. As mentioned above, these partners are the Ministry of Education, MoWA, the Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled, and the Ministry for Youth Affairs. While the national level government partners have a coordination role (with focus on ensuring policy coherence), the provincial level government entities serve a managerial role. The learning from the evaluation may strengthen their respective roles, capacities, and duties to promote an environment that increases girl's/women's economic empowerment. However, their interest in implementation of the programme maybe relatively limited, as they are under-resourced with high exposure to insecurity.



²⁶ With the application of a Human Rights-based Programming Approach, AWLI strengthens the capacity of duty bearers, parents and caregivers, to meet their obligations and for rights holders to claim their rights.

The implementing partners (IPs) have strong interest but limited power. They will share professional experiences in executing AWL's programme, including their challenges, lessons, and opinions about programming gender equality in Afghanistan. Aspects of learning from the evaluation may be transferrable to other similar initiatives implemented by these NGOs.

Rights holder adolescent girls and boys and duty bearer parents, community leaders, and Village Maliks or Mullahs also have very strong interest in this programme with limited power. However, they have experienced the programme and have perceptions about the design and quality of the AWL programme components which ought to be voiced through this evaluation. Their suggested improvements will more broadly benefit current and future beneficiaries involved in similar initiatives implemented in Afghanistan as well as other countries.

A.3 Description of the Context of the Intervention

A.3.1 SOCIAL ECONOMIC PROFILE

Afghanistan is one of the youngest countries in the world, and so there is currently a “youth bulge” within the population. In 2018, about **64 per cent** of the population was under 25 years of age,²⁹ and this figure has almost doubled since 2000.³⁰

Afghanistan belongs to the category of Least Developed Countries in the world. Its Human Development Index score stands at 0.498, thus positioning it as 168th in the ranking of the 189 countries for which the HDI scores are available.³¹ Afghanistan's Gross National Income (GNI) per capita in 2018 (Atlas method) was 550 USD, which is well below the average of the group of fragile and conflict affected countries (which is 1,533 USD).³² The Gross Domestic Product growth rate, around one per cent since 2013, is low and indicative of the slow economic development of the country. Agriculture is the principal source of income for almost half of the population. However, due to the protracted period of conflict, which is continuing to impact the general population in Afghanistan,³³ agricultural development is hampered, and natural disasters further deteriorate the situation.³⁴ According to the Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016-2017, **54.5 per cent** of the population lives in poverty, and “12.5 million people are identified as severely food insecure”.³⁵ Unemployment is also high at 9.3 per cent in 2014, but this figure is likely higher due to the Pandemic.³⁶ The share of women, aged 15 to 19 years old, participating in the labour market in the non-agricultural sector is only 20.3 per cent, indicating that female youth are experiencing major challenges when pursuing employment.³⁷

A.3.2 RELEVANT POLICIES AND IROA INSTITUTIONS

According to Article 70 of Afghanistan's civil law, the legal age for marriage is 16 for girls and 18 for boys. A girl who is 15 years old can, however, be married with the consent of her father or a court (Article 71).³⁸ Parents may arrange to marry off their daughters for a myriad of reasons, including cultural (i.e., to relevant family standing), economic (i.e., to repay debts), political (i.e., to resolve tribal conflicts³⁹).

²⁹ UNFPA. Young People. Accessed on 15 March 2021. <https://afghanistan.unfpa.org/en/node/15227>.

³⁰ World Bank. Population, total; Population growth (annual %); and National Statistics and Information Authority (NSIA), Dec 18, 2018.

³¹ The 2020 United Nation Development (UNDP) Human Development Index Report, page 243.

³² World Bank. GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$); GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$); GDP growth (annual %), Accessed on 15 March 2021. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD>

³³ Human Rights Watch report in 2017: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/afghanistan>. Accessed on 15 March 2021.

³⁴ International Fund for International Development. Afghanistan. Accessed on 15 March 2021.

³⁵ World Food Programme. Afghanistan, Accessed on 15 March 2021. <https://www.wfp.org/countries/afghanistan>.

³⁶ United Nations (2017). The National Action Plan (NAP) to Eliminate Early and Child Marriage in Afghanistan, page 5; and Central Statistics Organization (2016), Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2013-14. National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment. Kabul, CSO. It should be noted that given the Covid-19 pandemic, unemployment is likely to be even higher, with the increasing likelihood of girls not attending school (due to school closures), dropping out of school, and taking up more household responsibilities.

³⁷ International Labour Organization (ILO) (2017). 2017 Household Income Expenditure Surveys: Living Conditions Survey Data. [Retrieved on March 18, 2021].

³⁸ IRoA, Ministry of Justice, Republic of Afghanistan. (1977).

³⁹ This is a practice called *baad* and *baadal* (marital exchange between families or communities to address a conflict or concern).

According to the National Action Plan (NAP) 2017–2021 to Eliminate Early and Child Marriage in Afghanistan, the Government of the IRoA “is committed to taking firm steps to address early and child marriage” with the support of United Nations partners. The NAP outlines actions designed to prevent and end early and child marriage, and to improve the implementation of laws and services which aim to support for people at risk of early and child marriage.⁴⁰ Specifically, under the leadership of the Deputy Ministry for Youth Affairs (DMoYA) and MoWA, the NAP provides the roadmap “which will play an essential part in coordinating and guiding interventions, programmes and projects on early and child marriage in Afghanistan over the course of the next five years.”⁴¹

The 2018 Girls’ Education Policy, which also benefits from the leadership support of MoWA, outlines the commitment to help girls to continue their education by increasing the number of girl students, providing continued facilities for women, and decreasing the level of illiteracy. However, there is a gender gap in formal primary education, which has grown in recent years. The 2015 Demographic Health Survey (DHS) indicates that “**nine** percent of ever-married women, and 31% of ever-married men, aged 15-49, have completed at least some secondary education. However, only **five per cent of women** and 17 per cent of men have completed secondary school or beyond. **Eighty-four per cent of women** and half of men have never attended school. Only 15% of women and 49% of men are literate.⁴²

While there are many factors forcing girls to drop out of school, early marriage and the lack of support to continue formal schooling rank as key causes.⁴³ Indeed, “the interaction between the number of years of a girl’s schooling and the postponement of marriage is firmly established by demographic studies.”⁴⁴ Early marriage is a major contributor to extremely low rates of school enrolment amongst girls, particularly at the secondary level, and the table below lists some of these influencing factors.

Table 2: Positive and negative factors associated with the likelihood of early marriage.

Direction of Influence	National & Regional Evidence which Increases or Decreases The Likelihood of Child Marriage
	Early marriage is more likely in regions where the practice is generally acceptable due to existing, harmful social norms and traditions.
	Secondary school dropouts who are female - are two [combined] variables that are closely associated with child marriage, and as a result, are likely to experience limited economic advancement. For example, 56.8 per cent girls (aged 16-8 years of age) “are less likely to be attending school, generally, and are more likely to be neither in school nor working”. ⁴⁵
	The lack of a sense of autonomy and agency are strong drivers. They include limited to no access to reproductive health care, no ability to give informed consent on different practices, and restrictions on their movements. All of these factors increase the likelihood of early marriage and adolescent pregnancy. ^{46, 47}

⁴⁰ United Nations (2017). The National Action Plan (NAP) to Eliminate Early and Child Marriage in Afghanistan, page 5.

⁴¹ Ibid, page 5. It should be noted that the NAP focuses on the elimination of early marriage by putting in place enabling policy instruments, and it is not certain if AWL's community-based services, which had been ongoing for a few years, benefitted from or was influenced by such upstream interventions.

⁴² IRoA (2015). Demographic Health Survey (DHS), page 31. Afghanistan's formal education system includes primary schooling (Grade 1-6), lower secondary school (Maktabeh Motevaseteh) (Grade 7-9), upper secondary school (Doreyeh Aali) (Grade 10-12) and various types of vocational schools (teachers' schools and technical schools) under the leadership of the Ministry of Education (MoE). Other elements of the education system include community-based education (CBE), accelerated learning programmes to allow students delayed in their education to join their age group, and early childhood education (ECE).

⁴³ Birchall, J. (2018). Early marriage, pregnancy and girl child school dropout, Knowledge, Evidence, and Learning for Development, Helpdesk Reports, commissioned by the United Kingdom Department for International Development. Report is [here](#).

⁴⁴ UNICEF (2001). Innocenti Digest, Early marriage: Child spouses, No.7 - March 2001, page 11. ([here](#))

⁴⁵ Ministry of Education, IRoA, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Samuel Hall (2018). All In School and Learning: Global Initiative on Out-Of-School Children – Afghanistan Country Study, Ministry of Education, UNICEF, Samuel Hall and USAID, Kabul, page 25.

⁴⁶ UNICEF. Programming with and for adolescents sourced from: <https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/adolescent-health-and-development>.

⁴⁷ United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2010). Harmful Traditional Practices and Implementation of the Law on Elimination of Violence against Women in Afghanistan.

Direction of Influence	National & Regional Evidence which Increases or Decreases The Likelihood of Child Marriage
	Regionally, higher educational levels, greater wealth, and a larger share of working household members are linked to a decrease in child marriage. ⁴⁸
	Regionally, economic development (although speculative) and access to social and mass-media are negatively correlated with child marriage. ⁴⁹

A.3.3 POWER RELATIONS & AFGHAN CULTURE

Within the younger population, adolescents particularly suffer from violence, abuse and an insecure environment perpetuated by cultural and traditional practices. The Child Rights International Network (CRIN) reported persistent violations of children's rights, including high rates of malnutrition, forced/early marriage, violence against children, sexual exploitation and abuse, child labour, and children affected by armed conflict.⁵⁰ These violations are especially severe for girls. Child marriage⁵¹ is particularly high, according to the *State of the World's Children 2019*, where **35 per cent of 20-24-year-old** women in Afghanistan were first married or in a union before 18 years of age (versus only seven per cent for males).⁵² The DHS also indicates that the median age at first marriage among ever married women, aged 25-49, is **18.5**.⁵³ These estimates also vary between those residing in urban and rural areas and education levels. In Afghanistan, child marriage is mainly a result of harmful traditional practices, socio-economic factors, and a lack of appreciation for the value of education.

Women are also exposed to the risk of pregnancy at an early age with 11 per cent of women aged from 25 to 49 having had their first sexual intercourse by age 15 and 42 per cent before age 18. By age 20, 62 per cent of women have had sexual intercourse.⁵⁴ As a consequence of early marriages, adolescent pregnancy (fertility rate is 69 births per 1000 adolescent women⁵⁵) fosters high rates of maternal mortality. There is limited awareness of the considerable health risks associated with child marriage. Primarily, early pregnancy is closely linked to the extremely high maternal mortality rate (MMR), which is **638 per 100,000 live births**.⁵⁶ Negative outcomes associated with MMR also include illness and disability due to early pregnancy, including obstetric fistula from obstructed labour, among other complications. Young mothers are subject to these negative health outcomes, because their bodies are simply not yet sufficiently developed for childbirth.

A.3.4 THE GLOBAL AGENDA OF EARLY MARRIAGE⁵⁷

Child marriage, recognized as a human rights violation under international law, is explicitly enumerated under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, among other international legal instruments.

Further, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the tools used to plan, monitor, and achieve a more equitable future for all. Child marriage intersects multiple SDGs although there is one, SDG 5, which aims to

⁴⁸ United Nations Children's Fund and United Nations Population Fund. (2018). Key Drivers of the Changing Prevalence of Child Marriage in Three Countries in South Asia: Working Paper, UNICEF, Kathmandu, page vii.

⁴⁹ Ibid., page 17 and 43.

⁵⁰ Child Rights International Network.

⁵¹ UNICEF (2019). State of the World's Children, page 234; This is defined as the percentage of women 20–24 years old who were first married or in union before they were 15 years old; percentage of women 20–24 years old who were first married or in union before they were 18 years old; percentage of men 20–24 years old who were first married or in union before they were 18 years old.

⁵² Ibid., page 232.

⁵³ IRoA (2015). DHS, page 61.

⁵⁴ IRoA (2015). DHS, table 4.5, page 71.

⁵⁵ Adolescents' fertility rate (births per 1,000 women ages 15-19), Source: The World Bank.

⁵⁶ UNICEF Social Indicators.

⁵⁷ Prioritizing the Linkages Between Sustainable Development Goals to Eradicate Child Marriage: Carnegie Ethics Online Monthly Column (August 8, 2019).

create gender equality, and this SDG is specifically dedicated to the elimination of child marriage and the promotion of girls' education. However, there are at least seven other goals directly linked and an additional nine which are indirectly linked.

Specifically, child marriage is most often associated with poverty (SDG 1), hunger (SDG 2), lack of access to/inadequate health care (SDG 3), lack of access to education (SDG 4), economic disenfranchisement and marginalization (SDG 8), economic inequality (SDG 10), as well as sexual and conflict-related violence and lack of access to justice (SDG 16). Generally, there is a need to use multifaceted, intersectional approaches to address early marriage and the interruption or cessation of education for girls, and these approaches are especially important given that Afghanistan is a conflict zone. For example, girls are even more vulnerable to child marriage/limited education due to:

- (1) increased insecurity—wherein a daughter is involuntarily entered into a marriage based on familial perceptions that such an arrangement can **protect her**;
- (2) the belief that marriage **keeps girls from delinquency**, prostitution, or debauchery – or poverty;
- (3) poverty, which makes **collecting a dowry**, or “bride price” a form of family survival;⁵⁸
- (4) weak state institutions, **which ought to offer education, protection, and other services to vulnerable groups but do not**; and
- (5) displaced and disrupted community relationships, which **tend to breakdown in humanitarian situations**.

SECTION B

B. EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, & SCOPE

B.1 Evaluation Purpose

This summative evaluation is a requirement of the grant obligations from the S/GWI, **award number S-LMAQM-15-GR-1304**. As per the Terms of Reference (ToR), the **purpose** of this evaluation is to contribute to:

- (i) evidence-based and risk-informed programming on increasing access of out-of-school (OoS) adolescent girls to secondary education;
- (ii) programming on changing societal perceptions about: (a) child marriage practices; and (b) girls' empowerment in Afghanistan; and
- (iii) institutional learning about the complex relationships linking financial incentives, education, and perceptions on child marriage/girls' empowerment. (See annex 1 for the ToR)

As further reasoning, there is limited global evidence connecting these variables (i.e., school attendance, perceptions on child marriage, and girl's empowerment), and so the results from this evaluation are also expected to add value to the global movements dedicated to ending child marriage and promoting the education of adolescent girls. Given that this evaluation is likely to generate lessons learned (and recommendations) about programming adolescent activities, this evaluation produces instrumental and refined evidence about programme approaches. It also elaborates what efforts in other provinces look like, where there is advocacy supporting OoS adolescent girls in Afghanistan. Therefore, the users of this evaluation are not only the United States Government and UNICEF in Afghanistan, but also others working for UNICEF and NGOs in the world (e.g., Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, etc.) who are also committed to the elimination of child marriage, girl's empowerment and programmes supporting adolescents.

⁵⁸ Ennaji, M., Child (2019). Marriage is stalling sustainable development, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/10/sustainable-development-goals-hindered-by-child-marriage/>. Accessed on 5 June 2021.

B.2 Evaluation Objectives

This summative evaluation's **objectives** are to:

- Measure the relevance, effectiveness, cohesion, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of the AWLI programme in regard to increasing school enrolment of adolescent girls and stimulating social behaviour change related to perceptions of child marriage and girls' empowerment; and
- Identify [and confirm] gaps in the programme results chain/ToC, lessons learned, and provide recommendations on how to design, implement, and scale up similar programmes in the rest of Afghanistan.

B.3 Evaluation Scope, Approach & GEEW

The evaluation's ToR outlines the **scope** according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's-Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) evaluation criteria, which is relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, sustainability, and impact, to be used in the evaluation.⁵⁹ The thematic area, or criteria, of "impact", although part of the ToR, is not **comprehensively** explored **as planned**. There are several factors which have led to the partial exclusion of some impact questions, and they are: (1) the lack of time and brevity of the evaluation exercise (three months); (2) inadequate sample size at the stage when the baseline data was collected; (3) the limitation that the evaluation only collected data in three out of five programme provinces (to be discussed in the methodology section); and (4) the programme participants who received an Unconditional Cash Grant were not exposed to social mobilization activities. Given that programme participants who received an Unconditional Cash Grant did not take part in social mobilization activities, the third evaluation purpose, which was to contribute to institutional learning about the complex relationships linking financial incentives, education, and perceptions on child marriage/girls' empowerment, was also not fully addressed. In essence, this summative evaluation reviews all the seven interventions carried out in three out of five provinces, and they are: 1) Herat; 2) Nangahar, and 3) Samangan and also covers the key milestones of programme implementation from 2015 through 2020.

This evaluation employs a combination of a theory-driven approach and utilization-focused approach. First, a theory-driven evaluation relies heavily on a Theory of Change (ToC) in order to understand better the degree to which programme participants have effectively changed or have been impacted by the programme. This approach seems fitting, as it highlights how, theoretically, the causal chains to achieve attitudinal and behavioural change have occurred as a result of being exposed to the programme.⁶⁰ Second, a utilization-focused approach is guided by the needs of the primary intended users [UNICEF], and these stakeholders were actively engaged in making meaning of the data throughout the entire process, from its conception (ToR), planning (securing ethical clearance and inception report), and ensuring that findings, conclusions and recommendations were accurate, relevant, practical, respectively.⁶¹ For example, the evaluation report underwent three thorough reviews by UNICEF Afghanistan and ROSA colleagues. After the draft report was submitted, a stakeholder workshop/presentation took place virtually with the stakeholders from S/GWI (donor), UNICEF Afghanistan, headquarters, and ROSA, whereby the recommendations were not only discussed but the implications for UNICEF's future programming opportunities in Afghanistan were contemplated. The dissemination of the evaluation, through the UNICEF website, will enable interested stakeholders to access this document.

Finally, it should be noted that while a Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (GEEW) perspective is not explicitly mentioned in the ToR, it is important to understand that the programme design integrates an equity and a gender approach to include those and girls and boys, families, communities most affected by early marriage located in the areas where early marriage is most prevalent (e.g., remote communities and resourced-restricted provinces in Afghanistan). Hence, while the construct of GEEW is not formally framed within the evaluation, these

⁵⁹ OECD (2000). Glossary of Evaluation and Results Based Management (RBM) Terms; and Summative Evaluation Terms of Reference.

⁶⁰ Leeuw, F. and Donaldson, S. (2015) Evaluation, Vol. 21(4) 467-480.

⁶¹ Patton, M. (2012). Essentials of Utilization-Focused Evaluation. Thousand Oaks, CA.: SAGE.

concerns are inherently part of the evaluand, and therefore, the entire evaluation process.⁶² Annex 2, the Integration of Gender, Equity, and Human Rights in the Evaluation, includes a checklist of the evaluation's adherence to these key principles.

B.3.1.1 Theory of Change (ToC)

It is recognized that the AWLI Baseline Report presents a conceptual framework that outlines the key drivers/enablers of early marriage as well as the corresponding programme components, which are designed "to change attitudes, behaviours, and perceptions on the acceptability of child marriage."⁶³ This ToC had gaps, however, as it did not include strategies linked to expected intermediate outcomes which delineated how key programme components would lead to desired impact. After a thorough review of existing documentation, it appears that there are multiple ToCs and frameworks available for the same thematic areas (e.g., ending child marriage and the promotion of girl's education).⁶⁴ During the evaluation inception phase, the Team Leader consulted with all of these relevant resources and reformulated the ToC to include programme activities and corresponding components, strategies, and intermediate outcomes. This ToC, with elaborated intermediate outcomes coupled with corresponding strategies, was intended to better inform the three levels (individual, family/community, and institutional levels) through which to measure AWLI's effects on programme participants.

The figure 3, reflecting the reformulated ToC, presents the basic premise that **IF** adolescent rights holders and their families (or/and communities) use the opportunities from AWLI's three key interventions, namely (1) capacity development, (2) Social Behaviour Change and other awareness raising activities, (3) Unconditional Cash Grants in Herat, and/or (4) Community -based Livelihood Training (in the case of Samangan), **THEN**:

1. The adolescent rights holders at risk of child marriage may express themselves and exercise choices regarding marriage and sexual and reproductive health (individual level);
2. The households and communities with adolescents at risk of child marriage may demonstrate positive attitudes regarding gender equality (family and community levels); and
3. The adolescent rights holders at risk of child marriage may express themselves and exercise choices in:
 - a. the continuation of their education; or
 - b. their livelihood with entrepreneurial activities (institutional levels).

⁶² Nichols, T. (2014). Measuring Gender Inequality in Angola: A Feminist-Ecological Model for Evaluation in the Feminist Evaluation and Research, co-edited by Brisolara, S, Seigart, D. and SenGupta, S., Guilford Publications, Inc.: New York.

⁶³ Econometria Consultores (2020). Summative evaluation and Randomized Control Trial of the Adolescent Women's Leadership Initiative Project in Afghanistan Baseline report (adjusted); figure 1.5: Main assumptions and risks identified in the AWLI's Theory of Change, page 17.

⁶⁴ MoLSAMD, and UNICEF (2018). Child Marriage in Afghanistan: Changing the narrative; Econometria Consultores (2020). Summative evaluation and Randomized Control Trial of the Adolescent Women's Leadership Initiative Project in Afghanistan Baseline report (adjusted) dated April 22, 2020, page 24; and United Nations (2017). The National Action Plan to Eliminate Early and Child Marriage in Afghanistan, Figure 1: Drivers of early and child marriage in Afghanistan; UNFPA and UNICEF (November 2019). Global programme to end child marriage: Phase II programme document 2020-2013.

Figure 3: Reformulated Theory of Change

Adolescent girls experience healthier, safer, and more empowered life transitions, including on decisions about their health, education, lifestyles.			
If adolescent rights holders use opportunities from capacity development, SBC and other awareness raising activities, and an unconditional grant or livelihood training offered through AWLI, then the:			
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES			
Adolescents at risk of child marriage may express themselves and exercise choices regarding marriage and sexual & reproductive health.	Households and communities with adolescents at risk of child marriage may demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviours regarding gender equality.		
INDIVIDUAL LEVEL	FAMILY & COMMUNITY LEVEL	SYSTEM LEVEL	SYSTEM LEVEL
STRATEGIES Support opportunities for the empowerment of adolescent girls through the provision of information and capacity development activities.	PROMOTE SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH SBC ACTIVITIES WHICH STIMULATE DIALOGUE AND RAISE AWARENESS OF THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF EARLY MARRIAGE AND ENDING EDUCATION AMONG FEMALES, MALES, FAMILIES, INFLUENCERS, POLITICAL LEADERS, AND LOCAL CHAMPIONS.	Offer economic support through unconditional cash grants to enhance the probability to sustainably engage in education systems (by increasing attendance in school and for a longer period).	Offer community-based livelihood training to enhance the ability to support themselves.
PROGRAMME COMPONENTS SAFE SPACES AND (IN)FORMAL NETWORKS MINI MEDIA CLUBS COMMUNITY-BASED LIFE SKILLS TRAINING	COMMUNITY DIALOGUES GENDER-SEGREGATED REFLECT CIRCLES	UNCONDITIONAL-CASH GRANTS	COMMUNITY-BASED LIVELIHOOD TRAINING
OUTPUTS Activities promoting girls' education and child rights through counseling, media clubs, and skills development.	Conducting community engagement activities through CDs, FGDs, workshops, RCs, and training facilitators.	Eligible households to receive cash grants in Ghor and Herat provinces.	Vocational education sessions provided to adolescent girls.
MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS			
Individuals are sufficiently supported by peers, family, and community to engage meaningfully.	All stakeholders demonstrate willingness to engage in SCB activities.	Individuals must be responsive to the intervention(s).	

Source: ToR reformulated by the evaluator.

The **process** which should take place for a rights holder to **believe that he or she could take action when responding to the messages about delaying marriage and extending education** is critical to understanding the adolescent model. The logic is that interpersonal communications and interpersonal relations are expected to happen at all levels (individual, family/community, and institutional), and AWLI's contributions will, *in turn*, lead to or influence attitudes, traditional beliefs, and, ultimately behaviour change.⁶⁵ More specifically, **IF** rights holders discuss and reflect on messages (delivered through trusted channels), **THEN** they will be encouraged or and motivated to adopt the new attitudes and practices and change their behaviour (see table below for more specific If-Then statements for the three levels). The results from operationalizing the intermediate outcomes through key informant interviews-KIIs will provide an opportunity for rights holders and duty bearers to share their views about whether broader change has emerged in their constructed reality.

⁶⁵ Theory of self-efficacy from Albert Bandura sourced from: Bandura, A. (1993). Perceived Self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning. *Educational Psychologist*, 28(2), page 117.

Table 3: ToC If-Then statements for three levels.

three levels ⁶⁶		Encouragement for Intervention(s)		Expected Outcome(s)	Assumptions
 INDIVIDUAL	IF	The rights holder [who is at risk of child marriage] receives opportunities through the provision of information and capacity development activities (e.g., life skills training, conflict resolution skills, messages about continuing education, prevention of child marriage),	THEN	The rights holder may express herself and exercise choices regarding marriage and sexual and reproductive health.	The individual rights holder has been exposed to messages about the consequences of early marriage and ending secondary education; and The individual has opportunity to express his/her viewpoints/opinions about the risks and benefits of the messages about early marriage and pursuing educational opportunities.
 FAMILY & COMMUNITY	IF	The duty bearer (parents) and community and religious leaders engage in, and in turn promote a supportive environment, through Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) activities which (i) raise awareness and (ii) stimulate dialogue of the negative consequences of early marriage and ending education among females, males, families, influencers or religious leaders, political leaders, and other local champions,	THEN	The duty bearer parents, and community and religious leaders may demonstrate positive attitudes and favorable behaviours regarding gender equality (includes delaying early marriages and supporting the pursuit of higher education).	A discussion about changing attitudes and/or practices will take place with others (through interpersonal communication).
 INSTITUTIONAL LEVELS	IF	The rights holders and her parents receive economic support through Unconditional Cash Grants to enhance the probability of engaging sustainably in the education system (by supporting the increase in school attendance or and for a longer period of time),	THEN	The rights holder [who is at risk of child marriage] may express herself and have the opportunity to exercise choices regarding her education or her family's livelihood.	The rights holder with an Unconditional Cash Grant has a greater likelihood of making her own decisions (with her family) regarding health care, education, and lifestyle.

⁶⁶ The three analytical levels, individual, community, and institutional levels, are used to measure AWL's effects on programme participants

three levels ⁶⁶		Encouragement for Intervention(s)		Expected Outcome(s)	Assumptions
	IF	The rights holder receives training and support to enhance the ability to support herself (or family).	THEN	The rights holder [who is at risk of child marriage] may exercise choices in her livelihood through an entrepreneurial activity.	The rights holder with Community -based Livelihood Training has the markets and support to sustain the entrepreneurial activity.

As noted in the table, the above processes through which attitudinal and behaviour change are expected to take place cannot occur without meeting the underlying **assumptions**. At the individual rights holder level, it is assumed that not only are the messages from AWLI sufficiently persuasive and effective (including the consequences of early marriage and limiting education), but that the person experiencing the programme also can use that information by expressing his/her viewpoints/opinions with others (through interpersonal communication). Similarly, at the community level, duty bearer stakeholders and Community and Religious Leaders will demonstrate positive attitudes/behaviour after engaging in interpersonal communication. Finally, it is assumed that the rights holder, and her family (with an Unconditional Cash Grant) has an experience, and therefore a greater likelihood, of making her own decisions (with her family) regarding health care, education, or/and lifestyle. It is also assumed that the rights holder has a market and support to sustain the entrepreneurial activity.

B.3.1.2 Evaluation Matrix

The Evaluation Matrix, located below, serves as an overview and framework that was used to guide the Evaluation Team throughout the process of measurement, data collection, and data analysis, and it is intended to show the linkages between the evaluation questions, the sources of data, and the analytical process that the team used. It includes the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, each KEQ from the ToR, the evidence required to answer the KEQs, indicators, sources of information, data analysis, and the relative reliability of the information gathered.

Table 4: Evaluation Matrix

OECD Criteria					
RELEVANCE	Evaluation Questions				
	Overall Q1. Assessment of alignment of the AWLI interventions to the local context as well as national strategies and policies of Afghanistan and UNICEF, especially among the most deprived sections of the population, including validating existing adolescent programming ToC.				
	Q1.1 To what extent does the programme design and implementation fit the local context, including the conflict context, and what measures were taken to adapt to changes in the context?				
	Q1.2 Is the programme aligned with the national strategies and policies of Afghanistan and the UNICEF Global Strategic Plan 2018-2021?				
	Q1.3 To what extent does the programme address and meet the needs of adolescent girls and their families, especially those that are OoS?				
VALIDITY	Evidence required to answer the question	Indicators	Sources of information	Data Analysis	Availability and Reliability of Data
	Policy and guidance from UNICEF (Strategic Plan 2018-2021)	Relevance of child marriage in global mandate	Strategic Plan Internal Reports on how security, and other factors, have impacted project activities	Alignment with the national strategies and policies, including the conflict context, and what measures were taken to adapt to changes in the context.	Highly reliable
	Available policy instruments from IRoA				Reliable.
	Evidence examining the relevance of programme design	Qualitative indicator: Convergence in perceptions about relevance of the programme and its ability to meet the needs of adolescent girls and their families, especially those that are OoS.	KIIs with key stakeholders, namely IPs, UNICEF, IRoA	Content analysis of qualitative data examining relevance.	Very reliable with triangulation.

EFFECTIVENESS	Evaluation Questions									
	Overall Q2. The extent to which the programme's intended results were achieved at the output level.									
	Q 2.1 To what extent did UNICEF deliver on its intended outputs?									
	Q 2.2 What were the major factors influencing the successful delivery of outputs?									
	Q 2.3 To what extent were the programme interventions taken up by target programme beneficiaries?									
	Q 2.4 Which factors impeded programme delivery and take-up and how could these have been overcome?									
Q 2.5 Did the programme effectively manage conflict-related risks?										
Evidence required to answer the question		Indicators	Sources of information	Data Analysis	Availability and Reliability of Data					
Internal monitoring documents of all programme activities from UNICEF from 2015 to 2020		<p>Extent to which planned activities were completed from 2015 to 2020.</p> <p>Input indicators - describe what goes into the programme or project, such as the planned number of girls to be trained, the amount of money spent, the quantity of information material distributed, etc.</p> <p>Output indicators - programme activities, such as the number of people trained, the number of vulnerable girls, boys, women and men reached, number of Unconditional Cash Grants distributed, etc.</p>	M&E data IP reports Donor Reports	Comparison between planned activities and documented achievements.	Very reliable with triangulation.					
Factors influencing service delivery		Qualitative indicator: Convergence in perceptions about working context in three provinces;	KIIs with key stakeholders, namely IPs, UNICEF, IRoA	Content analysis of qualitative data examining factors influencing the effectiveness of	Somewhat reliable, but with triangulation, the quality of					

		<p>Qualitative indicator: Convergence in perceptions about how well interventions were embraced by all programme beneficiaries (e.g., adolescents, parents, community/religious leaders).</p> <p>Qualitative indicator: Convergence on risk mitigation techniques used.</p>	partners at provincial levels.	programme components.	information ought to increase.
	Target programme participant behaviour change	<p>Examples of change in positive/negative perceptions of parents and religious leaders towards child marriage, girl's education, and gender equality; and</p> <p>Examples of perceived change in adolescent girl's knowledge about their rights to choose to continue their education and to marry later in life.</p>	KIIs with sampled programme participants.	Content analysis of qualitative data.	Somewhat reliable, but with triangulation, the quality of information ought to increase.
EFFICIENCY	Evaluation Questions				
	Overall Q3. The extent to which the programme's outputs were delivered in a timely and cost-efficient manner				
	Q 3.1 Were the programme outputs achieved according to the work plan and timeline?				
	Q 3.3 Were the programme outputs achieved according to the budget and cost-efficiently?				
	Q 3.3 What were the major factors influencing the efficient delivery of outputs?				
	Evidence required to answer the question	Indicators	Sources of information	Data Analysis	Availability and Reliability of Data
	Summary of key programme milestones mapped on a timeline	Qualitative evidence: Mapping of activities over time and compare these scenarios with key results.	M&E data IP reports Donor Reports Programme Budget KIIs with IPs & UNICEF	Comparison between planned activities and documented achievements; and Content analysis of qualitative data.	Very reliable with triangulation.

	Factors influencing service delivery	Qualitative indicator: Convergence in perceptions about the working context in three to five provinces.	KIIs with key stakeholders, namely IPs, UNICEF, IRoA at provincial levels.	Content analysis of qualitative data examining factors influencing the efficiency and timeliness of service delivery.	Somewhat reliable, but with triangulation with budget data, the quality of information ought to improve.
SUSTAINABILITY	Evaluation Questions				
	Overall Q4. The extent to which the AWLI interventions can be scaled up, and the capacity of Government partners to assume the responsibility of carrying these initiatives forward.				
	Q 4.1 What strategies and interventions of the programme are most likely to be scaled up or sustained after the implementation of the programme?				
	Q 4.2 What would facilitate or impede the scale-up of the AWLI intervention?				
	Q 4.3 Have beneficiaries indicated any interest in seeing the programme scaled?				
	Evidence required to answer the question	Indicators	Sources of information	Data Analysis	Availability and Reliability of Data
	Identification of targeted communities where programme implementation took place and where they continue to be implemented	Qualitative evaluation evidence where targeted communities have innovated and even expanded the scope and scale of programme activities (if possible).	KIIs with community leaders, parents, and programme participants (adolescent girls and boys).	Content analysis of qualitative data discussing the continuation of activities.	Somewhat reliable, but with triangulation, the findings could be solid.
	Evidence examining the distribution of Unconditional Cash Grant.	Data secured from Post Distribution Monitoring [PDM] describing the modality.	KIIs with: (1) IP who oversaw cash distribution; and (2) sampled programme participants (if possible); and	Review of PDM data, cash modalities, and content analysis of the likelihood of the cash grant supporting the continuation of girls' education.	Somewhat reliable, but with triangulation, the findings could be sound.

		(3) Review of results from the PMD database.	This also overlaps with Impact.		
	Evidence examining the Community -based Livelihood Training component in Samangan.	Qualitative evaluation evidence where targeted girls have innovated and flourished in their enterprise endeavor.	KIIs with: (1) IP responsible for this component; and (2) sampled programme participants (if possible).	Review of livelihood modalities, and likelihood of girl's economic empowerment. This also overlaps with Impact. Unsure if this data is available.	
COHERENCE	Evaluation Questions				
	Overall Q5. The extent to which other interventions with similar objectives complement or contradict the programme and vice versa.				
	How compatible was the AWLI programme with other interventions aimed at:				
	5.1 achieving girl's empowerment?				
	5.2 increasing school attendance?				
	5.3 reducing child marriage?				
	5.4 Please include internationally led, nationally-led, and local grassroots interventions. What synergies, linkages, contradictions, duplications, exist?				
	Evidence required to answer the question	Indicators	Sources of information	Data Analysis	Availability and Reliability of Data
	Policy and guidance regarding global, regional, ⁶⁷ and internal agendas.	Patterns / trends in other institutions' experiences with End Child Marriage interventions, including UNICEF.	Internet search on key platforms (including but not limited to social media, foundations, bilateral organizations)	Content analysis of qualitative data from KIIs from health, protection, nutrition, and gender UNICEF sections, looking at programmatic synergies.	Highly reliable
	Evidence of other strategic interventions developed to end child marriage	The interventions to be identified must meet a specific criterion, so that the findings are relevant and applicable to the AWLI programme.	See above. KIIs with UNICEF Afghanistan staff and partners, especially	Triangulating this evidence with a recent Portfolio	Highly reliable

⁶⁷ This refers to other ongoing national (if available) programmes to reduce or end Child Marriage/early marriage.

		regarding the existence of programmes advancing adolescent girl's empowerment.	Evaluation ⁶⁸ and social media platforms.		
IMPACT	<p>Evaluation Questions</p> <p>Overall Q6. The extent to which the project has increased secondary school enrolment of out of school adolescent girls and changed social behaviours and attitudes towards child marriage.</p> <p>Q 6.1 What difference has the project made in changing perceptions of the target groups on child marriage? Have they delayed marriage by raising awareness on the rights of adolescent girls to education, or for other reasons?</p> <p>Q 6.2 Has the project made a difference in adolescent girls' lives by increasing their ability to make life choices?</p> <p>Q 6.3 How successful has the combination of social mobilization activities and cash transfers been on increasing secondary enrolment rates of adolescent girls and changing social behaviour towards child marriage vis-à-vis social mobilization interventions alone?⁶⁹</p> <p>Q 6.4 How has raising awareness on the harmful effects of child marriage contributed to adolescent girls being able to attend school and subsequently enhanced their chances of delaying marriage?⁷⁰</p> <p>Q 6.5 What were the effects, intended or unintended, that the programme had on sources of tension and sources of cohesion in the 20 districts where it worked, and how were these monitored over time?</p> <p>N.B. While the evaluation may not be able to comprehensively answer this overarching Q6, due to limited data, nuanced self-reported insights about perceived changes (in the family and the community) will be gathered through the use of qualitative methods. Specifically, the KIIs will generate specific examples of how the programme has changed perceptions about early marriage and the importance of continuing girl's education.⁷¹</p>				
	<p>Evidence required to answer the question</p> <p>Communities where the programme has had strong effects on families and community leadership.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <p>Qualitative intermediate outcome /impact indicators - describe the actual change in conditions, such as self-reported changed attitudes</p>	<p>Sources of information</p> <p>KIIs with IPs, community leaders, parents, and programme</p>	<p>Data Analysis</p> <p>Content analysis of qualitative data from KIIs regarding (a) use of</p>	<p>Availability and Reliability of Data</p> <p>Reliable, especially with triangulation.</p>

⁶⁸ Konterra Group (2020). Adolescents in Afghanistan: A Portfolio Evaluation with a Gender Lens (2015–2019) Evaluation commissioned by the UNICEF Afghanistan Country Office, Hermania Majoor (Team Leader) Belén Díaz (International Evaluator) ATR Consulting.

⁶⁹ As noted under B3, this question could not be addressed comprehensively, as the programme participants who received an unconditional cash grant were not exposed to social mobilization activities. Given that programme participants who received an unconditional cash grant did not take part in social mobilization activities, this evaluation cannot contribute to institutional learning about the complex relationships linking financial incentives, education, and perceptions on child marriage/girls' empowerment.

⁷⁰ There is also a lack of evidence that can prove that a number of marriages have been delayed or reduced and that there have been relative increases in the number of adolescent girls attending secondary school.

⁷¹ These examples will not be representative of the entire programme. Also note that adolescents are not as articulate compared to adults, and so their "stories" may not be very detailed. Finally, given the sensitivity of the topic, some interviewees may not be willing to discuss private matters; Many do not even discuss such issues with their parents or guardians much less with a researcher who is not known to them. As noted in the limitations section, given the need for informed consent, some interviewee responses may not be very explicit or elaborate.

	<p>(as a result of AWL's training) may have changed their knowledge and practices. Given that this type of information <i>may be difficult to secure</i>, alternative qualitative evidence will be gathered where sampled respondents must give examples of: (a) how they used the information from the programme; and (b) how the programme has changed their perceptions about early marriage and the importance of continuing girl's education.</p> <p>Qualitative evaluation evidence where targeted communities have given examples of how the programme has changed their behaviours (if possible).</p>	<p>participants (adolescent girls and boys).</p> <p>KIIs with IPs, community leaders, parents, and programme participants (adolescent girls).</p>	<p>knowledge provided by the programme; and (b) perceived changes in their perceptions about girl's education and early marriages.</p> <p>Examples where action took place, and especially where (a) girl's education was continued; and (b) early marriages have been delayed or ended.</p>	
	<p>Qualitative data of the effects of community engagement in social mobilization activities, community-based Community -based Livelihood Training, and cash transfer.</p>	<p>KIIs with adolescent girls who received an Unconditional Cash Grant results in Herat and those who did not in the other two provinces.</p>	<p>Comparison of qualitative data between those with a grant and those only exposed to social mobilization activities.</p>	<p>Reliable.</p>

SECTION C

C. METHODOLOGY

A mixed methods design was adopted, leveraging both qualitative and quantitative evidence to answer the KEQs (a noted above in the evaluation matrix). Essentially, the main types of information sources collected were:

1. Documents which included pre-existing qualitative and quantitative information based on the existing logframe activity, outputs, and baseline data;
2. Existing M&E data, Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) and Results Assessment Module (RAM); and
3. Primary data from key informant interviews (KIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) at community levels.

C.1 Secondary Data Collection: Documents Review & Use of Monitoring Data

The main reference documents and other evidence are listed below.

1. Theoretical documents regarding perceptions about early marriage and the promotion of education, and ;
2. Relevant national policies and legislation;
3. Secondary data from DHS and populations estimates;
4. Monitoring data from Implementing Partners (IPs) regarding programme outreach;
5. UNICEF internal documents (i.e., Strategic Plans, donor reports, budgets, IP reports);
6. Information about the Global agenda to End Child Marriage;
7. Data from PDM and RAM; and
8. United Nations standards guiding this practice to the United Nations Evaluation Group's (UNEG) Evaluation Norms and Standards UN-Women's Guide: **Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: An Assessment of Gender Mainstreaming in United Nations Operational Activities for Development.**

The drivers of early marriage and the discontinuation of education among adolescent females were derived from research conducted in Afghanistan, and to some extent, Southeast Asia (i.e., Bangladesh and India). This research was purposefully selected to better understand the profile of the target population, adolescent females aged 12 to 18. The Team Leader also reviewed policy documents and past UNICEF internal reports and budgets to clarify the policy and operational context in which AWLI was implemented from 2015 to 2020. This substantive information contributed greatly to the relevance and efficiency sections of this report. To assess coherence, the Team Leader identified any relevant documents discussing the design, implementation, and evaluation of any programme which was part of the global movement to end child marriage as part of female empowerment (e.g., Global Programme to End Child Marriage). Given the dearth of such information, the Team Leader asked key informants for any references that they may have known about. In addition to documents, the Team Leader searched for any relevant data from the internet (i.e., websites, social media, etc.) to add to the overall data set. Finally, it should be known that the existing M&E data, PDM⁷² and RAM⁷³, was an additional information source used to triangulate other internal UNICEF resources and substantiate evaluation findings. Annex 3 includes resources consulted.

⁷² This database included responses from 230 persons who could comment on their experiences while receiving the unconditional cash grant.

⁷³ This results management system includes several indicators for assessing AWLI's progress. While the information was not perfect, it provided an overview of changes in the operating context.

C.2 Primary Data Collection

C.2.1 COMMUNITY SAMPLING & SELECTION

The programme covered five provinces with high rates of child marriage practices, namely: (1) Nangarhar; (2) Samangan; (3) Ghor; (4) Herat; and (5) Farah (see figure 1). **Only three, out of the five, provinces were selected** for data collection, and the justification for this decision was that there was pressure to complete this evaluation from the donor. Despite the need to expedite the evaluation, however, the logic guiding province selection was to have a balanced regional representation. Therefore, one province in all three regions was selected.⁷⁴ Given that there were three provinces located in the Western Region (i.e., Herat, Farah, Ghor), Herat was prioritized, as it was the only province with the Unconditional Cash Grant component. Herat also had the highest population density, compared to the other two provinces in the Western Region (Farah and Ghor). All provinces had to be safe for the data collection teams, and Ghor and Farah, at the time were very hard to reach. The selected three provinces and corresponding districts are outlined in table 5.

Table 5: Selected provinces and districts for data collection.

Province	Districts
Nangarhar	(1) Jalalabad; (2) Surkhrud; and (3) Kama. Jalalabad is mainly peri-urban, and Surkhrud lacks an industry and is isolated; Kama has a notable Internally Displaced Populations (IDPs).
Samangan	(1) Roi-do-ab ⁷⁵ , (2) Dara-i-soof-i-payan ⁷⁶ , and (3) Dara-i-soof-i-bala. Roi-do-ab is mainly peri-urban and has an industry, and Dara-i-soof-i-bala is isolated. Although the three districts were sampled, the national research team (QARA) worked primarily in Feroz Nakhcher district, where it was safe. More information about this issue is discussed in the limitations section.
Herat	(1) Herat, (2) Enjil ⁷⁷ , and (3) Karrukh. Herat is mainly peri-urban, and Enjil has a number of IDPs, and it experienced floods in 2019. Karrukh is noteworthy for its agricultural production.

At the sub-district level, the sampling strategy was purposive, as QARA, the national research firm, worked with the IPs to determine the sub-district communities which were most likely to have had a high exposure to programme activities. See annex 4 for more details regarding the selection criteria used for provinces, sub-districts, and individuals.

C.2.2 STAKEHOLDER SAMPLE

The following stakeholders were consulted to gain a better understanding about the progress toward objectives, programme relevance, effectiveness of services delivered, lessons learned, recommendations for improvements, and other information required to respond to the KEQs (i.e., End Child Marriage interventions ongoing in nationally, etc.).⁷⁸ A total of **five different** stakeholder groups were consulted, and each had their own unique qualitative interview guide or focus guide.

1. **UNICEF:** UNICEF staff (Girls Education, Health, Nutrition, Protection, and Procurement/Supply);
2. **UN & NGO Family working on End Child Marriage:** UNFPA and Aga Khan Foundation;

⁷⁴ For example, there was one province located in the North (i.e., Samangan) and one province in the East (i.e., Nangarhar) selected. Given that there were three provinces located in the Western Region (i.e., Herat, Farah, Ghor), Herat was prioritized, as it was the only province with the Unconditional Cash Grant component.

⁷⁵ Coalmines are the source of income.

⁷⁶ Dara-i-soof-i-payan does not have a safe space.

⁷⁷ Includes Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and experienced floods in 2019.

⁷⁸ Prior to data collection, the Team Leader engaged in a field trip to Kabul and Herat, for which the selection criterion was: (1) free of security concerns; (2) unconditional grant distribution; and (3) the availability of programme participants, since the closure in 2020. She engaged with stakeholders during this field trip, namely UNICEF, WASSA-IP, and community members who have been exposed to the programme (a. female adolescent programme participants-aged 14-18).

3. **IRoA:** at Central and Provincial levels (Education, Public Health, and MoWA⁷⁹);
4. **IPs:** Action Aid and three consortium members; and
5. **The community level:** There are four different groups:
 - a. Female adolescent programme participants;
 - b. Male adolescents;
 - c. Mothers and fathers; and
 - d. Community and Religious Leaders (Imams and Mullahs), especially those who received training through AWLI.

It should be noted that during the Inception Phase (from 27 February to 6 March 2021), the Team Leader traveled to Kabul (which included a field trip to Herat). The selection criterion for visiting this particular province was that it: (1) was free of security concerns; (2) had the Unconditional Cash Grant component; and (3) the programme participants were accessible since the programme's closure in December 2020. The Team Leader engaged with many stakeholders during this field trip, namely: (1) UNICEF, (2) WASSA-IP programme management, (4) IP service providers (i.e., community facilitators, Safe Space Counsellor, Mini Media Club Facilitator); (4) and female adolescent programme participants (aged 14-18), among others. The KIIs conducted by the Team Leader are presented in the table below. Roughly a little over one-half of the sample was female. Annex 5, List of Stakeholders Interviewed in Kabul, Herat, & Remotely, includes the data collection method (interview-in person or remote or FGD), the organization, and gender disaggregated information.

Table 6: Qualitative data stakeholder groups for the team leader.

Stakeholder Groups	Total Persons Interviewed by the Team Leader	Gender	
		Male ♂	Female ♀
KIIs/FGDs with UNICEF staff in Kabul and Herat (Gender and C4D cross-cutting issues staff, Social Policy, Evaluation & Research-SPEAR Section, AWLI manager, Adolescent Health, Education, Nutrition, Protection, and Procurement & Supply); and Remote KIIs with Senior Management.	18	4	14
Remote KIIs with UNFPA (United Nations partner) and an NGO institution (Aga Khan Foundation)	2	1	1
FGD with IRoA representatives in Kabul from the MPh	3	3	0
FGD with IRoA representatives at Provincial Education Directorate	4	4	0
KIIs with IP stakeholders: OWH, ECW, and ActionAid Afghanistan; and FGD with WASSA	9	8	1
FGD with IP service providers from WASSA (i.e., community advocates and facilitators).	8	6	2
FGD with adolescent girls (aged 17 and 18) who experienced Safe Space and their counsellor	4	0	4
FGDs with adolescent girls (aged 16 and 17) who experienced Mini Media Club	6	0	6
Sub Total	54	26	28
		48%	52%

⁷⁹ The Team Leader made multiple attempts to meet with representatives from MoWA but was unsuccessful.

C.2.2.1 Community-based Qualitative Interviews

The table below presents the number of persons who participated in qualitative data collection by information source (by province and district). All sampled participants had been exposed to or taken part in at least one activity, namely: (1) Community Dialogues; (2) Reflection Circles; (3) Mini-Media Clubs; (4) Community-based Life Skills sessions; and (5) Unconditional Cash Grant [only for Herat]; (6) Community-based Livelihood Training [only for Samangan]. Again, annex 4, Communities & Individuals Selection Criteria, presents 3 more details regarding the selection of individuals. In addition, due to the security situation in Samangan, two districts were not accessible. QARA conducted interviews for one district by telephone, and the **district of Feroz Nakhcher replaced Dara-i-soof-i-payan**. While the sample sizes for each data collection method and are shown in the table below, annex 6, Qualitative Sample At a Glance, includes the overall sample sizes for each province, by stakeholder group (i.e., adolescent girl, boy, community leader, religious leader, gender disaggregated data, and the sample size of respondents for each programme component.

Table 7: Total number of sampled programme participants at community level.

Methods	Information Sources	HERAT			SAMANGAN			NANGAHAR			TOTAL
		Herat City	Enjil	Karukh	Feroz Nakhche r	Roi-dab	Dara-i-soof-bala	Jalalabad	Surkhurd	Kam a	
FGDs	Implementation Partners (IPs)	5 people			3 people			6 people			11 (males) (3 females)
	Religious Leaders	0	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	8 (all male)
Qualitative Interviews	Community Leaders	1	1	1	2	0	0	1	1	1	8 (all male)
	Young females ⁸⁰	11	7	9	19	2	2	10	8	8	76 (all female)
	Total females	27			23			16			
	Young males	2	3	2	3	1	1	4	2	2	20 (all male)
	Parents-Mothers	4	3	5	7	1	1	2	3	3	29 (all female)
	Sister	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 (female)
	Parents-Fathers	4	4	2	3	1	1	1	2	2	20 (all male)
	Sub Total (KIs without FGDs with IPs)	22	20	20	36	6	5	19	17	17	162 KIs
											M 56 (35%) F 107 (66%)
	Grand Total (with IPs)										162+14= 176 M 67 (41%)

While the question of sampling (separately) persons with disabilities (PWDs) has been raised, it is important to understand that in addition to sampling community residents and families, this evaluation took deliberate steps to gather views from adolescents under age 18. The individuals in this age group, which is comprised of 22% (n=36) of the entire sample (n=162), may be categorized as “vulnerable”, as all those interviewed (male and female) were at risk of violence, abuse, sexual exploitation, early and forced marriage.

⁸⁰ All subjects were coded as “young”, and they had ages which ranged from 11 to 33 (females) and 17 to 40 (males).

C.2.3 METHODS USED

C.2.3.1 Focus Group Discussions with IPs

QARA conducted all focus group discussions with three IPs (ECW, OHW, and WASSA). These discussions included three to six persons, including (i) the Programme Manager, (ii) Programme Monitor, and (iii) a Facilitator who had direct contact with communities. The FGDs generated strong, in-depth, and detailed information about: (i) targeting of programme communities/participants, (ii) strategies used to engage the community residents (Community Leaders and Religious Leaders, families, and residents); (iii) the level of frequency of these engagements; (iv) how they persuaded residents to change their attitudes and practices regarding early marriage and promoting girl's education (including what was done right/not right in implementation); (v) challenges experienced; and (vi) their suggestions for future programmes. A total of 11 males and 3 females took part in FGDs. The FDGs were lengthy, taking up to two hours.

C.2.3.2 KIIs

QARA also conducted qualitative interviews with Community/Religious Leaders, parents, and adolescents. The scope of these interviews was to understand the perspectives about programme, namely its design, satisfaction with its activities, what messages were understood and used (with other family members and or community residents), how this programme could be improved in the future. Annex 7 includes the Data Collection Instruments for each stakeholder group interviewed. This includes:

(1) adolescent girls; (2) adolescent girls & parents who were recipients of Unconditional Cash Grants; (3) adolescent boys; (4) parents; (5) UNICEF-Management; (6) UNICEF Sector Offices; (7) IRoA-Central and Provincial; (8) IPs; and (9) community & religious leaders. The qualitative interview guides for all stakeholder groups were drafted in English, provided to QARA for translation into Dari and Pashto languages, and then pretested.

Mothers and fathers were interviewed separately to understand the differences in attitudes, perceptions, needs, and experiences by sex, thereby creating a more comfortable situation for sharing ideas and opinions. The key element was to ensure that the data was accurate, thereby reflecting what the current thinking about child marriage and the promotion of education for that province or district. These KIIs also covered satisfaction with the programme activities, perceptions about the appropriateness of the programme's design, its effectiveness, challenges, and perceived impact. The Team Leader had also pretested four statements measuring sentiments about early marriage and promoting education among girls. Females represented 66% of the overall sample (n=162). The KIIs did not take more than 45 minutes.

C.3 Analysis

The Team Leader conducted an iterative, inductive approach to the data analysis. First, the document review relied on thematic narrative analysis for highlighting key themes identified (programme evolution over time, triangulation of programme outputs) and connect these elements to the relevant issues and key evaluation questions. Second, the reformulated ToC was **validated**, examining whether attitudes and behaviour about delaying or ending child marriage and extending education occurred. In the event that the data indicated positive attitudes and practices regarding these key areas, the Team Leader noted if overall assumptions about the context were also met to generate a plausible argument for programme contribution to desired results. This guiding reasoning, or a **contribution analysis**, confirmed that the programme had, indeed, contributed to desired results.⁸¹ Third, descriptive statistics for (i) geographic location; (ii) age of programme participants; and (iii) gender were drawn from several sources of quantitative data, namely the donor reports, the IP's database, and UNICEF M&E data. The qualitative dataset was also sufficiently large to produce its own descriptive statistics. See annex 8 for the List of Qualitative Interviews undertaken in Nangahar, Samangan, and Herat provinces.

⁸¹ The analysis is specifically, a Contribution Analysis of Direct Influence, which includes reviewing and reformulating a ToC's expected outputs and intermediate outcomes, and then observing whether the immediate results resulting from the programme were consistent with the ToC in light of other influencing factors. Mayne, J. (2008). Contribution analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect. Institutional Learning and Change Brief No. 7.

The qualitative analysis process used three steps to the thematic analysis to emerge, including: (i) creating a codebook which linked codes directly to the KEQs and the assumptions of the ToC; and (ii) reviewing elements or factors influencing programme effectiveness; (iii) collecting examples where impact took place (using emotion, value, and action child codes); and (iv) noting where suggested improvements could occur for future programme implementation. The List of Codes Under Each Evaluation Criteria is available in annex 9. Finally, the results from the statements collected at the end of all qualitative interviews were mostly positive, which may be encouraging. However, these results did not meet the condition of linearity (for quantitative data), and so the information was not used in this report.

C.4 Ethical Considerations

C.4.1 UNEG ETHICAL STANDARDS & OFFICIAL APPROVAL

The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation⁸², and UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis.⁸³ All engagement with participants younger than 18 years of age was based on the principles outlined in the International Charter for Ethical Research Involving Children.⁸⁴ Before any data collection began, the evaluation protocols, instruments, and tools underwent an ethical review with HML Institutional Review Board (IRB), which is an autonomous committee, authorized by the United States Office for Human Research Protections within the United States Department of Health and Human Services (IRB 00001211). This entity issued ethics approval (**HML IRB Review #366AFGH21**) to collect data from children under age 18 who were expected to contribute to the evaluation. See annex 10 for a copy of the Letter for Ethical Approval from HML IRB.

C.4.2 ETHICAL SAFEGUARDS USED

Briefly, informed consent was collected before initiating any data collection. The stakeholders were shown respect in the following manner:

1. The purpose of the evaluation was clearly explained, and it was made clear that there is no “right” or “wrong” answer;
2. All participants could verbally agree to take part in an interview and could stop the interview at any time;
3. Those who were younger than 18 years of age were required to sign a “child assent form”, and their parents had to sign a “parental consent form”. See annex 11 for the Parental Permission Form and Child Assent Form, used to interview adolescents under the age of 18;
4. The respondent was also informed that all information provided would be kept confidential and would not be shared with anyone outside of the evaluation team (from enumerators up through the evaluation team leader);
5. The data was combined with other data and then used to draw conclusions and recommendations; and
6. All documentation was stored and transferred in password-protected files.

The annex 12, Description of Ethical Safeguards, delineates the team’s adherence to UNEG Norms and Standards, including (1) Preparing for data collection; (2) Data Collection; and (3) Quality Assurance Mechanisms to Enhance Data Credibility.

C.4.3 EVALUATOR OBLIGATIONS

The Team Leader and researchers from QARA also fulfilled their ethical obligations, in that they were independent with no conflict of interest, as they were not involved in AWLI’s design or implementation. The team was also impartial or had no vested interest in generating positive or negative evaluation findings. Finally, when there was a notable, emergent theme of adolescent females engaging in self-harm **in the past** (reported through KIIs), the Team Leader showed accountability and transparency by drawing attention to this occurrence to UNICEF staff.

⁸² United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation. (2016).

⁸³ UNICEF (2015). UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis.

⁸⁴ Graham, A., Powell, M., Taylor, N., Anderson, D. & Fitzgerald, R. (2013). Ethical Research Involving Children. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti; UNEG (2016). Norms; UNEG (2020). Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation; and Powell, M.A.; Taylor, N.; Fitzgerald, R.; Graham, A.; & Anderson, D. (2013). Ethical Research Involving Children, Innocenti Publications UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti, Florence.

C.5 Limitations

This evaluation had numerous limitations which are explained in this section.

C.5.1 SECURITY

The **security** situation in Afghanistan is dynamic and constantly evolving in many provinces. The use of different levels of evaluation team members to access different regions and stakeholder levels partially mitigates these security risks. For example, the Team Leader conducted interviews in Kabul and Herat, while QARA carried out the interviews in the provincial capitals, districts, villages. In spite of careful planning to visit certain places, however, QARA faced a major challenge in the Samangan Province, where there was insecurity in all three sampled districts. To mitigate the effects of this challenge, QARA conducted face-to-face interviews in the Feroz Nakhcher district, which was a district that was not sampled but was safe. Over 35 villages in Feruz Nakhcher district were reviewed. Another mitigation strategy carried out by QARA was to conduct telephone interviews (in place of face-to-face interviews) with at least five to six participants in the two districts which were inaccessible (e.g., Roi-do-ab and Dara-i-soof-i-bala). **Even with these efforts, however, the data was not sufficient to test the ToC and link programme results between: (1) Community-based Livelihood Training (and the ensuing entrepreneurial activity) and (2) a rights holder's ability to make lifestyle choices.**

C.5.2 TIME CONSTRAINTS

Due to pressing requirements from the donor, the evaluation process had limited time, and so only three provinces were visited. There is a risk in that the data collected does not represent the entire programme reality. However, consultations with UNICEF stakeholders virtually ensured that a balanced view is reflected in the final evaluation report.

C.5.3 PROGRAMME CLOSURE

While the programme ended roughly three months before the data collection for the Summative Evaluation was initiated, there were a handful of programme participants who experienced some difficulties remembering the frequency of Community Dialogue and Reflection Group activities. QARA reconfirmed this data with the IP to reconcile the difference when this limitation was noted.

C.5.4 STAFF TURNOVER

The ACO is categorized as a Non-Family Duty Station, which means that due to security reasons, family members are not authorized to travel the office. While staff are allowed Rest and Recuperation (R&R) travel to ameliorate work-life balance and limit the stress derived from working for extended periods, many staff do not wish to work in Afghanistan for long periods of time (more than three years).⁸⁵ To partially mitigate this limitation, the Team Leader: (1) interviewed four different managers responsible for programmatic decisions; (2) interviewed national staff working in multiple sectors (Adolescent Health, Education, C4D, Child Protection, and Nutrition); and (3) sought different information sources, including Donor Reports and Annual Reports to develop an understanding about how expected outputs occurred. In spite of these efforts, however, process details about implementation during AWL's early phase (before and during 2018) were insufficient for reporting.

C.5.5 SELECTION BIAS

Since the IPs helped QARA to identify programme participants, it is possible that the qualitative sample may have included individuals who had mostly positive attitudes and reflections about the programme's activities. To mitigate

⁸⁵ CF/EXD/2011-001 (2011). UNICEF's Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure, UNICEF's Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure.

this limitation, the Team Leader provided QARA with the sampling framework that outlined a specific number of KIIs with individuals who had to fulfill specific criteria (age, gender, and programme participation in at least two different activities).

When QARA arrived in Herat to interview families who received the Unconditional Cash Grant, it was discovered that these families had not been exposed to any SBC activities. This limitation therefore did not permit a two-group comparison of (i) those who had only participated in SBC; (ii) with those who had received a grant and participated in SBC activities. Hence, one of the impact related KEQs could not be addressed as planned.

C.5.6 LIMITATIONS IN DATA ELABORATION

Adolescents typically are not as articulate compared to adults, and so their “stories” may not be very detailed. This, combined with the fact that the topics of early marriage and continuing education are perceived as very private and sensitive topics, resulted in a small proportion of interviewees who were not willing to engage at length with QARA researchers. To mitigate this concern, the extended protocol used made interviewees comfortable, ensuring that their voices were being heard and their values respected. Indeed, in some of the transcripts, adolescent and young females disclosed that they had never discussed issues related to early marriage with anyone (including their parents, caretakers, and siblings), yet they were comfortable enough to share their experiences and perceptions with QARA researchers.

C.5.7 DATA REPRESENTATIVENESS

Examples garnered through qualitative methods are not to be considered representative of the entire programme. Rather, data analysis was completed after substantive saturation had been achieved.⁸⁶

C.5.8 TRANSLATIONS

This included a two-step process. First, data was collected in Dari and Pashto and then transcribed. From the transcription, the text was translated into English. This data then underwent a lengthy quality assurance process.

⁸⁶ Saturation is used in qualitative research as a criterion before discontinuing data collection and/or analysis. Its origins lie in grounded theory (Glaser, B.G., & Strauss, A.L., (1967). The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research. Chicago: Aldine.

SECTION D

D. KEY FINDINGS

D.1 RELEVANCE⁸⁷

OVERARCHING QUESTION: Assessment of alignment of the AWLI interventions to the local context as well as national strategies and policies of Afghanistan and UNICEF, especially among the most deprived sections of the population, including validating existing adolescent programming ToC.

Sub Question

Is the programme aligned with the national strategies and policies of Afghanistan and the UNICEF Global Strategic Plan 2018-2021?

D.1.1 ALIGNMENT WITH THE NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND POLICIES OF AFGHANISTAN AND UNICEF STRATEGIES

FINDING 1	The programme aligns with key national strategies, and AWLI's design emanates from a comprehensive analysis of national priorities at the provincial levels and regional research trends in early marriages. The programme is also consistent with UNICEF's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan and 2014-2017 Gender Action Plan.
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AWLI's objectives, ending child marriage and continuing girl's education, were (and continue to be), aligned with the national strategies and ratified policy instruments (See text box 1), including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The programme is also consistent with the National Action Plan to Eliminate Early and Child Marriage in Afghanistan.⁸⁸ For example, at the Consensus Conference, it was noted that early marriage was a harmful practice that needed to be reversed, "An assemblage of different harmful practices and family structure, cultural and economic factors influence the decision of parents in a family to determine whether or not a girl marries at a young age, without the girl being part of the very decision that will change her life."⁸⁹

The selection of AWLI's outreach to the five specific provinces was deliberate, based on the data secured from the 2007–2008 and 2011–2012 National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment, which demonstrated where the prevalence of child marriage was the highest.⁹⁰ Additionally, research in the Asian region showed that "Afghanistan has seen insufficient improvements in important gender-equity issues such as female child marriage, despite substantial and growing governmental efforts to improve the status of women in the country."⁹¹ This research prompted a multi-country project to reduce vulnerability of adolescents and increase their autonomy over decisions impacting their lives with support with funding from the IKEA foundation in 13 districts of four provinces.⁹²

⁸⁷ Assessment of alignment of the AWLI interventions to the local context as well as national strategies and policies of Afghanistan and UNICEF, especially among the most deprived sections of the population, including validating existing adolescent programming ToC.

⁸⁸ United Nations (2017). National Action Plan (NAP) to Eliminate Early and Child Marriage in Afghanistan.

⁸⁹ UNFPA (2016). Consensus Conference for the National Action Plan for prevention of early and child marriage. Excerpts from speech from Dr Mateen Shaheen the Officer-in-Charge for UNFPA Country Representative. Sourced from: <https://afghanistan.unfpa.org/en/news/consensus-conference-national-action-plan-prevention-early-and-child-marriage>.

⁹⁰ The National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA). The 2014 estimates from the Afghanistan Living Condition Survey (ALCS) were also consulted.

⁹¹ Raj, A., Gomez, C. S. and Silverman, J. G. (2014b). Multisectorial Afghan Perspectives on Girl Child Marriage. Violence Against Women, 20(12), p. 1492.

⁹² UNICEF (2015) Proposal for S/GWI Funding under the Afghan Women's Leadership Initiative, page 4; UNICEF (2015). Regional Office Annual Report, page 15; and UNICEF (2016). Regional Office Annual Report, page 16

Textbox 1: Alignment with IRoA Policies.

AWLI's ALIGNMENT WITH SEVERAL RATIFIED INSTRUMENTS

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) law – which remains the main legislative tool for protecting women from violence and criminalizes 22 acts of violence and harmful traditional practices against women and girls. This law is enacted and enforced by a presidential decree.

The Penal Code includes provisions to punish acts of rape including those that result in injury and disability. Other sections of the Criminal Code criminalize additional acts of violence perpetrated against women that are not codified in the EVAW law, such as murder and kidnapping.

National Action Plan (2015-2018) on the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 and a National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (2007-2017).

The MoPH has a Health and Human Rights Strategy (2014-2017).

National Gender Strategy (2012-2016).

Child Protection Law by presidential decree, which was fully aligned with the global Convention on the Rights of the Child.

UNICEF was well-suited to administer AWLI, as its aim was consistent with UNICEF's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan, which was that "UNICEF will identify and leverage positive synergies among related results, such as those among improving girls' education, ending child marriage and reducing maternal mortality." UNICEF's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan also continues with this priority, with Goal Area 3 (reducing child marriage) and Goal Area 5 (support of adolescent empowerment). The designers of AWLI, also ensured that the programme was aligned with the priorities noted in the Gender Action Plan 2014-2017, given that "girls [have] unequal access to basic health and education services; social norms and practices such as son preference and child marriage limit and devalue girls and their contributions and set them on a path of a lifetime of deprivations."

OVERARCHING QUESTION: Assessment of alignment of the AWLI interventions to the local context as well as national strategies and policies of Afghanistan and UNICEF, especially among the most deprived sections of the population, including validating existing adolescent programming ToC.

Sub Questions

To what extent does the programme design and implementation fit the local context, including the conflict context, and what measures were taken to adapt to changes in the context?

To what extent does the programme address and meet the needs of adolescent girls and their families, especially those that are OoS?

D.1.2 AWLI'S DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION FIT TO THE LOCAL CONTEXT

FINDING 2	UNICEF stakeholders noted that AWLI's design complemented other sectors, but AWLI was perceived as unique in that it focused on reducing early marriage, using a multi-sectoral approach. However, the focus was explicitly on girls, rather than girls and boys, which would have been more effective at promoting girl's education and reducing early marriage.
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Data from stakeholder interviews indicates that AWLI's program components designed to promote girl's education and end child marriage are very relevant. For example, it was noted that AWLI complemented the other sectors

in which UNICEF works, and especially education, as “early marriage is an impediment to education.”⁹³ Another important feature mentioned by UNICEF and IPs was that AWLI’s modality included working at the community level in an integrated manner.⁹⁴ For example, one stakeholder noted that “This programme worked with the community, and it had an integrated approach with the community, family, and the girls.”⁹⁵ Frequently, prevention programmes which seek to fulfill a gender inequality goal are implemented in isolation and fail to recognize the interconnected nature of the linkages among gender inequality and education, continued access to education, small enterprise, and climate change. Indeed, AWLI’s programme components recognize the social, economic, political, cultural, and religious drivers of child marriage and the promotion of education.

Even with this multi-sectoral approach, however, it was interpreted that the programme focused on girls, **when it ought to have focused on girls and boys, as the inclusion of men and boys tends to result in greater sustainability with longer lasting behavior change.**⁹⁶ It was noted in Samangan and Nangarhar, for example, the IPs made efforts to communicate messages to rights holder girls and boys, but the data indicates less emphasis for the IP in Herat.⁹⁷ In addition to this gap, the notion of whether a holistic and multisectoral approach is even a relevant one will be further discussed in the impact section.

D.1.3 AWLI’S RESPONSIVENESS TO THE CONFLICT CONTEXT

FINDING 3	AWLI was well-designed to address the needs of vulnerable (OoS) girls in conflict contexts, and there appears to be no other national programme that met the specific need to reduce early marriage.
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As noted earlier, adolescents suffer from violence and abuse, and the insecure environment perpetuates these harmful cultural and traditional practices. Girls, and especially those who are OoS and whose livelihoods are not prioritized, are even more vulnerable in a conflict context, as there is a belief that an early marriage can **protect girls and keep them from delinquency** (prostitution), and out of poverty. The rural and hard to reach communities where AWLI was implemented also have the custom of **collecting a dowry**, or “**bride price**”, which is a form of family financial survival. Therefore, AWLI was well-designed address early marriage in these provinces, and it appears that a programme like AWLI is extraordinary. Interview data from IRoA stakeholders pointed out that “there are few other relevant programmes ongoing and none at the national level.”⁹⁸ This draws attention to the fact that a programme like AWLI was unique in Afghanistan.

The steps undertaken during programme implementation, including the *measures undertaken to adapt to changes in the context*, is further discussed in the effectiveness section. In particular, the tactics that the IPs used to adapt the idea of discussing sensitive topics (i.e., the continuation of girl’s education and earlier marriage) is thoroughly described in the next section.

⁹³ Log 010 and Log 005.

⁹⁴ Log IP.03, Log 001, and Log 014.

⁹⁵ Log 14

⁹⁶ Tankink, M. and Sleigh, H. (2017). Living Peace in Democratic Republic of the Congo: An Impact Evaluation of an Intervention with Male Partners of Women Survivors of Conflict-Related Rape and Intimate Partner Violence. Washington, DC: Promundo-US. A finding from a recent evaluation shows positive sustainable changes occur when working with men in gender projects, as they too must undergo a transformation of their own gendered identities.

⁹⁷ AWLI-ECW-Samangan FGD; AWLI-Nangarhar-OHW-FGD; and AWLI-WASSA-Herat FGD.

⁹⁸ G01.LogGovt001

D.2 Effectiveness⁹⁹

OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which the programme's intended results were achieved at output level.

Sub Question

To what extent did UNICEF deliver on its intended outputs?

This section presents a brief description of programme outputs, planned targets, and achievement.

D.2.1 PLANNED ACTIVITIES VERSUS ACHIEVEMENTS

FINDING 4	The AWLI programme delivered an ambitious range of seven interventions, and almost reached all of its planned outputs. While the number of adolescents that the programme reached exceeded its target , the number of girls directly experiencing the programme was only 82 percent (or 164,207 out of 200,000) of its target.
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According to the final donor report, submitted March 2021, the number of girls, aged from 12 to 18 who directly experienced the programme compared to the planned number, was *almost* met. The target was 200,000 adolescent girls, and there were only 164,207 (as of December 2020) reached. (See table below) However, the total of adolescents reached aged 12-18, which also includes boys (or 91,347), was 255,554, and this far exceeds the target of 200,000. Moreover, the target for the number of community members who directly experienced the programme was 359,849, which also exceeds the target of 80,000 to 100,000.

Table 8: Planned and Actual Results.

Beneficiaries	Planned Targets	Result from End-of-project Report (Dec 2020) ¹⁰⁰
Direct beneficiaries (adolescents aged 12-17)		
Adolescent girls (direct)	200,000	164,207 ¹⁰¹
Adolescent boys (direct)		91,347
Total Adolescents (age 12-17)	200,000	255,554
Direct beneficiaries (others / adults ages 18-65)		
Total members of community level shura (elders, parents, community leaders and religious leaders)	80-100,000	359,849

The above figures also take into account the procurement of hygiene and recreational kits distributed to a select number of community- based education centers in all provinces which was instituted during the reprogramming phase in July 2020. The Summary of Planned Targets In Contrast With Achievements are in annex 13. Briefly, for each programme component, almost all have met their planned achievements. For a fuller Description of Programme Processes and the contents of hygiene and recreational kits, please see annex 14.

D.2.1.1 Community Dialogues

The Community Dialogue activities took place every three months, and the messages focused on the importance of education, literacy, child marriage, and early marriage. Reports indicate that the messages were developed

⁹⁹ The extent to which the programmes intended results were achieved at the output level. The information from this section drew from several sources, including the M&E database from the IPs and UNICEF (as it relates recipients of the unconditional cash grant), donor reports, procurement and budget reports, and other project management-related resources.

¹⁰⁰ Due to a cumulation error identified in the 2018 and 2019 reports, a variance is reported in the cumulative numbers against what had been reported in earlier submissions.

¹⁰¹ A significant increase in the reach of direct beneficiaries is reported at project-end (31 December 2020) compared to figures shared as of 30 November 2020. This is due to two main factors: first, activities under Objective 4 (distribution of hygiene and recreation kits, and installation of handwashing station) were completed in the last month of the project; second, reach data for Mini Media Clubs and safe spaces was accounted for fully and updated after project completion.

based on guidelines developed from the onset of the programme. In addition to community dialogues, the IPs facilitated advocacy activities, which forms part of a more holistic effort to not only address early marriage but also other community priorities. For example, through advocacy, community residents discussed other needs, such as bridges and other infrastructural issues, which were later brought to the attention of government sub-district and district leadership levels. There was a total of 4,463 **Community Dialogues** sessions conducted with 76,037 participants (38,024 F/ 38,013 M) which was **partially achieved**, as the planned target of 5,000 with 100,000 participants.

D.2.1.2 Reflect Circles

This intervention enabled communities to discuss their own specific priorities and problems. The topics covered were early marriage and promoting girls' education, although it was noted that often times, the issues were not necessarily focused on early marriage or delaying marriages (to be discussed later). Unlike Community Dialogues, Reflect Circles were much smaller. There were ten males and ten females recruited to take part in this activity.¹⁰² In order to participate in this activity, each community resident had to fulfill a specific selection criteria which included, but was not limited to, (i) being able to influence others in the village; (ii) being literate; (iii) connecting easily with others, through interpersonal communication; and (iv) sharing views without hesitation (or being outspoken).¹⁰³ One of the IPs, WASSA, reported that they even developed an "entry exam" to confirm whether the person selected for this role had the basic level of literacy. Having a basic level of literacy was important for this role, because Reflect Circle participants had to help develop Problem Trees and Solutions Trees. The Reflect Circle was facilitated by two persons, and the exercise focused on discussing problems of that village. Identified issues could then carried forward to the sub-district and even to the provincial level (if pursued). There was a female and male Shurah (council), an informal network, which could carry these issues forward. The longevity of the Reflect Circles is discussed in the sustainability section. The IP staff also used religious references from Holy Quran and flip charts. **There were 200 Reflect Circles established which was as planned with 42,553 participants (20,956 males and 21,597 females or 51%).**

D.2.1.3 Mini Media Clubs

Mini Media Clubs were open to all the students attending school. In this space, students had the opportunity to exchange their views, test their voices with the microphones, and develop confidence to speak in public.¹⁰⁴ The facilitator discussed: (i) How to manage conflicts in the home; and (ii) How to seek help from the facilitator when there are family problems and the child experiences difficulties concentrating in school. Mini Media Clubs were embedded within the government schools, and so they were and continue to be managed by the Provincial Education Directorates. **Fifty Mini Media Clubs were established which surpasses the planned number of 40, and these are equally distributed in boys' and girls' schools. Initially, it was reported that there was no access to a projector (screens), laptop, or internet. However, currently, these services are available.**

D.2.1.4 Safe Spaces

Interviews with IPs indicate that at the Safe Spaces, female participants had access to laptops and mobile phones for their use when they came and visit. "This [location] was open but not 24-7"; They employed community guards to make sure that the resources were not abused." Inside these facilities, the issues discussed include: (i) sexual and reproductive health; (ii) child marriage; (iii) abuse; (iv) gender-based violence (GBV) and victims of early marriage; and (v) psychological issues.¹⁰⁵ In Samangan and Herat, IP interviews indicated that some participants asked for legal advice related to *bad, badal*,¹⁰⁶ and inheritance cases. In Samangan participants received legal advice from the Safe Space staff, whereas in Herat, participants could be referred to service providers (government entities). **Five Safe Spaces were established, as planned, and a formal network has also been**

¹⁰² One IP reported a slightly different outreach, with 10-12 people participants.

¹⁰³ FDG-WASSA.

¹⁰⁴ AWLI Good Practices and Lessons Learned (case study 5), donor final report (30 March 2021), and 01 Adolescent Club.

¹⁰⁵ FDG ECW, IP002, IP006, IP007.

¹⁰⁶ It is known as *badal* the practice to trade women and girls in a marriage exchanges between families; giving away girls to settle disputes is known as *ba'ad*.

created, namely five adolescent and youth networks.¹⁰⁷ It should also be noted UNICEF is continuing another Safe Space called the Women and Girls Safe Space in Bagrami (Kabul).¹⁰⁸

D.2.1.5 Community-based Livelihood Training

Community-based Livelihood Training, or vocational training, were originally intended to be executed in all provinces, but the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs had a requirement that this training needed to last for six months, but the curriculum was only for three months. Ultimately, one (out of five provinces), or Samangan, executed this training. Interviews indicate that there were several vocational activities designed to lead to occupations planned, including (i) tailoring; (ii); (iii) hand embroidery; (iv) dairy processing; (v) poultry raising; and (vi) food processing from gardening (strawberries) to processing. **The target for this programme component was met as 360 female participants received training.** The IP in Samangan supported 260 adolescent girls and young women to receive a three-month tailoring course, after which the girls/women received sewing machines and accessories to support future businesses. Poultry raising sessions were also conducted for 100 adolescent girls.

D.2.1.6 Community-based Life Skills Training

A Community-based Life Skills Training (for girls only) training package was formulated and rolled out to 14,483 adolescent girls. This activity focused on life skills, namely (i) conflict resolution; (ii) how to spend money on basic needs; and (iii) sanitation and hygiene. **The revised target was to train a total of 10,710 adolescents, and so the Life Skills Training exceeded its target.**

D.2.1.7 Unconditional Cash Grants

The Unconditional Cash Grant intervention was initially planned to be implemented in both Ghor and Herat provinces, which have some of the highest rates of OoS girls. The eligibility criteria for the selected households were: (1) households that have at least one adolescent girl aged 10 to 15 years; and (2) be within the catchment area of an Accelerated Learning Centre (ALC), no more than three-kilometre radius. The original design of the Randomised Control Trial (RCT) targeted 2,000 participants; 1,000 would receive cash (treatment group), and 1,000 would not (control group). However, following a mapping exercise, the baseline process yielded a total of about 1,000 households based on the eligibility criteria. This left the RCT design with insufficient power to pursue and inform impact, necessitating an evaluation approach redesign. A programme decision was reached, on technical and ethical grounds, to give benefits to all 1,000 potential beneficiaries and drop the segmentation of treatment and control groups. Later, considering the perceived risks to implementation in Ghor, including limited community sensitization resulting in misinformation and security concerns, it was agreed and discussed with the donor that Unconditional Cash Grant activities should be suspended in Ghor, and implementation would only proceed in Herat province. Hence, **the Unconditional Cash Grant component was partially achieved**, as the target was revised to 950 beneficiaries to receive this financial assistance, but only 472 households with adolescent girls received a grant for the equivalent of approximately USD 255. The challenges specific to achieving this revised target are discussed in the section delineating factors influencing the successful delivery of outputs.

D.2.1.8 Supplies to support schools

As noted earlier, in the last quarter, the programme was reprogrammed with an additional objective of providing key supplies to adolescent girls affected by COVID-19. Therefore, the provision of supplementary hygiene

¹⁰⁷ Data from Samangan, indicates that there used to be one Safe Space “Centre” in every district, but now there are only three, as the one in Dara-i-soof-i-payan was handed over to the Department of Women’s Affairs in December, and has since closed its doors.

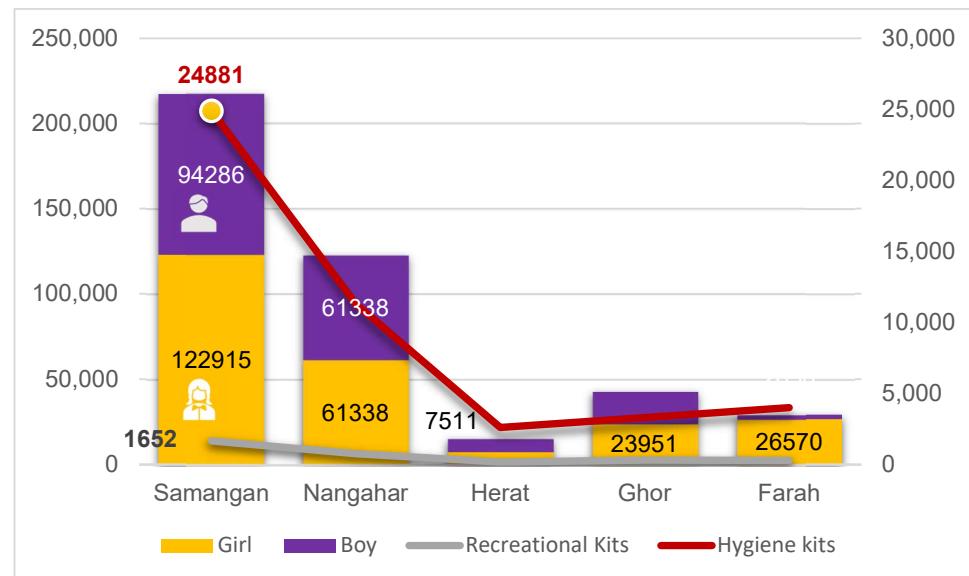
¹⁰⁸ This facility is in a district that has a high rate of illiteracy and dropping out of girls as well as a high rate of child marriage and violence against women and girls. The safe space is located in an area that is conveniently accessible to young women and adolescent girls. The safe space provides various educational, psycho-social support and livelihood related services. A mentor program involves older women from the community to be role models to adolescent girls and also refer girls to the center. The Safe Space is supported by several government departments and agencies: Directorate of Justice, Directorate of Education, National and international CSOs, Directorate of Labor and Social Affairs, Child Protection Action Network, Department of Youth Affairs (Directorate of Information and Culture), Directorate of Public Health, and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission.

materials and recreation kits to adolescent girls and boys in both formal (government) schools and CBEs was intended to prepare adolescent girls to return to schools/Community Based Education (CBEs). This component exceeded its target to support 50,000 adolescent girls. Specifically, a total of 46,048 Hygiene kits and 1,800 recreation kits were procured and distributed to formal schools and CBEs in five project provinces, thereby affecting over 97,000 adolescent girls.¹⁰⁹ (See figure below.) Finally, 270 Handwashing facilities were provided to 135 girls' schools in AWLI project districts.

The number of adolescent girls (12-17) was almost met, while the number of community residents (families and leaders) reached was exceeded. AWLI delivered an ambitious range (of seven) interventions, namely Community Dialogues, Reflect Circles, Mini Media Clubs, Safe Spaces, Community-based vocational training, Community-based Life Skills, Unconditional Cash Grants, and key supplies (hygiene kits and recreation kits) to support the return to school during COVID-19.

In summary, Reflect Circles, Mini Media Clubs, Community-based Life Skills, Safe Spaces, and supplies to counter the effects of COVID 19 met or surpassed their planned targets, but Unconditional Cash Grants and Community-based vocational training only partially achieved planned targets.

Figure 4: Outreach of procured supplies to support schools.



OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which the programme's intended results were achieved at output level.

Sub Question

What were the major factors influencing the successful delivery of outputs?

D.2.2 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE DELIVERY OF OUTPUTS

This section elaborates the positive and negative factors influencing the delivery of outputs, namely general positive stakeholder response to the programme, community resistance overcome, the responsive programming strategies used by the IPs to effectively communicate messages and engage communities, and constrained outreach.

FINDING 5	Stakeholder perceptions were positive, and it was reported that a strong feature of the programme was the premise of solving one's own problems within the community, which may have contributed to the unanimous request for the programme to continue.
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¹⁰⁹ This target was exceeded because, the hygiene kits, in particular, the handwashing stations supported a high number of students on a daily basis. Please see annex 14 for more information.

D.2.2.1 General Positive Perceptions about AWLI

With exception of a few stakeholders interviewed, each stakeholder group interviewed, duty bearers and rights holders, **expressed satisfaction with all of AWLI's programme components**. This **positive response** to AWLI is reflected in the IPs in qualitative data, indicating that they were motivated and passionate about helping people "solve their own problems".

"Because this [project] was the first time, perhaps one of the projects **that people directly participated in solving their problems**. In the past, the government or foreign institutions would come and solve the problems of the people, but the goals of this project have been the participation of the people in solving the problems of the people as well as the participation of the people in creating cultural, economic and social context." ¹¹⁰

Indeed, a Religious Leader at the community level not only confirms that the programme ought to resume, but he expressed satisfaction with the Reflect Circle activities and its mandate of being rescued "from these hideous and unaccepted customs."

"Really these activities and reflection circles were very effective and **we have worked on it**. We have sent some reports as well to the office. **There were really good activities and people are really satisfied**. Even we proposed to office that they **should continue** their activities, and like our youngsters to participate in these circles. Our girls who have a little literacy should participate and benefit from these circles so **hopefully our society could be rescued from these hideous and unaccepted customs....**"¹¹¹

Another Religious Leader reflects on how things have changed for his village, even where there is Anti-Government Elements ruling,

"Changes mean that in our village they don't marry their daughter while she is underage, **this is a change**. By God's grace, giving girls to baad or to [a] complainant against blood money **is not happening**, it used to happen when we were child[ren]. There is a district called X and Y...they used to hold early marriages but now they are good even though it's been 10 years that they are under [AGE] rule. Like they used to give a 12 year old girl to marriage and they used to do it for a cow or a sheep.and there it become a very big problem and it caused difficulties to girl and family. **They changed now**. It is not adequate that these people have changed...In this village things [have not changed] 100 percent but anyway it good."¹¹²

A rights holder adolescent girl expresses her satisfaction with the programme and requests the programme to continue,

"We were 100% satisfied. We want this **programme to be renewed again**. Our awareness was less and more so that we can understand and become more aware. The reason for our satisfaction is that they informed us [raised awareness]."¹¹³

The examples like the above, referring to all seven of the programme components and not just the Reflect Circles and Community Dialogues, are innumerable throughout the qualitative dataset, thereby reflecting the extent to which the programme participants were interested and engaged in AWLI's interventions.

¹¹⁰ AWLI -WASSA-Herat FGD

¹¹¹ 1-3-RL-1

¹¹² 2-5-RL2

¹¹³ 2-5-AD-F6

FINDING 6	As AWLI's premise was nontraditional, the IPs experienced community resistance in the beginning of programme implementation, because talking about early marriage and the promotion of girls' education was very sensitive. However, the IPs communicated clear messages, which resonated with targeted communities, and their responsive implementation strategies (such as crafting clear messages and recruitment of knowledgeable staff) laid the foundation for community-level attitudinal and behaviour change.
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The positive reflections about AWLI do not imply that there were no challenges. Indeed, there were many factors which impeded programme delivery. The qualitative data from IPs, programme participants, and UNICEF staff confirm that the IPs experienced resistance to the programme *in the beginning*. However, each IP used inclusive and deliberate strategies to persuade key stakeholders to consider and accept the messages about the harmful effects of early marriage and the interruption of education for girls.

D.2.2.2 Community resistance overcome

Community resistance took on various forms, ranging from arguments (protesting attitudes) to physical violence. Stakeholders noted that because the topics were too sensitive, "the culture was very strong", "you can't talk about this stuff", one community insisted on changing "Safe Space" to "Safe Centre", and another community requested to change the name of Afghan Women Leader Initiative to something else, "because women cannot be leaders." Another level of challenges included expressing disapproval and creating barriers by associating the programme with shame. For example, participant explained that some people think "People do not have food to eat....[have] respect for the culture, the people, the religion", and they question "What are you saying to our ladies?". Other community residents present linked the "[the Safe Centre is] where ...thoughts will get deviated," and "It is a very disgraced things for our culture that our girls go there." Another level of protest, wherein people took action, was also cited, as people did "not go to the "Safe Centre" in the beginning and an IP experienced damage to the project car. While such initial resistance is not directly connected to adolescent girls, these underlying challenges implicitly affect girls' autonomy and a community's ability to tackle gender and cultural norms.

Table 9: Verbal and physical resistance to AWLI.

	 Verbal Disagreements	 Create Barriers	 Physical Protest
UNICEF	"The communities were talking about how this issue [ending early marriage] was too sensitive and that "you can't talk about this stuff..." [Log 014-UNICEF Management]	"People do not have food to eat.... [Have] respect for the culture, the people, the religion. These activities are too sensitive – too difficult to undertake." [Log 008 UNICEF staff member]	
IP1 [Herat]	"In the beginning, there were a lot of problems, especially in the beginning – the culture was very strong. Girl's education was a very sensitive issue. "	The community said, "You are coming here, what are you saying to our ladies??? "	"Our project car in x district was [vandalized]...."
IP2 [Samangan]	"We had a programme activity in the name of Safe Space, but people didn't accept it because it was not according to their culture. The Safe Space is called center. As the x environment is not ready to call it Safe Space, for if we call it Safe Space, they would think about it as a place where people go there, their thoughts will get deviated. "	"....People told us if you use the Safe Space name, your project will be closed. It is a very disgraced things for our culture that our girls go there. "	"Believe it that at the beginning of the project, in our safe center , for two months no one would come. People would feel ashamed of coming there for being perceived as what she did."

While the above examples illustrate the extent to which there was limited acceptance by target programme beneficiaries *initially*, the IPs overcame these temporary setbacks with convincing messages disseminated through a clear communication strategy and the use of innovations while working with communities.

D.2.2.3 Responsive programming

D.2.2.3.1 Crafting clear messages

An IP highlighted that another factor impeding the programme delivery was the fact that messages were not clearly presented in the past, and so communities experienced challenges trying to understand what message was trustworthy. For example, an IP noted, “As per the Convention on the Rights of the Child, they [girls] are supposed to be 18. In the communities, however, they will say “Islam said this”, the “government says this”, and “the foreigners say this....There is a need to give a clear message to [the] people! This needs to be proper, clear, and transparent message.”¹¹⁴

A content analysis from data from KIIs and FGDs indicates that the messages used to communicate the harmful effects of early marriage and terminating education were linked to four critical themes, namely 1) physical (maternal) health ; 2) mental health; 3) building a future (or economic gains); and 4) religion. The table below shows the examples of these communicated messages.

Table 10: Effective messages and their dissemination.

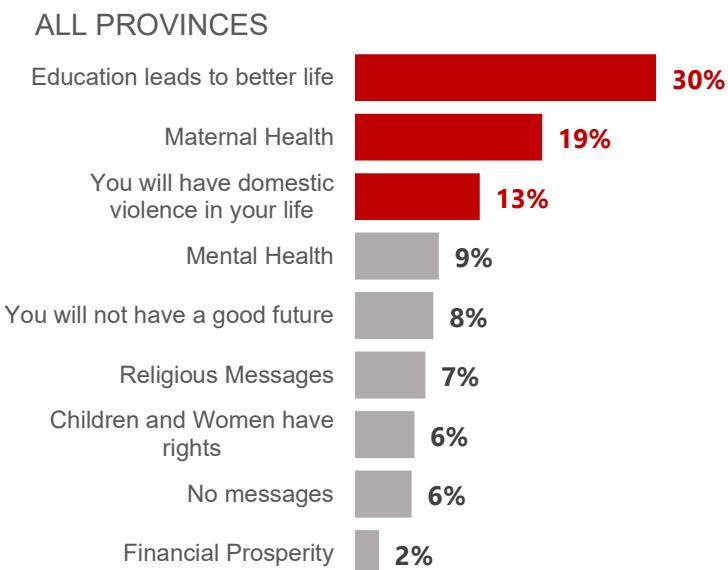
 Maternal Health	<p>The key is to link these sensitive issues to health issues. People can hear health issues...You have to say: “people will stop dying...IF you stop marrying at 12 or 14 years old or having babies at 14 or 16 years old....” UNICEF [Log 003]</p> <p>The message is “[The girl] gives birth while she is small....She will not know the value of her life, husband and her in-laws. And she dies. Mother [2-5 PF1]</p>	 Mental and Physical Health	<p>If you forced your daughter to marry, your daughter doesn't know about joint life. She doesn't know who a husband is because she still cherishes her childhood habits, she may like the celebrations and feel happy about it, but tomorrow she will become pregnant and sheShe will not be able to study and she will not understand life. When they face a bad economic situation, the husband will become addicted to drugs, and at end your daughter's life will be a mess and she may end up divorcing.” Adolescent Female [1-2-AD-F5]</p>
 Education	<p>“Yes, this is one of my sayings...girls should study in order to obtain their place in the society. If girls study, they will build their own future and will be saved from misery. There is a big difference between a literate person and an illiterate person. From every aspect, [a] literate person's understanding will be much better.” Adult Male [2-6-AD-M1]</p> <p>“With [child] delivery, pregnancy, and not continuing education, she [a girl] will not be the good mom that she is supposed to be.” Education partner [IRoA-PG01]</p>	 Religion or Faith	<p>“Did you know education is very important for our society? Our Prophet has emphasized on this matter, and there God says [it] in [the] holy Qu'ran. Male [1-2-AD-M1]</p> <p>“For example, you go among people and talk about children's rights, if you say a verse or a hadith about it, the effect will be greater.” FDG ECW</p> <p>“..underage marriages as well as the education of girls was something that everyone wanted their children...to be...who does not want their daughter to be a doctor? who does not want their daughter to become an engineer?...They all responded yes to this question. We told them that if you have more knowledge, you will know God better.” FDG WASSA</p> <p>“Regarding the education of girls, the correct verse of the Quran says: It is a presumption for men and women to get educated. Whether male or female, both must get educated, when he is educated, he understands how to live, he understands how to deal with people. The level of knowledge of the region rises, and the society is moving towards mobilization.” Male [2-5-AD-M3]</p>

As illustrated in the table, the IPs used clear messages, negative and positive, in order to overcome the problem of confusing messages from the past. For example, the harmful effects of early marriage and limited education include **death**, living a **life of misery**, and having a **baby who dies**. The positive messages, however, were that the Prophet Mohammed (Peace be upon Him), says that the rights of children and women should be affirmed, and that to be educated is to know God better.

¹¹⁴ Log IP.05.

D.2.2.3.2 What messages were heard?

Figure 5: Messages that the community heard.



Source: Qualitative data. n=162
problems that should be prevented.”¹¹⁵

In addition to the prevention of “domestic violence”, mental health, not having a good future without education, religious messages, and child/women’s rights, ranking lower, also helped to persuade the delay of a marriage and the continuation of education. Finally, only a few of those interviewed believed that early marriage and the lack of education would prevent one from having a financial footing.

In a few cases in Herat and Nangahar, respondents could not recall any messages linked to the harmful effects of child marriage and interrupting education, which is normal especially for young adolescents. It is also noted in the evaluation limitations that some respondents had difficulties recalling frequency of Community Dialogues and Reflection Group activities.

A further examination of the messages for each province and by gender shows that with the exception of Samangan, the messages about the importance of education rank the highest, although there does not appear to be any relative difference between men and women in all three provinces. Messages connecting maternal health issues to early marriage ranked the highest in Samangan.

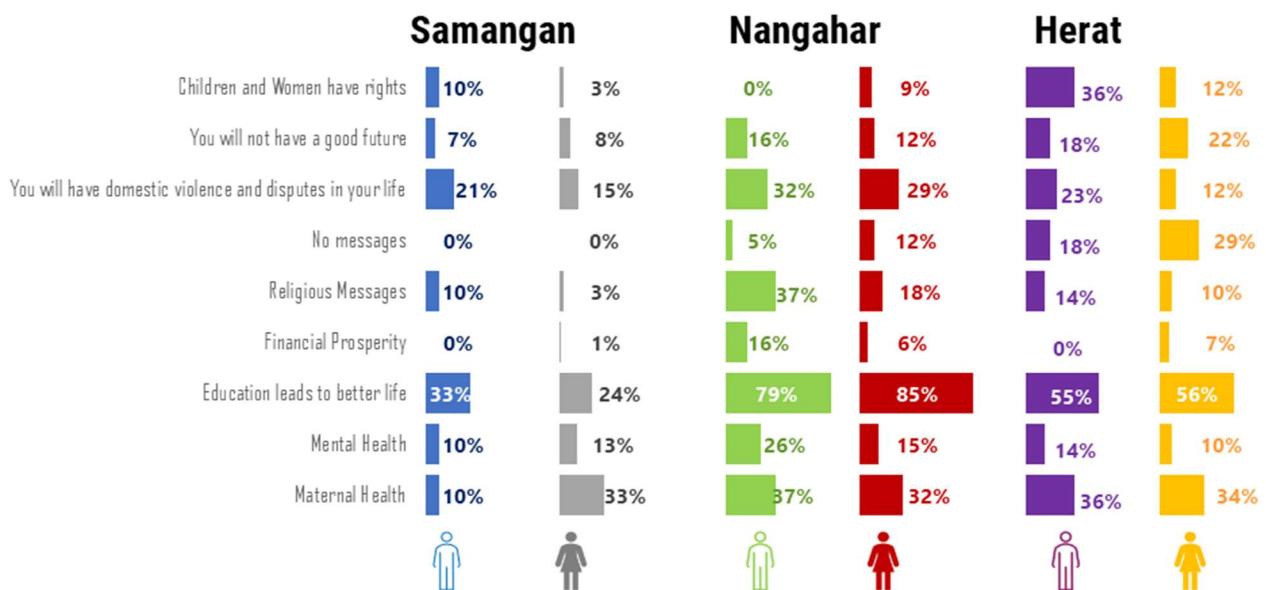
A content analysis, illustrated in the figure, reveals that the primary messages that the community **heard** were:

- 1) “education leads to a better life”;
- 2) “maternal health” is a major concern; and
- 3) “there will be domestic violence if you marry too young”.

Separate from what the messages that the IPs communicated, the theme of “domestic violence” represented several issues which concerned programme participants (primarily in Samangan and Nangahar). The term is linked to “domestic chores and responsibilities” (washing dishes, laying out husband’s clothes), “hard work on children”, preventing girls from continuing their education, husband violence, disputes and disrespecting mother and father in-laws, running away from home, suicide, “death, anemia, and [other]

¹¹⁵ 3-9-PF3; 3-7-AD-F9; 2-5-AD-F6; 3-7-AD-F2; and 1-3-AD-F6-GR.

Figure 6: Disaggregated data of messages heard by gender and province.



Source: Qualitative data. n=162

However, after the importance of continuing education messages, maternal health-related issues (in Herat and Nangahar) and education leads to a better life (Samangan) are the messages that women perceive most important. The third highest ranking messages are “domestic violence” (Samangan), mental health (also in Samangan), religious messages (Nangahar), and no real message (Herat). Finally, in Samangan, men perceived that when marrying too young, the one’s life will have disputes and domestic violence, whereas in Herat and Nangahar, the messages connecting early marriage to maternal health ranked second, followed by a split between: (1) children and women have rights (Herat); and (2) religious messages (Nangahar). Annex 15, Supplementary Data on Messages Heard, presents this data in separate for all three provinces.

FINDING 7	The IPs responsive programming was effective with five community engagement innovations , namely (1) crafting a clear message; (2) involving male messengers who are respected and trusted; (3) employing knowledgeable staff; (4) leveraging female community champions; and (5) ensuring that a literate person took part in the Reflect Circles.
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D.2.2.3.3 Community engagement approaches

The IPs used an effective community-based innovation to overcome challenges, which ultimately ensured that participants understood, used, and spread the messages. Specifically, they made sure that messenger was someone who was respected and trusted in the community. One IP explains, “we did not directly come to the early marriage’s topic...it wasn’t that effective because of its sensitivity”. A tool, a problem (and solution) tree, was used to support the process of prioritizing community needs.¹¹⁶ When it was time to deliver the messages, the IPs explained that their team included persons “who understood the religious affairs”.¹¹⁷ One IP specified, “among our staff, there was a person **who memorized the Holy Qu’ran**, and so they were able to be persuasive [especially] with the religious leaders. “When people gathered, we started our programme with verses from the Holy Quran, ...after that, we would explain the goals of the meeting very briefly and would tell them that our

¹¹⁶ AWLI-ECW-Samangan FGD data; and AWLI-WASSA-Herat FGD data.

¹¹⁷ AWLI-ECW-Samangan FGD data

meeting would focus on one topic.”¹¹⁸ Another innovation was the separation of men and women’s groups, so that participants could thoroughly express their views. The IPs also had staff who were very skilled in their respective districts and had worked in previous projects in the programme villages before. “They [the staff] knew the people and the culture there.”¹¹⁹

In addition to having a knowledgeable staff, the IPs used another strategy which was working intently with religious, community, and other powerful “actors” within the community. It was noted,

“The mullah...plays a very important role in the village. The village head [also] is...influential...when responsibilities come from international institutions or government at the provincial level....The head of the village was influential. It appears that the mullah may also require capacity strengthening in order to support the programme. For example, “the mullah Imam was [also] influential. Sometimes the mullah may not say the right thing, but the people of the same village are talking to the mullah, now we have to work with [that] mullah...”¹²⁰

“

Our change actors were **influential figures, religious leaders, and those who were influential** figures in the society and government organizations.

ECW

Moreover, it was also observed that many communities had their own female champions, apart from those working for the AWLI programme, and the IPs worked with these advocates, among other community members, to serve as messengers. For example, one female rights holder admitted, “Old ladies used to say that it is good that we didn’t let our daughters to marry while being underage.”¹²¹ Other advocates also included Provincial Government stakeholders, who “were eager to participate in the project activities.”¹²² **Hence, when the community’s input was integrated into the delivery of messages, it appears that the programme was likely to be more effective. Given this finding, future programmes ought to take into consideration this important programming approach.**

Another strategy used to overcome challenges was working diligently to select stakeholders who could affect the most change. This process is explained in the quote below,

“If I am the [leader] of the village and you come to me to list the beneficiaries, it is normal for me to give you the name of my wife or aunt or uncle, no matter how much we say that we are only informing [we have a selection criteria].... For instance, selecting a beneficiary through the Department of Women’s Affairs, then through the chairperson of the district women’s council, we [then] selected our beneficiaries...“We gave [the leaders] our criteria. Our criterion was to be under the age of 19, from the village, and also to be a woman....”

IPs noted, however, that “it is very difficult to select the beneficiaries”, as after the final selection, the IPs noted, “...Then the elders would not give us a list of 20 people, but 40 people....”¹²³ To overcome this challenge, one IP noted that **for reflect circles**, the selection also included specific criteria, wherein the participants had to be “literate, could connect easily with others, and could share their views without hesitation.” Other important strategies highlighted that the staff person had previous experience in the village; although there was some challenge there too. In the case of WASSA, the staff developed an “entry exam” to see if the person selected for this role had the basic level of literacy.

In essence, the IPs initially experienced verbal and physical resistance from communities, because talking about early marriage and the promotion of girl’s education were, and continue to be, very sensitive topics. Five key

¹¹⁸ AWLI -WASSA-Herat FGD

¹¹⁹ AWLI -WASSA-Herat FGD; IP Log006.

¹²⁰ AWLI-ECW-Samangan FGD data; and AWLI-WASSA-Herat FGD data.

¹²¹ 1-1-AD-F2.

¹²² AWLI-WASSA-Herat FGD data.

¹²³ AWLI-ECW-Samangan FGD data; and AWLI-WASSA-Herat FGD data.

innovations laid the foundation for attitudinal and behaviour change, and these positive practices are reflected below.

POSITIVE PRACTICES

- 1) Having a clear message. As seen, the messages may be negative and positive, including how early marriage may lead to **death**, a **life of misery**, and having a **baby who dies**. The positive messages, were that the Prophet Mohammed (Peace be upon Him), says that the rights of children and women should be affirmed, and that to be educated is to know God better. Based on a content analysis, There were three main messages which resonated with the communities, namely that “education leads to a better life” (emphasized by both men and women); “maternal health” issues (highlighted by women), and “there will be domestic violence if you marry too young” (primarily reported by men).
- 2) Involving male messengers who are respected and trusted;
- 3) The IP employed knowledgeable staff who both knew the Quran and worked with powerful community actors;
- 4) The IPs leveraged female community champions and government officials who wanted to help; and
- 5) Ensured that a literate person took part in the Reflect Circles, so that they could follow up on the results from the Problems and Solutions Tree.

D.2.2.4 Constrained outreach

One issue which emerged was that programme participants had not been exposed to more than one AWLI component, and an IP explained why AWLI’s outreach was, in part, limited, a constraint that could not be overcome. To gain support at the community level, IPs needed to **work with** the communities, stating that “There would be some overlapping [of] people [beneficiaries], [but]....the community was saying that this would **not be fair** if [some other beneficiaries] were involved in many different programme components.” Indeed, the explanation for the limited programme dose was that community leaders would say, “No, those people have already benefited from x project [in the past], and now, this family must get assistance.”¹²⁴

OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which the programme’s intended results were achieved at the output level.

Sub Question

To what extent were the programme interventions taken up by target programme beneficiaries?

D.2.3 UPTAKE OF PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

FINDING 8	There was an overall positive response to interventions as well as repeated demands for scaling up and or continuing all activities. While it is recognized that Community-based Livelihood Training was only implemented in Samangan, and Unconditional Cash Grants were only distributed in Herat, the Mini Media Clubs, Safe Spaces, Community-based Life Skills Training were implemented equally to all provinces, but their uptake was remarkably different between provinces.
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The extent to which the Community Dialogues and Reflect Circle components were taken up by the community is described at length in the Impact section. In this section, however, the uptake of the Community Based Livelihood Training, Unconditional Cash Grants, Mini Media Club, Safe Space, and Community-based Life Skills Training is presented in this section.

¹²⁴ IP Log005.

D.2.3.1 Community Based Livelihood Training

One IP noted that the training “was the best activity of the project.....we were thinking of continuing this [activity], because [of] the feedback from the community.” In other words, the community reception to the premise of this programme component was so strong, the IP perceived that linking programme activities (or livelihood activities) to the reduction of early marriage was a straightforward experience. One important strategy used was a clear targeting approach, which focused on including the most vulnerable in the community. “We give 20 chickens to those who did not have household heads and were poor....[A beneficiary’s] son was killed at war....[only] one or two kids left in that family...we would give them chickens, so that they sell the eggs, each egg for 10 Afghan, 10 eggs will become 100 Afghan....she [the mother] could [then] purchase pen and notebooks for her schoolgirl....Creating this motivation was very good for them, especially in the chicken farms and tailoring. We have worked a lot on creating this mindset.¹²⁵ IPs also reported connecting the beneficiaries with markets. Moreover, the data from interviews indicates that the adolescent girls who were exposed to “tailoring” training continue to engage in this activity, and the parents from two families reported being pleased with their daughter’s involvement in such activities.¹²⁶

D.2.3.2 Unconditional Cash Grants

As noted earlier, there were plans to distribute non-conditional cash grants in both Ghor and Herat, but due to community sensitization resulting in misinformation and security concerns, the programming in Ghor was not implemented. Eligible households in Herat were identified through a listing exercise carried out in late 2019, and then again verified in 2020, and included households with adolescent girls aged 10-15 in villages within four districts of Herat Province (e.g., Enjil, Herat, Karrukh, and Zendajan). The value of the one-off cash grant of 19,500 Afghan (around US\$ 255) was determined based on the average cost of education costs, namely scholastic materials, uniforms, and general school-related expenses. UNICEF staff note that it was important to devise a clear communication and dissemination strategy to support the cash grant component of the project. Staff interviews also indicate that WASSA, organized various sessions with the communities with potential beneficiaries as well as persons who were not likely to benefit from the cash grant. The Communications Strategy—Cash Strategy Modality Document guided how WASSA undertook this important activity. There was great effort not to create false expectations, and so during these sessions, communities were made aware of all aspects of the cash transfer programme **beforehand**, discussing the objective of the unconditional, unrestricted cash grant, and providing a full description of the eligibility criteria (having one adolescent girl aged 10-15 in the household). While the criteria of residing within a three kilometers radius from a functional ALCs was another criterion, there is limited evidence that indicates that this criterion was effectively executed and verified. There were no double cash transfers, which means that if there was more than one girl in an eligible family, the family only received one grant. **As evidence of uptake, the PDM database results showed that 100 per cent of recipients reported spending funds on education, although some mentioned spending funds on other items.** Additional PDM results indicate that most grant recipients felt safe at the cash distribution venue (100%), were treated with respect (100%), and found the mechanism used to pay the money (direct cash through My Money) satisfactory (100%).

D.2.3.3 Mini Media Club

The data shows that the Mini Media Clubs in the government schools also had good uptake, and all children benefitted from the services. The IP in Nangahar and Herat noted that the children share the messages discussed at the club with their families when they go back home. This activity also provides additional support specifically around early marriage. One school stakeholder noted that there was a need for additional funds to support the scale up of this programme component, as it should be in every school. As part of programme sustainability, the mini-media clubs have been handed over to Provincial Education Directorate in each province.

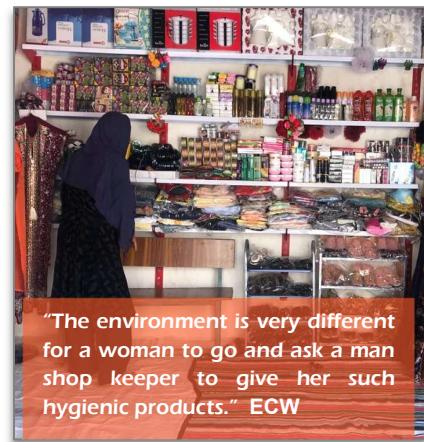
¹²⁵ IP Log006; and AWLI-ECW-Samangan FGD data; 2-5-PF5; and 2-5-CL2.

¹²⁶ 3-7-PM1; and 3-9-PF2.

D.2.3.4 Safe Spaces

The data from the IPs in Samangan and Nangahar suggests that the Safe Spaces, which were centrally located in municipal or provincial centers, functioned more like venues for Reflect Circles or awareness raising meetings, as the communities in these provinces are more traditional. The uptake for Safe Space in Herat, however, was overwhelming. The Safe Space included a Counsellor who actively engaged adolescent girls individually and in groups. The IP admitted that there were community reservations, as psychosocial services *initially*, as these services were for “crazy people”. The interest in this programme component appeared to also have a ripple effect. The IP explained that three adolescent rights holders met at the Safe Space, and now they use WhatsApp to communicate with each other independent of the Safe Space. Hence, whenever one girl is experiencing a difficult time as it relates to early marriage-related issues, the other two girls independently support each other (without an intervention from the counsellor). The constraints preventing the full implementation of this component include: (1) the lack of funds for transportation; (2) the demand for psychosocial services is higher than what can be supplied; and (3) an absence of an appropriate referral system, which prevents girls from easily seeing a physician, when needed.

Figure 7: Shop selling female hygiene products.



D.2.3.5 Community-based Life Skills Training

With the exception of Samangan, the data collected from Herat and Nangahar had limited information about the extent to which rights holders were interested in this programme component. However, this programme component contributed to an unexpected positive outcome. Through the Life Skills Training, programme participants “realized... what are the hygiene products for women.” Three women opened a small shop which sells hygiene products and offers consultations to women with questions.¹²⁷

In this section, the KEQ addressed was “To what extent were the programme interventions taken up by target programme beneficiaries?” This evaluation has found that programme participants responded positively to the Community-based Livelihood Training, Unconditional Cash Grants, Mini Media Clubs, Community Based Life Skills Training, and Safe Spaces (in Herat). Given this evidence, there is, therefore, an opportunity for scalability, albeit in a sustainable manner. This issue is further explored in the sustainability section.

OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which the programmes intended results were achieved at the output level.

Sub Questions

Which factors impeded programme delivery and take-up and how could these have been overcome?

Did the programme effectively manage conflict-related risks?

D.2.4 FACTORS LIMITING EFFECTIVE PROGRAMME DELIVERY

FINDING 9	The three main factors limiting effective programme delivery are: (1) partner capacity limitations; (2) government policies on Community-based Livelihood Training; and (3) insecurity.
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¹²⁷ AWLI-ECW-Samangan FGD data.

While established procedures and practices guided the implementation processes, it was noted that there are three main constraints that prevented the effective delivery of programme activities. This section presents these challenges.

D.2.4.1 Partner Capacity Limitations

Randomized Control Trials (RCT), a programme component dedicated to mapping and documenting the benefits of that the Unconditional Cash Grant would have on targeted families, was incorporated into the programme design solely for the purpose of conducting an impact evaluation.¹²⁸ However, the responsible consultants experienced significant challenges, and subsequently, there were delays when producing the baseline assessment.¹²⁹ The data from reports and KIIs with IPs and UNICEF confirm that the consultants were indeed positioned to initiate programme activities, but the delays from the baseline assessment precluded the IPs from working for almost one year.¹³⁰ The details regarding the specific challenges and mistakes that led to delays and, therefore, a limited baseline are not clear despite the evaluator's intentional investigation in this area. As already mentioned in the limitations section of this report, there are incomplete process details about implementation during AWL's early phase (before and during 2018), and these information gaps have, in turn, limited reporting.

As a lesson learned, however, it is important to understand the underlying requirements for carrying out such a narrowly defined data collection and analysis method. Likely topics to review thoroughly would include: (i) how to develop good study questions; (ii) the data requirements; (iii) methodologies which are not conducive to certain contexts like Afghanistan; and (iv) the competencies that the consultants or IPs must not only have to collect the information, but also to refrain from creating false expectations within affected populations.¹³¹ UNICEF evaluators also ought to have an open dialogue to programme managers the risks and benefits of using a certain method.

D.2.4.2 Government Policy on Livelihood Training

Originally, the Community-based Livelihood Training was intended to be implemented in all five provinces, but it was only executed in one, Samangan. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, and Martyrs and Disabled requires livelihood programmes to have a six-month curriculum, but AWL's curriculum was only for three months. The data from interviews with the IPs in Samangan noted that "government needs to have a clear idea of the concept." As noted above, there was a strong interest and demand for this programme component. However, qualitative data from interviews with ActionAid, the IPs in each province, and UNICEF indicates that in spite of multiple rounds of meetings and lengthy discussions with the government stakeholders, this activity was eventually dropped in other provinces. Hence, based on the evidence, government stakeholders were not able to provide an exception despite lengthy discussions. This programme shift was also partially due to COVID-19 movement restrictions and limitations in the number of people who could gather at one time.¹³².

D.2.4.3 Insecurity

There are two types of delays linked to insecurity which influenced programme implementation, and ultimately, the degree to which targets were met. For example, longer-term fighting created persistent security concerns, whereby UNICEF had to close the outpost in the province of Farah on 31st December 2018.¹³³ These areas were simply inaccessible. In Ghor in 2020, UNICEF could not distribute Unconditional Cash Grants due to IP capacity gaps and insecurity, and this directly led to UNICEF's inability to meet that specific target. Similarly, monitoring

¹²⁸ It should be known that there was a separate programme monitoring framework to monitor programme activities.

¹²⁹ The responsible consultants carried out a listing exercise, which is a method used to generate an accurate, representative sample. The data from the listing exercise was intended to feed into a second exercise, the comparison of baseline and the end line survey data. However, when the consultants experienced multiple challenges during the baseline phase, the RCT component was eventually dropped.

¹³⁰ H7 Half-Yearly Progress Report (15 June 2019 - 15 November 2019), page 11.

¹³¹ It should be mentioned that the data from FGDs with the IP in Herat also had their own unique challenges in managing community expectations when supporting the distribution of Unconditional Cash Grants. Log 03.IP.

¹³² H9 Half-Yearly Progress Report (15 May – 30 November 2020), page 14.

¹³³ H6 Half-Yearly Report, Part A, page 6.

results indicate that the number of Community Dialogue sessions were only partially achieved due to some villages in Nangahar provinces being inaccessible due to insecurity and armed clashes.

Separately, there was also indiscriminate insecurity which documents confirm took place in all five provinces, and this insecurity also directly affected programme implementation. For example, the insurgency in Nangarhar province has been fragmented, and Anti-Government Elements have been active in Samangan province, which even affected the conduct of this evaluation.¹³⁴ Herat, a relatively calm province, also experiences such security issues.

Nonetheless, these delays associated with insecurity, despite all the mitigation strategies, capacity limitations of the consultants who experienced significant challenges conducting the baseline assessment, the lack of clarity of the government policy on Livelihood Training, and movement restrictions linked to COVID-19's all effectively reduced the programme's ability to fully meet its targets.

D.2.4.4 Effective management of conflict-related risks

It should be noted that while insecurity is a central theme mentioned throughout the qualitative database, irrespective of the organization or programme staffing level, reports indicate that UNICEF used a mitigation strategy during 2016-2017, wherein it is cited that "AWLI activities were implemented through UNICEF staff based in Kabul, and communication advisors and district advisors based at provincial and district levels. UNICEF staff and National Technical Assistants under the leadership of the respective UNICEF Chiefs of Zonal Offices also facilitated the project implementation and monitored activities regularly."¹³⁵ Another example of conflict-related risk management was at the provincial level. Data from FGDs with IPs indicates that the active Anti-Government Elements adversely affected their ability to work in targeted communities. However, a content analysis from FGDs with IPs showed that one strategy commonly used was to work with the facilitators who were residing in the communities with active Anti-Government Elements, as they would communicate with the IPs when it was safe to return. "In the last quarter of 2020, there was a big fight in one of our key districts and we had no access....They called us back after the fighting subsided."¹³⁶

D.3 Efficiency¹³⁷

OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which the programme's outputs were delivered in a timely and cost-efficient manner.

Sub Questions

Were the programme outputs achieved according to the work plan and timeline?

Were the programme outputs achieved according to the budget and cost-efficiently?

What were the major factors influencing the efficient delivery of outputs?

In examining the budget allocations, with the exception of Community Dialogues, the distribution of Unconditional Cash Grants in Ghor, programme outputs were achieved according to planned expenditures. However, this section elaborates the key factors which impeded the efficient delivery of outputs, examining closely the: (1) causes for delays in work plans and timeline; (2) issues related to monitoring; (3) cost-efficiency.

Management Structure of the Programme

The programme was headed by a UNICEF Youth and Adolescent Development Specialist. Through a Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with ActionAid, a Consortium Team Leader coordinated AWLI's programme activities which were implemented by three different non-governmental organizations, namely WASSA, OHW,

¹³⁴ UNICEF (2019). Good practices and lessons learned: Security risk mitigation, page 2.

¹³⁵ Ibid., page 2.

¹³⁶ AWLI-ECW-Samangan FGD data; AWLI-WASSA FGD data; and UNICEF (2019). Good practices and lessons learned: Security risk mitigation, page 4.

¹³⁷ The extent to which the programme's outputs were delivered in a timely and cost-efficient manner.

ECW in the five provinces. Within each NGO, funding partially or fully covered the engagement of a Gender Advisor, Project Manager, Project Coordinator, District Officer, Community Officers (or facilitators), and a Community Space Officer.¹³⁸ A nominal contribution was provided to participants in Reflect Circles and other community volunteers. For the Unconditional Cash Grant, an independent bank service, the Afghan Besim Mobile Money Company (ABMMC), was used to provide cash directly to families.

FINDING 10	Several challenges prevented the timely delivery of AWLI's outputs, namely: (1) multiple changes in key leadership positions within UNICEF Afghanistan; (2) change in management; (3) delays created by IPs; (4) the Pandemic; and (5) uncoordinated monitoring systems.
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D.3.1 CAUSES FOR DELAYS IN WORK PLANS AND TIMELINE

D.3.1.1 Multiple changes in key leadership positions in ACO

Qualitative interviews and documents revealed there were multiple staff changes in the ACO, which inadvertently affected programme management. For example, a review of donor reports and interviews with Senior Managers indicates that there were three different country representatives, over five years, and three different AWLI programme managers during the same period. While some of this change in staffing may be considered part of UNICEF's emergency duty station staff rotation policies and procedures,¹³⁹ this reality tends to create delays in the overall workplan. **For future programmes, this dimension ought to be considered when designing and planning programmes. In Afghanistan, even the programmes which focus on changing attitudes and behaviors through IPs (based in the provinces) require close monitoring and supervision, especially if the existing monitoring systems do not produce reliable and accurate monitoring data (to be discussed below).** It is also recognized that there are frequent rotations of IRoA officials, in Kabul especially, which may compound the effects of UNICEF's staff changes. Under these circumstances, however, these events may be considered an opportunity to re-engage more actively with government.

D.3.1.2 Change in Management

Donor Reports also show that over the five years, AWLI's Manager temporarily reported to two different supervisors, namely the Education Section Chief and the Deputy Representative's Office, although stakeholder interviews indicate that the Child Protection staff assigned to carry out some of AWLI's training and related follow up activities reported to a Child Protection Manager. The benefit of having the AWLI manager report to the Deputy Representative as a supervisor was that this person could recognize the holistic design of the programme and ensure that the other sections would contribute to AWLI, thereby making programme management more efficient. This means that the management lens was adolescent-centered and not solely focused on education or protection. However, the challenge was when there was an office restructuring, and the AWLI Manager had to report to the education section, under Girls' Education Unit. Under these circumstances, inefficiencies increased, as AWLI no longer benefited from a supervisor with a wider view of adolescent programming within the ACO. Moreover, AWLI had to compete with the other priorities (girls' enrollment in ALCs) for which that new supervisor was responsible. These circumstances of selective monitoring and follow-up (part of programme management) would inherently weaken the efficiencies that were already created. In essence, as reports and data from KII's indicate that change management occurred two times between 2015 and 2020, the **multi-sectoral programme was positioned in different sections within the Country Office's programme portfolio.**¹⁴⁰ To maintain efficiencies, AWLI should have been positioned under the supervision of a staff member who was not likely to change (or leave).

¹³⁸ Source: budget information supplied by UNICEF.

¹³⁹ United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF's Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure, from the Executive Office, CF/EXD/2011-001, 2011; and United Nations Children's Fund, Simplified Standard Operating Procedures for Level 3 Emergencies (L3 SSOPs), 2015.

¹⁴⁰ Data from KII's and document review show that initially, AWLI's management started under the supervision of the Deputy Representative, and then it was shifted to the Child Protection section around 2016 to 2017. In 2018, another change management occurred, repositioning AWLI in the Girls' Education Unit.

D.3.1.3 Capacity Limitations

As noted earlier, partner capacity limitations also affected the delivery of the baseline data collection, which in turn delayed the implementation of the programme. This delay prolonged the overall timeline and workplan.

D.3.1.4 The Pandemic

There are notable gaps in coverage for Community Dialogues, Unconditional Cash Grant, the Community-based Livelihood Training, and the Community-based Life Skills Training was reduced to a limited scale (reduced targets). An array of contextual challenges explains these gaps. Due to COVID-19, community-based activities were suspended during March to June 2020, and IPs continued to conduct community-based activities, albeit with fewer participants. Hence, this evidences why targets could not be met.

It was this circumstance which led to the proposal for reprogramming and the addition of the fourth objective, focusing on the distribution of supplies. Another compounding factor was the cold climate, and so schools in Farah and Ghor typically close (from March to September). **While it is recognized that UNICEF is an organization with strong capacity, and so a contingency, or back up plan would have helped to better navigate the challenges linked to the Pandemic.**

D.3.2 UNCOORDINATED MONITORING SYSTEMS

AWLI's monitoring architecture consists of a database of beneficiaries exposed to various programme interventions. This is a detailed excel sheet which includes the beneficiary names, contact information, gender, language spoken, and location. Age, date of participant registration into the programme, and education levels were not consistent variables in the file. This reservoir of information was used to produce quarter progress reports generated by AAA (from WASSA, OHW and ECW), which, in turn, fed into donor reports and the RAM. In addition, for the Unconditional Cash Grants, there was a PDM spreadsheet which included survey responses from 230 recipients (out of 472). There was no variable for the adolescent's age in this spreadsheet.

To examine programme monitoring, the evaluation drew from the donor reports and other available UNICEF documents (i.e., Annual Reports and budgets). However, when calculating the number of beneficiaries independently, the Team Leader found that the numbers were not consistent with those presented in the donor reports. While all programme components had gender disaggregated data, the available data was not consistently separated by age.¹⁴¹ This data gap is critical to the strategic management of a programme that focuses on adolescents, as the development outcomes between an 11 year old compared to a 17 year old are very different.

Furthermore, the data from donor reports showed that the target for direct beneficiaries had been incorrectly presented in the previous progress reports and was corrected based on the targets mentioned in the original donor agreement. When the Team Leader calculated the number of beneficiaries reached throughout the programme's timeline, it appeared that there was slow, progressive participation from targeted adolescents from the beginning of the 2018, finishing with a significant growth in 2020. When triangulating this finding with data from KIIs with UNICEF and IPs, inconsistencies were evident. **It is important for all programmes to have a system which produces reliable and accurate monitoring data.** While this situation could have been remedied with a recommendation for stronger cooperation in data sharing between UNICEF and IPs, this recommendation has already been made by a 2020 evaluation.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ Given that age was not a consistent variable in both the beneficiary or the PDM database, this observation is logical.

¹⁴² Konterra Group (2020). Adolescents in Afghanistan: A Portfolio Evaluation with a Gender Lens (2015–2019) Evaluation commissioned by the UNICEF Afghanistan Country Office, Hermania Majoor (Team Leader) Belén Díaz (International Evaluator) ATR Consulting.

D.3.3 COST-EFFICIENCY

In response to the question about whether the programme outputs were achieved according to the budget, it has been explained in effectiveness section that the outputs for two activities were only partially met (i.e., Community Dialogues and Unconditional Cash Grants were suspended in Ghor). The margin for the target number of Community Dialogues (4,463 out of a planned target of 5,000) is relatively small. Indeed, it was mentioned that some villages in Ghor and Nangahar provinces were inaccessible due to insecurity. However, the partial achievement of Unconditional Cash Grant distributions created a surplus in the budget. Initially, the overall target for Unconditional Cash Grants was 3,000 beneficiaries, and this target was later reduced to 950 beneficiaries. Ultimately only 472 households in Herat received a grant.

As explained earlier, when the Pandemic restricted movement and prevented participants from gathering into groups, UNICEF sought solutions by reprogramming and adding the fourth objective focused on the distribution of supplies. This was an adaptive and cost-efficient management approach. The procurement of recreation and hygiene kits and handwashing stations was successful, as this component not only expended the surplus of funds, but it also exceeded the planned target. Recall that the target was to support 50,000 adolescent girls in five provinces, but it affected over 97,000 adolescent girls.

In summary, there were frequent rotations in UNICEF senior management (as well as the IRoA partners) from 2015 to 2020. The combination of AWLI's inconsistent position within the programme portfolio, an unreliable monitoring system, and the effects of the pandemic challenged the efficient use of available resources. However, the surplus of funds was expended cost-efficiently by investing in the fourth objective focused on the procurement and distribution of supplies.

D.4 Sustainability¹⁴³

OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which the AWLI interventions can be scaled up, and the capacity of Government partners to assume the responsibility of carrying these initiatives forward.

Sub Question

What strategies and interventions of the programme are most likely to be scaled up or sustained after the implementation of the programme?

This section presents the process used for the official transitioning of AWLI activities to national partners, followed by: (1) the key interventions not likely to be sustained; (2) the activities that beneficiaries indicated in; (3) and factors facilitating and impeding scale-up.

FINDING 11	The outputs from AWLI (Safe Spaces and Mini Media Clubs) have been handed over to national partners, but certain activities are not likely to be sustained due to the pandemic and limited community reception, especially in Nangahar and Samangan. Given the requests for the continuation of Community Dialogues Reflect Circles and high demand for Safe Space services in Herat, however, targeted funding could facilitate their future continuation and scale up.
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D.4.1 PROCESS USED FOR OFFICIAL HANDOVER

Documents and data from KIs indicate that in the beginning, the AWLI programme leveraged the use of provincial level steering committees to secure an active participation of relevant Government departments from the: (1) provincial Education Directorate (PED); (2) Department of Women's Affairs (DoWA); (3) Department of Labour and Social Affairs (DoLSA); and (4) Department of Youth Affairs (DoYA). Given this involvement, the data from

¹⁴³ The extent to which the AWLI interventions can be scaled up, and the capacity of Government partners to assume the responsibility of carrying these initiatives forward.

FGDs with IPs also indicates that AWLI's programme components have transitioned to the appropriate national and provincial partners of PED (for the Mini-Media Clubs) and DoWA directorates and departments (for the Safe Spaces).

D.4.2 INTERVENTIONS NOT LIKELY TO BE SUSTAINED

Data from FGDs IPs indicates that only a small number of the Mini Media Clubs in Samangan and one Safe Space in Herat continue to function since the official handover. As for the Community Dialogues and Reflect Circles, only a limited number of references within FGDs with IPs suggests that communities continue to meet independently since the programme ended in December of 2020, albeit irregularly.¹⁴⁴

While the **Mini Media Clubs** are embedded in government schools and are therefore under the management of the PED, this activity is not likely to be sustained due to the cessation of instruction as a result of the Pandemic. Similarly, the **Safe Spaces in Nangahar and Samangan** are not likely to be sustained in spite of their management by DoWA, as they functioned like venues for other programme activities. While the **Community-based Livelihood Training** had strong uptake in Samagan, the fact that there were challenges linked to interpretations of government policy on Livelihood Training *in general* leads the evaluation to conclude that this activity is also not likely to be sustainable. Finally, given the difficulties with **Unconditional Cash Grants** in Ghor, it would be necessary for a comprehensive risk assessment in order to continue this intervention. Indeed, data from the FGD with WASSA indicated that there were difficulties in spite of careful planning, namely: (1) organizing multiple sessions to engage with communities with potential beneficiaries; (2) taking multiple steps not to create false expectations; and (3) providing a full description of the eligibility criteria (having one adolescent girl aged 10-15 in the household). IP capacity is therefore an integral to scale up. **Nonetheless, given that this evaluation has found a positive response to the Community Dialogues, Reflect Circles, and Safe Spaces (in Herat only), there is an opportunity for scaling up these interventions in a sustainable manner.**¹⁴⁵

OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which the AWLI interventions can be scaled up, and the capacity of Government partners to assume the responsibility of carrying these initiatives forward.

Sub Questions

Have beneficiaries indicated any interest in seeing the programme scaled?

What would facilitate or impede the scale-up of the AWLI intervention?

D.4.3 BENEFICIARY INTEREST IN SCALED UP ACTIVITIES

AWLI has a complex design which is intensive, drawing on a great deal of intersectoral coordination. Though IP and participant interviews indicate that Community Dialogue and Reflect Circle sessions are not likely to be retained without additional finding, a content analysis shows that there are male and female champions based *within the community* whose values are aligned with the AWLI's objectives (priorities). This is especially in Herat and Samangan. Moreover, an earlier section evidenced that programme participants requested that the Community Dialogues and Reflect Circles continue. In the Impact section, it will be evidenced that there is an opportunity for the Reflect Circles and Community Dialogues to be scaled up, so long as there is nominal compensation to female and male volunteers (aged 18 to 22). The rational for focusing on young female and male volunteers is elaborated in the impact section.

¹⁴⁴ FDG ECW, FGD OHW, and FGD WASSA.

¹⁴⁵ It should be noted that the Community-based Livelihood Training, Community-based Life Skills training, and Unconditional Cash Grants, were also positively received, but the data is insufficient to recommend further support.

D.4.4 FACTORS INFLUENCING SCALE-UP

Government willingness is a critical to sustaining programme activities. As noted earlier, while there was strong interest and demand for Community-based Livelihood Training, interviewed stakeholders confirm that this activity was eventually dropped in all provinces except for Samangan, despite numerous meetings with the government.

A content analysis revealed that community interest, enthusiasm, and demand for service(s) are also key drivers to successful programme delivery. The communities in Herat and Samangan provinces demonstrated their interest in Community Dialogues, Reflect Circles. As evidenced, the Safe Space in Herat had a demand for psychosocial services which exceeded what could be supplied.

As evidenced above, IP capacity is major factor which would impede scale up. For example, data from KIIs and FGDs confirm that IPs had strong capacity to craft messages and communicate the harmful effects of early marriage and terminating girl's education. Conversely, the competencies of the other IP responsible for the baseline data were lacking, as they could not manage community expectations regarding the Unconditional Cash Grants. As noted above, the IP in Herat, WASSA, also confirmed the challenges of managing community expectations.

Finally, pursuant to E/I/CEF/2019/P/L.2¹⁴⁶, the ACO's Country Programme of Cooperation (CPC) will be ending in 2021, which also influences the scale-up of the AWLI intervention. Given this circumstance, the ACO has a limited window in which to act before the new CPC begins.

It should be noted that prior to scaling up or continuing interventions, it is necessary to examine future needs, including but not limited to: (1) what would entail the expanded coverage; (2) what would the contributions from the government partners' limited infrastructure and capacity to adopt the initiative; (3) whether the models for Community Dialogues, Reflect Circles, and Safe Spaces should be further tested, perhaps adding other components to the existing models; and (4) potential weaknesses and threats that might have negative (or unplanned) impact as a result of scaling up of these activities.

D.5 Coherence¹⁴⁷

OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which other interventions with similar objectives complement or contradict the programme and vice versa.

Sub Questions

How compatible was the AWLI programme with other interventions aimed at:

- achieving girl's empowerment?
- increasing school attendance?
- reducing child marriage?

Include internationally-led, nationally-led, and local grassroots interventions.

This section presents an overview of how compatible AWLI is with global and national programmes focusing on promoting girl's education and reducing child/early marriage, within and outside of UNICEF. It should be noted that this section does not consider interventions which aim to strengthen girl's empowerment, because this is a conceptual area that goes beyond the scope of AWLI's specific interventions.

FINDING 12

Though there is one global programme to end child marriage, evidence about grassroots or national initiatives designed to directly reduce child marriage was limited. However, there are many national programmes aimed to encourage education for girls. While there are not

¹⁴⁶ UNICEF (2019). Extensions of ongoing country programmes which includes Afghanistan from 2019 through 2021.

¹⁴⁷ The extent to which other interventions with similar objectives complement or contradict the programme and vice versa.

very many contradictions in these education programmes, the synergies specifically within UNICEF-administered programmes are not explicit.

D.5.1 AWLI'S COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER PROGRAMMES

A review of initiatives designed to reduce child marriage in Afghanistan yielded very limited information. Globally, however, AWLI's structure is somewhat consistent with the preventative measures used by **the Global Programme to End Child Marriage**. Administered by UNICEF and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), this four-year programme, worth over USD 127 million dollars, is executed in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Yemen, and Zambia.¹⁴⁸ Within Afghanistan, in Badghis and Baryam provinces, the Improving Adolescents' Lives in Afghanistan (IALA) programme focuses on empowering adolescents by enhancing their knowledge, improving their access to information and supporting their rights to healthier and safer lifestyles. It has three key objectives: (1) reducing child marriage; (2) lowering the incidence of teenage pregnancy; and (3) enhancing female educational outcomes through increased secondary school (re)enrolment.¹⁴⁹

Similarly, data from a stakeholder interview and documents from the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF Afghanistan) confirm the existence of several education programmes aimed at increasing girls school attendance.¹⁵⁰ Currently, the focus is on community development in governance, civil society, market development, natural resource management, infrastructure, health and education. Working under the government's qualification framework, AKF's education programmes concentrate on school-based education from kindergarten through twelfth grade. In addition, the Girls' Education Support Programme (GESP) provides support for AKF's existing education programmes. The programme started with the coordination of the District Education Department where AKF identified remote schools where girl's enrolment was low and needed GESP's support. The main goal of this programme was to increase girls' access to school and create an encouraging environment to keep them in school, both in terms of more supportive teaching practices and the commitment of their communities and the school system to further their education. These programmes are designed to:

- Decrease dropout rates (through children's rights to education awareness);
- Increase graduation rates by promoting girl's enrolment;
- Increase attendance at and success in the Kankor exam. AKF conducted Kankor preparation courses which provided supplementary support for students to help them familiarize themselves with the Kankor syllabus and exam-writing skills.
- Increase the number of female teachers by transferring teachers from urban to remote areas; and
- Better equip and resource schools and classrooms through physical infrastructure.¹⁵¹

Finally, one of UNICEF's education programmes, the Girls' Access to Teacher Education (GATE) programme, specifically increases access to education for girls by supplying female teachers, which is compatible with AWLI. The multi-purpose adolescent groups (MAGs), an entry point to work with girls on protection-related issues, are also compatible with AWLI.¹⁵²

OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which other interventions with similar objectives complement or contradict the programme and vice versa.

Sub Question

What synergies, linkages, contradictions, duplications, exist?

¹⁴⁸ UNFPA and UNICEF (November 2019). Global programme to end child marriage: Phase II programme document 2020-2013.

¹⁴⁹ Center for Evaluation and Development (2019) Evaluation of the Programme on Improving Adolescents Lives in Afghanistan Midline Report for UNICEF, page 12.

¹⁵⁰ Roy, P. (2019). Case study: Aga Khan Foundation girls' education support programme-Flexible Response Fund, and the AKF Afghanistan Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning Unit, page 4-5; and Log 009.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., page 4-5.

¹⁵² UNICEF Afghanistan. Child Protection Programme Strategy Note (2020-2021).

D.5.2 SYNERGIES, LINKAGES, CONTRADICTIONS & DUPLICATIONS

Many of the programmes from the AGF and UNICEF have similar designs and outcomes linked to girl's empowerment and education, but few are dedicated to the reduction of early marriage. Indeed, data from KIIs with IRoA, IPs, and UNICEF confirm that AWLI's premise of raising awareness about the harmful effects of early marriage through a multi-sectoral approach is unique.¹⁵³ Moreover, based on the qualitative data, there do not appear to be any contradictions. In fact, AWLI has **linkages** and **synergies** with ongoing UNICEF programmes in other sectors (i.e., education, gender, and WASH). Several interviewed staff members cited specific examples of programmatic linkages. AWLI's activities were linked with those associated with the GATE, and "this was good result." The WASH programme, targeting schools and teachers, focuses on menstruation health among adolescent girls. As menstruation can prompt action for an early marriage, the WASH programme staff inspired teachers to raise awareness about the harmful effects of early marriage. Finally, the staff member responsible for the provision of technical assistance in gender noted that "it only makes sense to talk about maternal health issues with adolescents" when conveying messages about the harmful effects of child marriage and pregnancy. In the effectiveness section, it has been evidenced that the maternal health is a major concern among programme participants in the sampled provinces, and so those messages are very effective.¹⁵⁴

Since AKF and UNICEF's programmes are located in different geographical areas, there is little duplication in the areas of girl's education and empowerment. However, the Adolescent Portfolio Evaluation noted duplications *within UNICEF's programmes*, and this could be remedied with a ToC for adolescent programming. According to the Adolescents in Afghanistan: A Portfolio Evaluation with a Gender Lens (2015–2019) Evaluation, this insightful gap has already been observed, and their recommendation was to "generate a full-fledged Theory of Change for adolescent work in Afghanistan, which should be a collective effort with inputs from all different ACO sectors to ensure the appropriate synergistic work across the board."¹⁵⁵

D.6 Impact

OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which the project has increased secondary school enrolment of out of school adolescent girls and changed social behaviours and attitudes towards child marriage.

Sub Questions

What difference has the project made in changing perceptions of the target groups on child marriage?

How successful has the combination of social mobilization activities and cash transfers been on increasing secondary enrolment rates of adolescent girls and changing social behaviour towards child marriage vis-à-vis social mobilization interventions alone?

How has raising awareness on the harmful effects of child marriage contributed to adolescent girls being able to attend school and subsequently enhanced their chances of delaying marriage?

D.6.1 EVALUATION QUESTIONS NOT FULLY ADDRESSED

It should be noted, however, that the KEQ, "**How successful has the combination of social mobilization activities and cash transfers been on increasing secondary enrolment rates of adolescent girls and changing social behaviour towards child marriage vis-à-vis social mobilization interventions alone?**" cannot be comprehensively addressed. The interviewed families with adolescent girls who received Unconditional Cash Grants did not participate in social mobilization activities. Therefore, the implication is that

¹⁵³ Log 003, 03 IP, Log 004, and Log 001.

¹⁵⁴ Log 002, Log 006, & Log 003.

¹⁵⁵ Konterra Group (2020). Adolescents in Afghanistan: A Portfolio Evaluation with a Gender Lens (2015–2019) Evaluation commissioned by the UNICEF Afghanistan Country Office, Hermania Majoor (Team Leader) Belén Díaz (International Evaluator) ATR Consulting, pages 36-37.

the lack of data did not permit a two-group comparison of (i) those who had only participated in SBC; with (ii) those who had received a grant and participated in SBC activities.

Moreover, the KEQ, “**How has raising awareness on the harmful effects of child marriage contributed to adolescent girls being able to attend school and subsequently enhanced their chances of delaying marriage?**” was also not fully addressed due to a lack of evidence that **connects** the number of delayed marriages with relative increases in the number of adolescent girls attending secondary school. Nonetheless, a finding in this section partially addresses this KEQ, as it describes how religious leaders take action and support the promotion of education for many girls, but they may be less action-oriented when it comes to holding community members to account in refraining from early marriage.

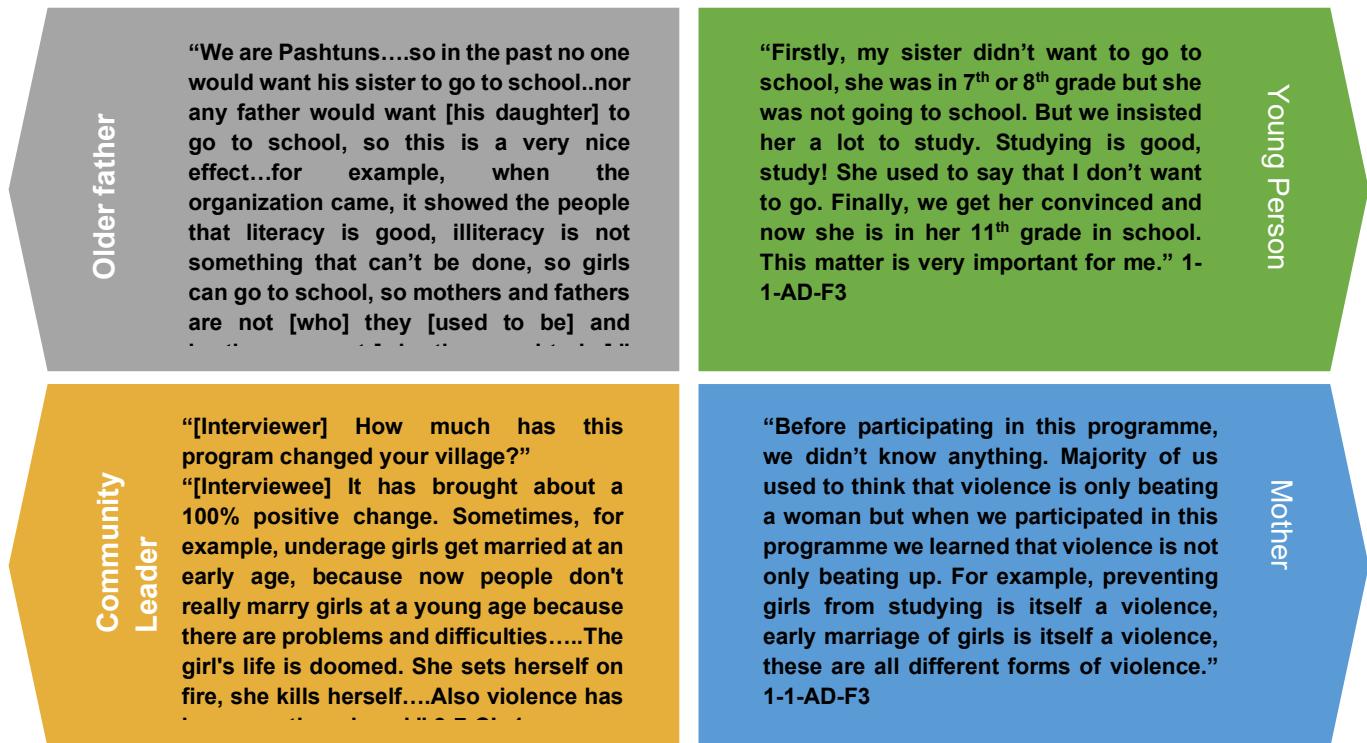
This section describes the: (1) differences that AWLI has made in beneficiaries’ lives; (2) the conditions under which girl’s education has been continued; (3) where early marriages have been delayed/ended; (4) if beneficiaries used child/women’s rights reasoning to raise awareness about the harmful effects of discontinuing education and early marriages; (5) whether AWLI influenced girls to make life choices; and (6) intended/unintended effects of AWLI on community/household tensions.

FINDING 13	While only a small number of participants expressed that after experiencing the programme, their perspectives had changed , there are many examples from rights holder young males and females and duty bearer parents, wherein their raised awareness through interpersonal communications [reportedly] led them to taking some form of action. However, adolescents (ages 11-17) and community and religious leaders appear to be less action-oriented for different reasons.
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Increasing school attendance and changing behaviour towards child marriage

D.6.1.1 Limited evidence about attitude change from the past compared to the present

The evidence shows that most of those interviewed have **gained an awareness of** (experienced a shift in Figure 8: Quotes confirming attitudinal change.



mindfulness) about the harmful effects of early marriage and discontinuing education. However, this finding alone **does not confirm** that there was necessarily *an attitude change* from the past compared to the present. Specifically, from the qualitative data, only a small number of participants expressed that after experiencing the programme, their perspectives had **changed**. Four examples of observations wherein the respondent reported a change in mindset (see figure below). The above observations, from Community Leaders, an older father and mother, and a young person, highlight how practices from the past have changed in the community and from within themselves.

D.6.1.2 Examples from four stakeholder groups

In response to the question about "What difference has the project made in changing perceptions child marriage?", the qualitative data confirms that some stakeholders have experienced or/and observed changed attitudes within themselves or and their communities. The interview data from rights holder young males and females includes a considerable number of examples where they have spoken up and taken advantage of opportunities to convince others in their families or communities to delay a boy's and girl's marriage or encourage the continuation of their education.¹⁵⁶

In recalling the specific steps within the ToC, **IF** the rights holder [who make be at risk of child marriage] receives opportunities through the provision of information and capacity development activities (e.g., life skills training, conflict resolution skills, messages about continuing education), **THEN** an action takes place. There are two actions expected to follow, namely (i) she is expected to express herself (or speak up) and; (ii) exercise having

¹⁵⁶ AWLI-ECW-Samangan FGD; 1-2-AD-M1; 3-7-CL1; 3-9-CL1.

choices regarding marriage and sexual and reproductive health. It appears that these two actions (self-expression and making choices) do not follow in sequence.

D.6.1.2.1 Examples from young rights holders (aged from 18 to 24)

The qualitative data from young rights holders, duty bearer parents, and community and religious leaders indicates that once messages were accepted, these rights holders exercised their rights and **took action** within their own families by encouraging and motivating others to change their practices. The gear figure below is intended to highlight how the community stakeholders are interconnected. Each stakeholder group's data is color coded to help clarify to convey the perspective of each stakeholder. Figure 9 shows the data for rights holder young males and females (ages 18+).

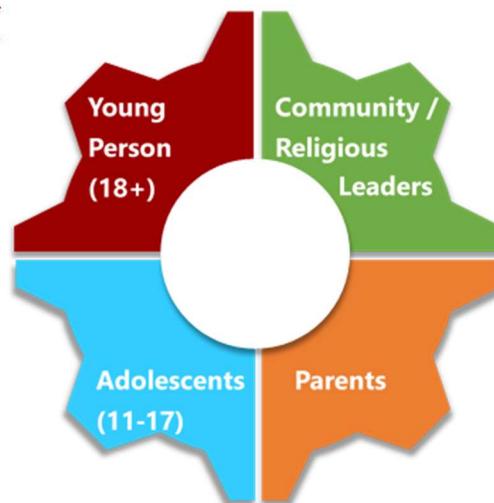
Figure 9: Qualitative data-young people.

"There was one of our relatives who wanted to get her daughter married underage and the girl did not even agree about it. **We told them** that they should ask the girl if she is not happy about it then she should not marry. When we told them, they accepted our words and let the girl to get mature enough for marriage.

It is a very important matter for me to prevent early marriages and everyone should do this (preventing early marriages from happening)." 1-1-AD-F3

..Mullah...explain[ed] to us time and time again that when we used to do prayers in the evening, he should explain to us again and again that a sister and daughter should not be married early. The child should not be worked hard on, the child should not be prevented from attending school...." 3-9-AD-M1

We talked with my cousin. My cousin was taken from school by her father and brothers. Then I went to my midwife family and said, "Why did you take her from school?" They said, "What are these schools for? Go to religious schools and things like that." I also told him that there is no infidel school there, religious education are included in their lessons. Now **they have re-included her in grade 9** 3-5-AD-F5



Numerous examples of these actions include someone who has been exposed to the programme approaching another person within their family or community circle (directly or indirectly). For example, "we went to her father **and told him**", "I went to them **to stop them**..but they didn't listen to me, so I told my father about it."; "I told my brother to convince him"; "She was in the 10th grade, then he expelled her from school, my brother called my father from Iran **and told him that my sister could continue her studies**"; "and then I went to his mother. I told her mother that I had gone to a seminar today on violence against women who talked about early marriages"; and "Mullah X explain[ed] to us....that a sister and daughter should not be married early....the child should not be prevented from attending school." Additional quotations are located below.

"There was this family that engaged their daughter. I tried a lot so they don't do it. There was another girl that they wanted to give her to someone, I went to them to stop them but they didn't listen to me, So I told my father about it. My father is a chairman, when he went to their house and told them not to do so, they accepted. We didn't let the small girl to get

"My father don't let me to continue my education. **I told my brother to convince him so that I could continue my studies.** My brother is a good man and he is encouraging me to continue my education. He talks a

My father would not let my sister study. She was in the 10th grade that he expelled her from school, my brother called my father from Iran and told him that my sister could continue her studies, she is currently continuing her studies. It is important for me to continue my

"We went, whether in the family or in the village or going to our relatives' house, we shared with them that they should prevent this fact. **That is before it happens, we should prevent it, and they should not ruin the future of their children.**" 2-4-AD-F1

engaged, when they didn't listen to me, I asked my father for help." 2-5-AD-F5

lot with my father I don't know if he will let me or not." 1-2-AD-F3

"One of our relatives (she was an aunt's granddaughter) wanted to marry her underage daughter to a husband. Again I went and talked to my aunt and they agreed not to marry their daughter underage." 2-6-AD-F1

"...We had a 13-year-old [niece] whom people proposed. [Her] father was also agreeing. But me and my father stood up in the end and told her father it will ruin her life and she will have problems, [and] after a lot of advice they rejected the marriage proposal." 3-7-AD-F2

education as well. 1-3-AD-F4

"The girl was 12 years old, and they wanted to give [her] to her uncle's son (the son of her mother's brother), while her uncle's son was old, and the girl did not want it. The girl wanted to go to school. But they did not allow it and told her that we would arrange for engagement. But the girl did not accept this. Her mother did not agree neither. Our neighbor told us this and then I went to his mother. I told her mother that I had gone to a seminar today on violence against women who talked about early marriages. You should marry the girl at her legal age because she has not reached the legal age, and this is harmful to her. It causes violence among families. I solved the problem by using the seminar I had joined, but I do not understand that they did not listen to me." 2-5-AD-F6

D.6.1.2.2 Examples from adolescent rights holders (aged from 11 to 17)

The above quotes are from young males and females, and it is evident that these individuals are proactive and outspoken. The quotes from adolescent girls (below), however, appear to be **more soft-spoken** and less action-oriented with,

Figure 10: Qualitative data-adolescents.

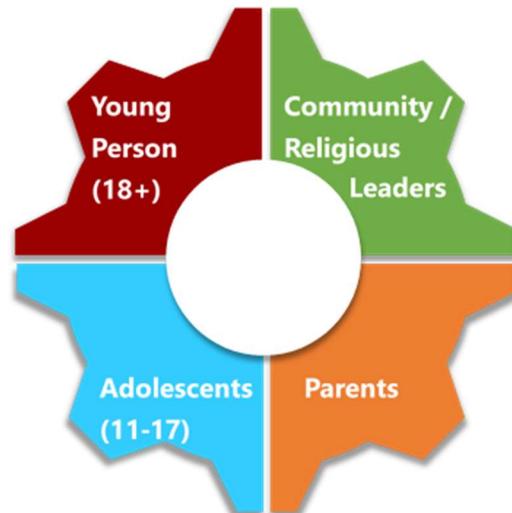
"My cousin....she left in 9th grade due to people's harassment and abuse, but then her father allowed her and now she is in 11th grade. It is very important to me..... (age 13) 3-9-AD-F3

"[Female cousin] was very young and the boy was an old man. There were a lot of problems in [her] life, there were no mothers-in-law or fathers-in-law, but there would be a lot of quarrels with her husband.....She would tell her uncles (and my father was also one of her uncles)...She said, 'Look, I can't take care of my husband at a young age....I do not know how to raise children because I am young'. From then on, I realized that when I grow up

"The one who is educated has a higher social class and the one who has not, has a lower class. The one has studied becomes a doctor or an engineer [or] a teacher and so on. Then the one who is not educated is left behind in ..."

My classmate is engaged, and I didn't talk to her that she was young and she should not marry. 1-1-AD-F9-GR (age 14)

"There was a friend of mine who got married at the age of 10 to her cousin. There was no public awareness at the time to make people understand...no one [protested]." 3-9-AD-F5 (age 15)



Additional full quotations are located below.

"In my family no one is currently married underage. But there are many relatives. Even two of my cousins got engaged at the age of 12 and 13....I [went to] a hospital, the man was 45 years old, he was very old. He was married to an 11-year-old girl. I [thought] there is a big difference between this man and the girl. I talked to [some] mothers [about this] and told them not to do this [to me], this is wrong." 1-3-AD-F7 (age 15)

"It is important to learn because education is a good thing, it is like a lamp that illuminates the whole room." 3-7-AD-F1 (age 16)

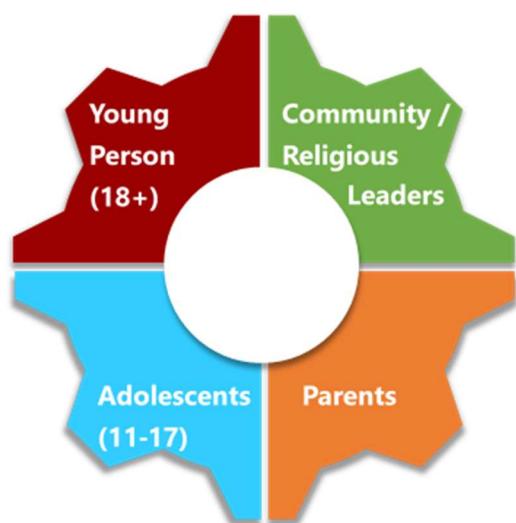
Briefly, the older males and females interviewed (aged between 18 to 24) are **more action-oriented**, intervening within the family dynamics of others-either indirectly or directly, whereas the younger adolescents (aged between 11 to 17) are comparably less likely to follow through with action. One explanation for the constrained self-

expression is that younger participants may be still in the process of forming an opinion and may have not reached a point of *exercising a choice regarding marriage or sexual and reproductive health* (or even convincing someone else to change their practices). The perspectives of younger participants appear, however, to be forming. For example, the above participant's disclosure about "From then on, I realized that when I grow up enough, I can do these things," suggests that there is a process of forming an opinion taking place (or the initial phases of verbalizing her own opinion) but may not have reached a point of deciding to act.

D.6.1.2.3 Examples from duty bearer parents

When testing the logic for the ToC for parent duty bearers, the reasoning for the conceptual framework also holds true. That is, **IF** the duty bearer parents engage in, and in turn promote a supportive environment, through SBC activities (which include (i) raising awareness and (ii) stimulating dialogue about the negative consequences of early marriage and ending education), **THEN** the parents may demonstrate positive attitudes and favorable behaviours regarding gender equality, which includes exercising their authority, delaying early marriages, or supporting the pursuit of secondary (or higher) education.

Figure 11: Qualitative data-parents.



The elders said that the girls of the village should become educated. The girls will also be able to talk and speak for themselves. The boys will also learn something. **Now we send boys and girls to schools in the village.** 3-9-

"There have been a lot of positive changes [because of the programme]. Now no one marries little ones and no one works on them. Everybody educates them and sends them to school.... they say that it is also mentioned in the Holy Quran that you should not make your children get married at a young age.... **It is harmful to boys and it is harmful to girls.**" 3-7-PF2. 42 year old father

"...the **marriages were stopped prematurely**...[the programme] turned it around. The other thing that used to be [was] that ...a sister would be married in [an] exchange. But all of it is gone now. It's all a big change." 3-9-PM1 44

"One of our neighbor's girl was excluded from going to school because of her uncle, so we **the council members and some elders prevented** that from happening and decided to let the girl to go back to school." 2-5-PM3 48

As indicated earlier, the content analysis of the qualitative data set has several examples, wherein once messages were accepted, duty bearer parents also **took decisions** within their own families and communities by helping others to change their behaviour. One respondent notes, "The first thing I did was I implement it [the programme] on myself. My cousin [was] supposed to be married to me. She was younger than me. Then I didn't accept it..."¹⁵⁷ Several other examples include cases where "they wanted to make a girl marry in her early age, the girl was a student in her seventh or eighth grade of school... **Then we went to her father** and told him to let his girl study and that it's a bad habit or forcing girls"; "when someone wants to get married, the boy and girl both are expected to know their rights and responsibilities"; As a teacher....we always **talk about the harms of early marriages** and we try to save our society from this disaster....and this is everyone's responsibility"¹⁵⁸; and "Now people are aware...if someone come as a suitor for a little girl **[we] will tell them that she is underage and now early**

¹⁵⁷ 3.8.PM2.

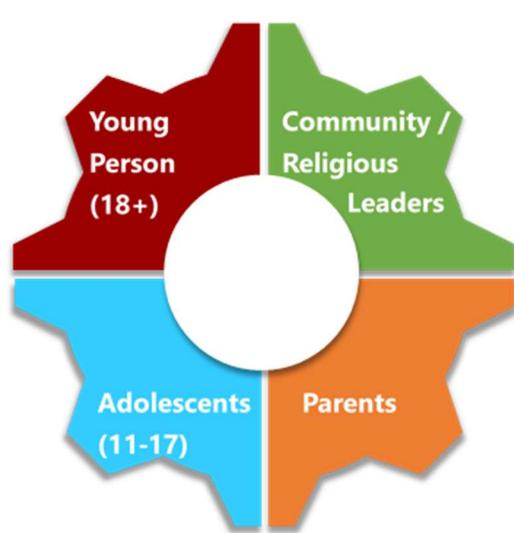
¹⁵⁸ 2-6-AD-M1.

marriage doesn't happen.¹⁵⁹ Finally, themes from duty bearer parents also highlighted the importance showing responsibility to delay marriages and promote education for **boys and girls**.¹⁶⁰

D.6.1.2.1 Examples from community & religious leaders

After assessing the ToC for community and religious leaders, it appears that there are mixed results. As noted earlier, the awareness raising messages take on multiple forms, namely health, mental health, the important investment of education, and **religion**. Naturally, the content analysis from community and religious leaders emphasize the links among early marriage and stopping education with religious messages, or what is considered acceptable in the Quran. There appears to be goodwill in showing support to the project, as mullahs and community leaders help to transmit messages during meetings, and as fathers, they take a stance and allow their own daughters to go to school.¹⁶¹

Figure 12: : Qualitative data-community and religious leaders.



"One day the focus of the program was about early marriages. Then, I came back to the mosque I told people about it....After three days, I was invited to an engagement ceremony....I asked that what is going on? ...They said that we engaged him with that person's sister.

I told them that she is too young and underage. This girl doesn't have a father, she is under guardianship, and she doesn't have a right to select a solicitor. they should let her become mature enoughBoth families were good people so they decided that they will wait for three years to do the marriage. 1-2-RL1 56 year old male

A father who wanted to marry his daughter informed us as Qaari Sahib [someone who has memorized Quran] and religious leader. We went with the head of the council, village head, and relatives, and we canceled the girl's marriage. 2-5-RL1 54 year old male

People had awareness specially in forced and underage marriages, which have faced problems in many places and have caused conflicts between the region and relatives. People were also informed on education. 1-3-CL1 36 year old male

However, **there is limited evidence that the AWL's awareness raising components about the harmful effects of child marriage have, indeed, contributed to the delay of marriages**.¹⁶² That is, the messages appear to be effective, but behaviour change is limited, particularly when it comes to the community and religious leaders taking advantage of their power to hold others in the community to account for (specifically) early marriage. There is comparably a larger amount of evidence that the programme has helped many stakeholders within the community and family to take action and support the promotion of education for many girls.

To summarize, the KEQ was "What difference has the programme made in changing perceptions about child marriage?". When validating the ToC, there are countless examples in the qualitative data where young rights holder males and females and duty bearer parents have spoken up and taken the following action: (i) informed others of the harmful effects of early marriage and discontinuing girls' education; (ii) intervened in a planned marriage with and without success; (iii) convinced a family member to let a girl continue her education. This evidence confirms that some stakeholders have experienced or/and observed changed attitudes within

¹⁵⁹ Similar data from: 2-5-AD-M3; 2-6-PF1; and 3-8-AD-F5.

¹⁶⁰ 1-2-AD-M1, 3-9-PM1, 3-7-RL1, 2-5-RL2

¹⁶¹ 2-5-RL2, 2-5-CL1, and 3-9-AD-M1.

¹⁶² 2-5-CL1 57, 2-5-CL2

themselves or and their communities. **As this stakeholder group is action-oriented, they would make strong candidates to participate in the Reflect Circles, in the event that this intervention were to be scaled up.**

There is only a partial fulfillment of the intermediate outcomes in the ToC, however, because the data from adolescents and Religious and Community Leaders does not explicitly show a difference attitudes or behaviour. Compared to the young rights holder males and females and duty bearer parents, adolescents (between 11-17) are **comparably less action oriented**. They are not intervening within the family dynamics of others-either indirectly or directly. One explanation is that adolescents may be still in the process of developing an opinion and may have not reached a point of *exercising a choice regarding marriage or sexual and reproductive health*.

It is the behaviour of the Community and Religious Leaders which allows one to conclude that the ToC's Intermediate Objectives are only **partial met**. Indeed, there are examples where the Community Leaders and Religious Leaders take action and support the promotion of education for many girls. However, there are only a few examples where these stakeholders take action by using their power to hold others in the community to account for (specifically) early marriage. **Given this conclusion, AWLI's awareness raising components about the harmful effects of child marriage have and discontinuing education are, indeed, effective, but the evidence does not support that the programme contributed to the delay of marriages.**¹⁶³

OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which the project has increased secondary school enrolment of out of school adolescent girls and changed social behaviours and attitudes towards child marriage.

Sub Question

Have they delayed marriage by raising awareness on the rights of adolescent girls to education, or for other reasons?

FINDING 14	While older males and females (aged between 18 to 24) and duty bearer parents were action-oriented , demonstrating a sense of responsibility to delay marriages and promote education, the extent to which they use women's rights or child rights reasoning is uncertain. However, Community and Religious Leaders were more likely to be aware of the women and child rights terminology, yet they were less likely to take action by using their powers to hold others in the community to account.
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As already mentioned, older males and females (aged between 18 to 24) are more action-oriented, directly speaking up and intervening within their own family dynamics or that of others, and so several examples (noted above) show how early marriages were either prevented or delayed. The extent to which they use women's rights or child rights reasoning is uncertain, however. There were very few examples where older males and females drew attention to injustices by using rights-based terminology. Similarly, examples presented above show that duty bearer parents also demonstrate a sense of responsibility to delay marriages and promote education for boys and girls. There were no examples of the use of rights-based language within this stakeholder group, however. Surprisingly, the Community and Religious Leaders were aware of the terminology of women and children having rights, but, as illustrated above, there are some examples where they take action and support the promotion of education for girls. There are only a few examples, however, where these stakeholders take action by using their power to hold others in the community to account to delay or stop an early marriage.

OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which the project has increased secondary school enrolment of out of school adolescent girls and changed social behaviours and attitudes towards child marriage.

Sub Question

¹⁶³ 2-5-CL1 57, 2-5-CL2

Has the project made a difference in adolescent girls' lives by increasing their ability to make life choices?

D.6.2 INCREASED ABILITY TO MAKE LIFE CHOICES

In referring back to the ToC, it does not appear that AWLI has made a major difference *in adolescent girls'* lives *as it relates to increasing their ability to make life choices*. The Intermediate Outcomes for adolescents may have been too ambitious. As noted in the data, the adolescents (aged between 11 to 17) are at the age and developmental stage of their lives, where they are only beginning to have or/and express an opinion. The data shows, for example, that younger participants are in the process of forming their own opinions. It is also likely that one main ToC assumption was not met, which is that individuals are sufficiently supported by peers, family, and community to engage meaningfully. If this holds true, some of these adolescents may have their opinions, but they may not yet have had the opportunity or reached a point where they can exercise a choice regarding: (1) their sexual and reproductive health; (2) early marriage; and (3) the continuation of their education.

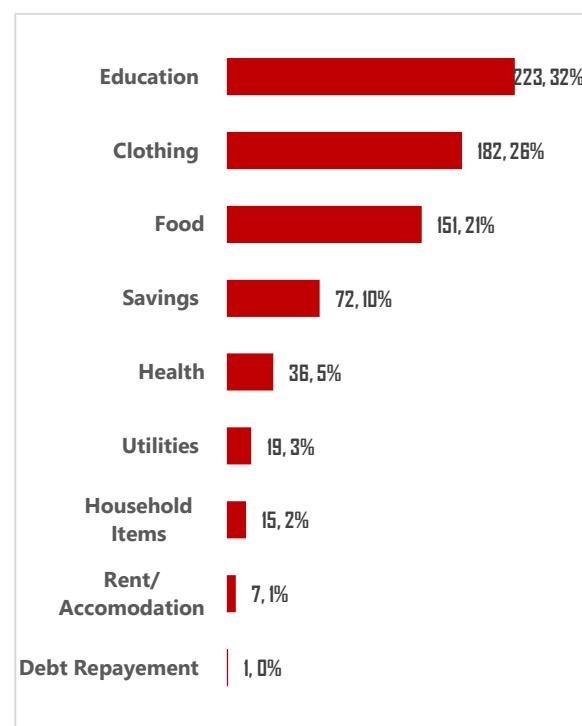
It is important to recall that when QARA faced a major challenge in the Samangan Province, where there was insecurity in all three sampled districts, QARA conducted telephone interviews (in place of face-to-face interviews) in two districts which were inaccessible (e.g., Roi-do-ab and Dara-i-soof-i-bala), but the district of Feroz Nakhcher replaced Dara-i-soof-i-payan. Even with these efforts, however, the data was not sufficient to validate the ToC and link programme results between: (1) Community-based Livelihood Training (and the ensuing entrepreneurial activity) and (2) a rights holder's ability to make lifestyle choices.

FINDING 15	Different programme components have made a difference in the lives of adolescent females (namely Unconditional Cash Grants and Community-based Livelihood Training), but because the programme participants are so young, it is uncertain if the programme helped rights holders to make "life choices".
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When validating ToC, after the rights holders have accepted the messages, they must take another step, which is take advantage of the opportunities to make their own decisions (with their families) regarding health care, education, and lifestyle. The Unconditional Cash Grant is an excellent example of how AWLI may have helped rights holders to continue their education. Though it has already been noted how the family received the grant, it is still necessary to present the data about how the money was reportedly used. The data from seven qualitative interviews and a data base from PDM indicates that the top three areas where the funds were spent include education-related expenses (i.e., a backpack, and a notebook/pen), food, and clothing. Similarly, the rights holders mentioned using the grant "for my school expenses....**I bought myself hijab, bag shoes, pen, notebook**, books that I didn't [have] a **school bag**. **I paid the rest for my transportation.**" In addition, the parents interviewed noted that they purchased a veil, helped a family relative in Kabul, paid the electricity bill. In general, it was noted that the grant **helped to solve many**

Figure 13: PDM Data on grant expenditures.

n=220



problems that were creating tension in the home.¹⁶⁴ As the average age of the recipients (adolescent girls) was age 12, it is evident that the funds were not spent exclusively on the child, but the funds were also invested in the household. Fifty-six percent reported that the grant significantly improved their living conditions.

Ultimately, the cash grant mechanism is a short-term remedy to support girl's education, but the extent to which the **girls' voices are heard, especially young ones, and are able to take decisions is not confirmed**. For example, the PDM results showed that 83 per cent reported that the parents decided how the money would be spent. It is also not clear if the cash support **facilitates the child's negotiation with their parents and their elders**.

The data from one interview recounts the story about how the funds were used to support a family with five children. Although the mother was grateful for the funding, she admitted "I am illiterate....My husband is an old man, he can't work." Therefore, when the children ask for money to go to school, she noted They go to school and say, "Mother, give me ten afghanis...I look at their faces and cry." Hence, while the grant is intended to support the adolescent girl in making life choices (related to her education), the grant is allowing the parents, the families to make those choices on her behalf. Ultimately, this grant enables "buying time. Sometimes the two years' time makes the difference for the adolescent.... The family can do something that they may not have been planning [to do] but then it can come in and help them make do with a certain situation."¹⁶⁵

In conclusion, this section presents the results after validating the ToC after having received an Unconditional Cash Grant. After the rights holder's family received the grant, the evidence shows that the funds were spent on education-related items. However, the rights holder's ability to fulfill the intermediate outcomes of exercising choices regarding her education and family's livelihood are not met. In this case, the ToC did not well represent the outcome that can be expected from an Unconditional Cash Grant. The likelihood of whether the rights holder is any closer to making such decisions may also be limited, simply because the adolescent was very young and still developing her opinions. Basically, in the short-run, the Unconditional Cash Grant helps to reduce the cost/income barrier to a girl's education, but it does not necessarily directly address issues of self-confidence, skills, or power of the adolescents to make decisions.

OVERARCHING QUESTION: The extent to which the AWLI interventions can be scaled up, and the capacity of Government partners to assume the responsibility of carrying these initiatives forward.

Sub Question

What were the effects, intended or unintended, that the programme had on sources of tension and sources of cohesion in the 20 districts where it worked, and how were these monitored over time?

D.6.3 INTENDED & UNINTENDED EFFECTS & SOURCES OF TENSION/COHESION

FINDING 16

The unintended factors, influencing programme effectiveness include the severe reduction of the dowery in Samangan, when the patriarch is addicted to drugs, and when the matriarch was a victim of early marriage. However, these circumstances, which reduce and create tensions, were unforeseen and therefore could not be monitored or mitigated.

In response to the KEQ "What were the effects, intended or unintended, that the programme had on sources of tension and sources of cohesion in the 20 districts where it worked, and how were these monitored over time?", a content analysis indicates that in Samagan, AWLI **reduced community tensions** with the severe reduction of the dowery in Samangan. One participant explains that "Back then, a groom was compelled to pay for everything

¹⁶⁴ 1-2-AD-F8-GR; 1-2-AD-F1-GR; 1-1-AD-F1-GR; and 1-3-AD-F1-GR.

¹⁶⁵ [Log 014]

which accounted for around 100,000 [Afghan] (roughly USD 1,291) or more. But now it has become very simple.” If a young person wanted to get married, he had to travel out of the country and work for at least five or six years in order to save the money and to get married. Through the AWLI project, however, it was established that the bride price could not exceed 300,000 Afghan (roughly USD 3,870).¹⁶⁶ This example, where in AWLI effectively helped to better negotiate the dowery, was unique and only took place in Samangan.

At the family level, two critical circumstances, or situations, increased tensions, thereby obstructing the effectiveness of AWLI’s programme components. That is, the programme is not likely to show positive results under these specific conditions. A theme emerged indicating that “when [a] father was an addict”, the likelihood of that daughter being married off or taken out of school **is highly likely**. This means that, when the family is experiencing a crisis of drug addiction or a debt, the early marriage is unlikely to be delayed. A few examples were raised about “cases” in the community where a father who was a drug addict “wed his daughter to a very old aged man, and took six hundred thousand rupees.”¹⁶⁷ A similar situation occurred when the father had a debt. A respondent recounted a story about how he tried to intervene with a man who was attempting to “give his daughter away to a 35-year-old man. The respondent noted that the many told him “if you want to stop this [early marriage] from happening then give me 20,000 Afghan, because I’m in debt and I [have]....to pay my debt” He told the respondent that “this poverty and humiliation is the cause that I’m giving my girl who is only in her 6th grade to a man who is almost 35 years old.... I [don’t have] the ability to pay my debt and I have to give my girl to him.” Unlike the other cases, this respondent’s actions did not delay the marriage, because he did not have the money to pay off that person’s debt, although the action was that he **told him many times**, but he told us about his poverty and distress and said that [he couldn’t do anything].”¹⁶⁸

Another compounding variable is when a daughter who weds at a very young age and does not continue school, it seems that her position in the family and society becomes very vulnerable.¹⁶⁹ That woman becomes a duty bearer mother who is isolated with a strong likelihood of making poor decision, especially if she lives in poverty. **Indeed, she may be an active participant in perpetuating the cycle of early marriage.** That is, when young illiterate rights holder daughters fallen prey of the harmful effects of early marriage become vulnerable duty bearer mothers, they are likely to be the ones perpetrate the situation by marrying off their daughters at an early age.¹⁷⁰ Such a finding has implications for targeting participants in future gender equality programmes. Young illiterate mothers fallen prey of the harmful effects of early marriage also become perpetrators by marrying off their daughters at an early age, thereby continuing the vicious (generational) cycle.

D.6.4 MONITORING OF SOURCES OF TENSION/COHESION

From the evidence available, there was no indication that there was programme monitoring of the above-mentioned factors that could cause community tensions. As AWLI reduced community tensions in Samangan and exacerbated tensions, unintentionally, within the family, it does not appear that IPs were monitoring such occurrences during implementation. Moreover, there is no evidence suggesting that the programme exacerbated gender inequalities and or rights violations.

In sum, the data shows that AWLI’s unintended effects were a severe reduction of the dowery in Samangan, and this should be heralded as a positive finding. Moreover, a content analysis shows that, at the family level, tensions may flare when the patriarch is addicted to drugs and when the matriarch was a victim of early marriage. As these negative circumstances were unforeseen, they were not monitored or mitigated.

¹⁶⁶ [Log005]

¹⁶⁷ 3-7-AD-M4 (age 15)

¹⁶⁸ 2-4-PM1

¹⁶⁹ 3-8-AD-F5; 3-7-AD-F4; and 2-4-AD-F2.

¹⁷⁰ 1-3-PF1; and 1-3-PF3

E. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, AWLI, with a budget of **USD 6,949,735.23**, was a three-year programme but was executed over five years. The programme focused on redressing gender inequalities, changing harmful gender norms and practices (perceptions and terminating education and early marriage), supporting girls and disadvantaged people from diverse population groups (illiterate women, OoS girls, poor families, and hard to reach communities), and removing structural barriers (by supporting Community -based Livelihood Training and increasing market access for entrepreneurial activities). By partnering with AAA, WASSA, OHW, and ECW, the ACO effectively leveraged their influence, innovations, and expertise to realize children's rights at scale. Through this programme, UNICEF has successfully supported Afghanistan's progress in raising awareness about child and women's rights. In using the theory-driven and utilization focused evaluation approaches, part of evaluating AWLI's adolescent programming model is to validate the intermediate outcomes within the ToC, examining: (i) the programme theory; (3) its effects at the individual, community, and institutional levels; and (3) underlying assumptions. More specific conclusions are presented below.

E.1 Relevance

This programme was highly relevant for Afghanistan, given that adolescents suffer a great deal from violence and abuse, and the insecure environment perpetuates harmful cultural and traditional practices. Both girls and boys, especially those who are OoS and whose livelihoods are not prioritized within their families, are even more vulnerable in Afghanistan's conflict context. The rural and hard to reach communities where AWLI was implemented have the custom of collecting a dowry, or "bride price", which is a form of family financial survival, and AWLI was developed to address early marriage in these provinces. While this programme's design came from an evidence-based assessment of national priorities at the provincial levels, regional research trends, and a thorough alignment with both national strategies and UNICEF's Strategic & Action Plans, the strength of this programme was that it used a multi-sectoral approach. Many programmes with a gender inequality goal frequently adopt implementation strategies that isolate girls and women, whereas AWLI's design acknowledged the social, economic, political, cultural, and religious drivers of child marriage. However, the findings illustrate that AWLI could have been more inclusive, focusing on girls and boys, as the inclusion of men and boys tends to result in greater programme sustainability with longer lasting behavior change.

E.2 Effectiveness

There was a total of **seven** interventions in five provinces and 20 districts.¹⁷¹ The AWLI programme delivered almost all of its planned outputs. While the number of adolescents that the programme reached exceeded its target, the number of girls directly experiencing the programme was only **82 percent** (or 164,207 out of 200,000) of its target. Apart from Community Dialogues and Unconditional Cash Grants, all of the activities met their targets.

Stakeholders reported that a strong feature of the programme was the premise of solving one's own problems within the community, which may have contributed to the unanimous request for the programme to continue. The positive perspectives about AWLI do not imply that there were no challenges. Indeed, there were many factors which impeded the delivery of outputs. IPs initially experienced verbal and physical resistance from communities, because AWLI was a nontraditional programme and talking about early marriage and the promotion of girl's education was, and continues to be, very sensitive. In examining the a few of the different strategies used by the IPs, it has been evidenced that these NGOs overcame *initial* adverse circumstances (tensions within the community). The IPs responsive programming was effective with five community **engagement innovations**. The use of clear messages, negative and positive, helped to overcome the problem of confusing messages that communities had heard from the past. The strategy of acknowledging the power of the messenger resulted in

¹⁷¹ They included: (1) Community Dialogues; (2) Reflect Circles; (3) Safe Spaces and Formal and Informal Networks; (4) Mini Media Clubs; (5) Community-based Life Skills Training; (6) Unconditional-Cash Grants; and (7) Community-based Livelihood Training.

partnerships with mullahs, and other religious leaders, and community leaders, which in turn translated into community / peer acceptance. IPs also employed knowledgeable staff, leveraged female community champions, and required that a literate person took part in the Reflect Circles, so that they could follow up on the results from the Problems and Solutions Tree.

While the Mini Media Clubs, Safe Spaces, Community-based Life Skills Training were implemented equally in all provinces, the Community-based Livelihood Training was only implemented in Samangan, and the Unconditional Cash Grants were only distributed in Herat. The target programme beneficiaries in the three sampled provinces responded differently to programme components. For example, in Samangan, the adolescent girls who were exposed to “tailoring” through the Community-based Livelihood Training continue to engage in this activity. All recipients of an Unconditional Cash Grant reported spending funds on education, although some mentioned spending funds on other items. The Mini Media Clubs also had good uptake, as IP service providers in Nangahar and Herat noted that the children share the messages discussed at the club with their families when they go back home. The use of Safe Space facilities varied. For example, in Samangan and Nangahar, the communities in these provinces are more traditional, and so the Safe Spaces, functioned more like venues for Reflect Circles or awareness raising meetings. The uptake for the Safe Space in Herat, however, was remarkable. Through the Community-based Life Skills Training, programme participants were exposed to hygiene practices, and, unlike the other provinces, three women in Samangan opened as small shop which sells hygiene products and offers consultations to women.

Overall, there were several factors limiting the effective delivery of programme services, and they are: (1) partner capacity limitations; (2) government policies on Community -based Livelihood Training; and (3) insecurity.

E.3 Efficiency

To the extent possible, the ACO managed to ensure an efficient implementation of AWLI. Notwithstanding the delays created by an IP and the Pandemic, results were achieved in a cost-efficient manner with little waste and duplication. As noted in the limitations section, the ACO is categorized as a Non-Family Duty Station, which means that due to security reasons, family members are not authorized to travel the office. Staff are allowed Rest and Recuperation (R&R) travel to support a work-life balance, and so staff typically work for short periods of time (no more than three years). Not surprisingly, findings indicate that there were three different country representatives over five years and three different AWLI programme managers during the same period. Change in management also implied supervision from multiple supervisors. **All such dimensions ought to be considered when designing and planning programmes in Afghanistan.**

Moreover, the consultants responsible for the baseline experienced significant challenges, and subsequently, precluded the IPs from working for almost one year, thereby prolonging the overall workplan. While UNICEF has used a mix of strategies to implement AWLI, one of the most cost-efficient ones was during the Pandemic. The Pandemic restricted movement and prevented participants from gathering into groups, and UNICEF sought solutions by reprogramming and adding the fourth objective focused on the distribution of supplies. Findings show that the procurement of recreation and hygiene kits and handwashing stations was successful, as this component not only expended the preexisting surplus of funds, but it also exceeded the planned target. Finally, the findings illustrate that AWLI’s monitoring systems in place were imperfect, creating confusion about the number of programme participants reached, and the ages of adolescents specifically. **A system which produces reliable and accurate monitoring data is critical to strong programme management.**

E.4 Sustainability

Data indicates that only a small number of programme activities continue to function since the official handover of AWLI to provincial partners. However, there is interest in scaling up activities, as there are male and female champions based *within the community* whose values are aligned with the AWLI’s objectives. Key factors influencing scale up include: (1) government willingness; (2) community interest; and (3) IP capacity. Activities

recommended for scale up are Community Dialogues, Reflect Circles, and the Safe Space facility in Herat only. Samangan and Herat provinces ought to be prioritized, because the communities in Nangahar province were still very conservative. Given that the CPC will be ending in 2021, the ACO has a limited window in which to scale up activities in the recommended provinces.

E.5 Coherence

AWLI is consistent with the Global Programme to End Child Marriage and does not duplicate national initiatives promoting girl's education. National initiatives designed to directly reduce child marriage in Afghanistan are limited. It does not appear that AWLI has any contradictions, and in fact findings indicate **linkages** and **synergies** with ongoing UNICEF programmes in other sectors (i.e., education, gender, and WASH). Since AKF and UNICEF's programmes are located in different geographical areas, there is little duplication in the areas of girl's education and empowerment. However, the Adolescent Portfolio Evaluation observed duplications *within UNICEF's programmes*, which could be remedied with a ToC for adolescent programming. This insightful recommendation has already been included in that report.¹⁷²

E.6 Impact

Findings show that through the AWLI programme, UNICEF Afghanistan helped to improve the well-being and education of adolescent girls, especially through the promotion of positive gender norms across the life cycle, including the reduction of harmful practices (early marriage for adolescent girls aged 12 and older), effective parenting (investment in girls' education through Unconditional Cash Grant), and the promotion of girl's education into secondary education level.

The process which should take place for a rights holder to believe that he or she could take action when responding to the messages about delaying marriage and extending education is critical to understanding the adolescent model. The logic is that interpersonal communications and interpersonal relations were expected to happen at all levels, and AWLI's contributions would, in turn, lead to or influence attitude, traditional beliefs, and, ultimately behaviour change.

More specifically, **IF** rights holders discuss and reflect on messages (delivered through trusted channels), **THEN** they will be encouraged or/and motivated to adopt the new attitudes and practices and change their behaviour. This finding assumes that the rights holders and duty bearers have had the opportunity to voice their views about ending child marriage and promoting education for adolescent girls.

This evaluation's findings also showed that older rights holders (males and females) have indeed taken action, whereas younger rights holders still appear to be forming their opinions. The observed positive change of older males and females, by taking action and calling attention to the violence against children and women, represents a key prerequisite for a reducing early marriage and promoting girl's education. After the rights holder's family received the grant, the evidence shows that the funds were spent on education-related items. However, findings show that the rights holder's ability to exercise choices regarding her education and family's livelihood are not met.

The evaluation findings have also given a glimpse into the Afghan family and community dynamics, as the impact section have shed light on who within the family or community makes decisions about if, when, and who a girl should marry. For example, the community level, this evaluation revealed that community and religious leaders, who exert influence over decisions about early marriages and girl's education, do not always use their powers to hold community member to account despite having knowledge about child and women's rights. Moreover, it has

¹⁷² Konterra Group (2020). Adolescents in Afghanistan: A Portfolio Evaluation with a Gender Lens (2015–2019) Evaluation commissioned by the UNICEF Afghanistan Country Office, Hermania Majoor (Team Leader) Belén Díaz (International Evaluator) ATR Consulting, pages 36-37.

been evidenced that an Unconditional Cash Grant helps in purchasing education-related items, but this may not translate into an increased ability to make life choices for the adolescent rights holder.

Finally, the circumstances are now distinct that a positive unintended effect was a severe reduction of the dowry in Samangan, yet at the family level, there may be mounting pressures when there is drug addiction or when the matriarch was a victim of early marriage, as she may perpetuate the cycle.

F. LESSONS LEARNED & RECOMMENDATIONS

F.1 Lessons Learned

As part of fulfilling the ToR, this section includes notable lessons learned, summarizing the key take-aways regarding AWLI's programme implementation.

- Multi-sectoral programmes help in advancing gender equality, as multiple groups (including men) become attracted to and participated in AWLI.
- Highly skilled and motivated IPs work through initial community resistance by galvanizing male and female community champions.
- Working with men (fathers and uncles) and boys (brothers and nephews) is critical, as they are also part of social norms and harmful practices that limit women's ability to make decisions about education, health, livelihood resources.
- The context is an important factor when developing programmes to reduce early marriage, promote girl's education, and support women's empowerment. As seen the Safe Space facility in Herat could not keep up with the demand, whereas in Samangan and Nangahar, the Safe Space was not taken up in the same fashion.
- Understanding the underlying requirements for carrying out RCTs helps to minimize costly errors in the end.
- It is important for UNICEF programme staff to understand the underlying requirements for carrying out different data collection and analysis methods. Likely topics to review would include: (i) how to develop good study questions; (ii) the data requirements; (iii) methodologies which are not conducive to certain contexts like Afghanistan; and (iv) the competencies that the consultants or IPs must not only have to collect the information, but also to refrain from creating false expectations within affected populations.
- UNICEF evaluators ought to have a comfortable, professional session in which they may clearly communicate to programme managers the risks and benefits of using a certain method.
- Given the suspension of the Unconditional Cash Grant component in Ghor, it is paramount that upcoming programmes have a comprehensive risk assessment and mitigation strategy.

F.2 Recommendations

In accordance with the ToR, the recommendations are presented in the order of programme design, implementation, and scale up of similar programmes in Afghanistan. However, it should be noted that the last recommendation is time sensitive. These recommendations were developed with UNICEF and its partners through two-rounds of debriefing stakeholder presentations.

Table 11: Table of Recommendations & Findings

Findings and Rationale	Recommendations	Action to be led by
1. Design-Intended Population-Gender & Equity <p>Frequently, prevention programmes which seek to fulfill a gender inequality goal isolate women and girls and fail to recognize the interconnected nature of the linkages among gender inequality and education, continued access to education and small enterprise. AWLI's programme components recognize the social, economic, political, cultural, and religious drivers of child marriage and the promotion of education. In Samangan and Nangahar, for the IPs made efforts to communicate messages to rights holder girls and boys, but the data indicates less emphasis for the IP in Herat. Future gender-focused programmes should target girls and boys, as the inclusion of men and boys tends to result in greater sustainability with longer lasting behavior change.</p> <p>As noted from stakeholders, there was a clear concern about promoting continued education for both males and females. Hence, when creating messages to promote girl's education, also consider similar messages for boys.</p> <p>Finding 2. Pages 40 – 41.</p>	To ensure longer-term sustainability, deliberate efforts should be made to focus on girls and boys in future adolescent programmes.	Deputy Representative, Adolescent Programming Manager developing future proposals to support the development of adolescents Gender Advisor
2. Implementation <p>There are countless examples in the qualitative data where young rights holder males and females and duty bearer parents have spoken up and taken the following action: (i) informed others of the harmful effects of early marriage and discontinuing girls' education; (ii) intervened in a planned marriage with and without success; (iii) convinced a family member to let a girl continue her education. This evidence confirms that some stakeholders have experienced or and observed changed attitudes within themselves or</p>	For higher impact interventions, it is recommended to focus on older girls (aged 17 to 22). The findings have indicated that they have a voice, which enables them to have an instrumental role (in Reflect Circles, community engagement, and SBC activities). Providing a nominal incentive to	Adolescent Programming Manager developing future proposals to support the development of adolescents

Findings and Rationale	Recommendations	Action to be led by
<p>and their communities. As this stakeholder group is action-oriented, they would make strong candidates to participate in the Reflect Circles, in the event that this intervention were to be scaled up.</p> <p>Finding 13. Pages 59-60.</p>	<p>them would also motivate them to engage with others.</p>	
<p>There were multiple changes in staffing and management within the ACO, which inadvertently affects the quality of programme management, especially when the existing monitoring system did not produce accurate and reliable data (next recommendation). It is also recognized that there are frequent rotations of IRoA officials, in Kabul especially, which may compound the effects of UNICEF's staff changes.</p> <p>Finding 10. Page 57</p>	<p>UNICEF should assess the extent to which, the change in management and staffing as part of UNICEF's emergency duty station staff rotation policies and procedures, will create delays in the overall work plan when developing longer term programmes and plan accordingly.</p>	<p>Representative, Deputy Representative, Adolescent Programming Manager developing future proposals to support the development of adolescents.</p>
<p>AWLI was first under the supervision of the Deputy Representative, who was a well-suited supervisor for the multi-sectoral programme, as this person recognized the holistic design of the programme and ensured that the other sections could contribute efficiently. However, after a change in management, AWLI was positioned under the supervision of different sections within the Country Office programme, thereby weakening the efficiencies that were already created.</p> <p>Finding 10. Page 57</p>	<p>To maintain efficiencies, UNICEF should position a programme which cuts across multiple sectors under a supervisor who has a holistic and wide view of the ACO portfolio rather than a supervisor who is solely focused on one or two sectors (e.g., education, health, child protection).</p>	<p>Deputy Representative, Adolescent Programming Manager developing future proposals to support the development of adolescents.</p>
<p>All programmes merit a system which generates accurate and reliable information about the number of people reached. While AWLI's monitoring data was gender disaggregated, the available data was not consistently separated by age, which is a gap that is critical to the strategic management of a programme focused on adolescents. It is paramount to ensure that sex- and age-disaggregated data collection is routinely available through systematic coordination of data. Working with IPs to establish this system is critical.</p> <p>Finding 7. Page 58.</p>	<p>To support the establishment and maintenance of a robust management information system (MIS), develop stronger cooperation in data sharing between UNICEF and IPs and ensure that sex- and age-disaggregated data collection is consistent.</p>	<p>Adolescent Programming Manager developing future proposals to support the development of adolescents.</p>
3. Scale Up	TIME SENSITIVE	
<p>While the Mini Media Clubs are embedded in government schools and are therefore under the management of the PED, this activity is not likely to be sustained due to the cessation of instruction because of the Pandemic. Similarly, the Safe Spaces in Nangahar and Samangan are not likely to be sustained despite their management by DoWA, as they functioned like</p>	<p>Prior to pursuing scaling up or continuing these recommended interventions, position UNICEF to strategically examine needs, including but not limited to:</p>	<p>Representative, Deputy Representative, Adolescent Programming Manager developing future proposals to</p>

Findings and Rationale	Recommendations	Action to be led by
<p>venues for other programme activities. While the Community-based Livelihood Training had strong uptake in Samagan, the fact that there were challenges linked to interpretations of government policy on Livelihood Training <i>in general</i> leads the evaluation to conclude that this activity is also not likely to be sustainable. Finally, given the difficulties with Unconditional Cash Grants in Ghor, it would be necessary for a comprehensive risk assessment in order to continue this intervention (see Lesson learned section). Given that this evaluation has found a positive response to the Community Dialogues, Reflect Circles, and Safe Spaces (in Herat only), targeted funding could facilitate their future continuation. As the ACO's CPC will be ending in 2021, there is a limited window in which to act before the new CPC begins.</p> <p>Finding 11. Pages 59-60.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) what would entail the expanded/continued coverage; (2) what would be the contributions from the government partners' limited infrastructure and capacity to adopt the initiative; (3) whether the models for Community Dialogues, Reflect Circles, and Safe Spaces should be further tested, perhaps adding other components to the existing models; and (4) potential weaknesses and threats that might have negative (or unplanned) impact as a result of scaling up of these activities. 	<p>support the development of adolescents.</p>

G. ANNEXES

G.1 ANNEX 1: Terms of Reference

<p>Title International Consultancy - Evaluation Consultant to conduct the Summative Evaluation of the UNICEF ACO programme, Afghan Women's Leadership Initiative in Support of Adolescent Girls (AWLI).</p> <p>WBS/Funding Reference/Activity/IR</p> <p>Type of engagement</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor</p> <p>Workplace of Consultant: UNICEF ACO & Home-based</p>			
Grant:		GL Account:	Fund ID:
<i>Enter PBA Code</i>		<i>Enter GL Account Code</i>	<i>Enter Fund Code, e.g., SC, SM, GC</i>
<p>Background</p> <p>Afghanistan has one of the world's youngest and fastest growing populations, with approximately 63 percent of the population (27.5 million Afghans) below 25 years of age and 46 percent (11.7 million children) under 15 years of age.¹⁷³ Over 25 per cent of the population are at the most important juncture of their lives, adolescence: the transition from childhood into adulthood.</p> <p>Of the nearly 29 million people in Afghanistan, adolescents (10-19-year olds) account for approximately 25 percent of the population.¹⁷⁴ While adolescence is a time of both opportunity and vulnerability for girls and boys, adolescent girls are a particularly vulnerable population in Afghanistan, especially to child marriage. Moreover, poor access to proper healthcare, basic facts for life information and life skills, nutrition, education, livelihood opportunities as well as vulnerability to sexual abuse and other forms of violence, have long-term effects on girls' and boys' health and development and the wellbeing of their future children and communities.¹⁷⁵</p> <p>Child marriage is a human rights violation and is a key impediment to girls being able to reach their full potential. Harmful cultural practices such as exchange of brides, bride price, engagement before birth, and marriage as a method of solving community disputes contribute to child marriage.¹⁷⁶ Married adolescent girls suffer separation from family and friends, decreased opportunities for education, lack of freedom to interact with peers, poor health</p>			

¹⁷³ National Statistics and Information Authority (NSIA), Dec 18, 2018

¹⁷⁴ Central Statistics Office Afghanistan, population estimates 2017-2018

¹⁷⁵ 'Innovation for Change, Empowering Adolescents in South Asia', UNICEF 2013

¹⁷⁶ OECD (2019). Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) Global Report Summary – Afghanistan.

outcomes, and lack of livelihood opportunities. Child marriage also results in bonded labour, sexual exploitation and intimate partner violence against adolescent brides, including sexual violence.

Girls married young are less likely to be able to give informed consent, go to school, and have access to reproductive and sexual health care, and face restrictions of movement. It is estimated that 4 out of 10 girls are married before 18 years of age in Afghanistan, with figures varying between those in urban and rural areas (DHS 2015). In Afghanistan, child marriage is mainly a result of harmful traditional practices, socio economic factors and a lack of appreciation for the value of education. These determinants vary from province to province and between rural and urban areas.

Although UNICEF advocates for marriage only from the age of 18 years, in Afghanistan, tribal social rules are still the norm and are predominantly applied in many parts of the country. Unfortunately, this has enabled an environment where underage marriage of children is still the norm, especially for adolescent girls. In respect to the legal age of marriage, Afghanistan has two parallel legal systems: Article 70 of the Civil Law of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan denotes the legal marriage for girls as sixteen and for boys as eighteen, while under the system of Sharia law, the age of marriage for girls is defined as the age upon which a girl reaches maturity. As a result, this can be different ages for different girls, many of whom are adolescents. Another compounding factor to the challenge of ending child marriage in Afghanistan is that marriage is generally not recorded under the civil registration system, making it very difficult for any legal recourse.

Furthermore, the development and humanitarian environment for adolescent boys and girls is exacerbated by the difficulties of living in a conflict- and emergency-affected country. Afghanistan is a complex environment, where natural hazards and conflict negatively impact adolescents' rights, disproportionately affecting poor communities and eroding development gains. The dire situation for children in Afghanistan is further reflected in the Human Development Index of 0.46, the lowest in the region, and 169th out of 182 countries globally. It is estimated that 46 per cent of women aged 15 to 49 years were first married or in union by 18 and that 15% of them were married by age 15¹⁷⁷.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

The AWLI Programme

The Afghan Women's Initiative in Support of Adolescent Girls (AWLI) programme was initiated in 2016 as a 5-year intervention to enable adolescent girls to fully enjoy their childhood and adolescence free from the risk of marriage. By engaging key actors, including adolescents and young people, the programme sought to enable adolescent girls to experience healthier, safer, and more empowered life transitions, including on decisions about their health, lifestyles, marriage and childbearing.

In specific terms, the programme aimed to:

1. Change perceptions on the acceptability of early and forced marriage (EFM) and mobilize communities to delay marriage by raising awareness of adolescent girls' rights, the laws in place to protect them, the negative consequences of EFM, and the importance of educating girls;
2. Empower adolescent girls to make informed life choices through education, vocational and life skills training, and peer support networks; and
3. Map and document the status of adolescent girls in Afghanistan.

The programme covered 5 provinces, namely Nangarhar, Samangan, Ghor, Herat and Farah - provinces with high rates of child marriage practices. Four districts were prioritised in each province, for a total focus of 20 districts in 5 provinces.

Province	Districts
Nangarhar	Jalalabad, Surkh rud, Kama, Darah-i-noor
Samangan	Feroz Nakhcheer, Roi-do-ab, Dara-i-soof-i-payan, Dara-i-soof-i-bala
Ghor	Chighcheran, Dwalatyar, Lal was sarjangal, Tulak
Herat	Herat, Enjil, Karrukh, Zendajan
Farah	Farah, Qala-e-Kah, Shib koh, Anar Dara

Direct target groups:

- 200,000 adolescent girls. Adolescent girls from 20 out of the 66 districts in five provinces were to have opportunities to participate in training and orientation sessions and organize themselves into youth and adolescents' associations/clubs for various activities under the project.
- 200 members of community level Shura from the 20 districts - 80,000 to 100,000 elders, parents, community leaders and religious leaders from the 5 provinces.
- 1,000 households, each with at least one out of school (OoS) adolescent girl, to receive cash grants in a total of 8 districts in Ghor and Herat provinces.

Indirect target groups:

- 875,000 adolescents in the remaining 46 districts of the five provinces and 200,000 adolescent boys in the 20 'project districts' of the five provinces to benefit from information shared through public fora, media including TV, radio, mobile technology, social media, traditional methods of information sharing, including television spots, street theatre, youth and student forums etc.

The total population of about 1.2 million including adults in the five provinces will benefit from awareness

- a) Training of facilitators from among key stakeholders - including religious leaders, Maliks, teachers, youth leaders and adolescents - on facilitation skills, community dialogue, and appreciative inquiry as well as on key issues, such as the harmful impacts of Child Marriage and the provisions of the CRC, sharia/Islamic laws, the Afghan constitution and laws, as well as other relevant frameworks related to ending Child Marriage;
- b) Workshops and focus group discussions facilitated at the district and community level by those trained in a) above, to determine the specific barriers and bottlenecks for preventing and ending Child Marriage and addressing the needs of married girls in each community. This would in turn lead to consensus and collective agreement on the strategic approach and messaging for community dialogues and orientation sessions as well as for local media. The goal of these activities was to promote new norms around the marriage of adolescent girls and identify mechanisms to support families in delaying marriage. Issues requiring attention at the level of provincial governor's office and various ministries were to be identified and form part of the key messages for policy advocacy;
- c) Community dialogues at village and district level focused on the harmful effects of Child Marriage, carried out quarterly by a group of facilitators with adolescent girls (and boys), families, Maliks, religious leaders, teachers and youth leaders. These dialogues were intended to result in timebound action plans with clear roles and responsibilities to be reviewed in subsequent community dialogue sessions three months later, with further elaboration of new activities on issues aimed at preventing and ending child labour in the community;
- d) Communication and information sessions both through the community dialogues at the village level and through a wide range of public channels, including television spots, plays, leaflets, pictorial storybooks, etc.

II. Empower adolescent girls to make informed life choices through education, vocational and life skills training, and peer support networks

This objective was to be achieved in synergy with some of the other programmes and projects already being implemented by the provincial departments of Education and Public Health with UNICEF assistance. The specific intervention that was already being implemented and would have a bearing on this objective was the education of adolescents and out of schoolgirls through Accelerated Learning Centres (ALCs) and primary schools.

The interventions under this objective were aimed at empowering girls with the knowledge and skills to understand themselves, their surroundings, their allies in postponing marriage and thus reduce child marriage. It was also aimed at addressing the needs and challenges faced by adolescent girls who were already married. Cash grants were to be given to adolescent girls and families to help girls attend and complete secondary school, or to complete primary education for those who had not yet done so. However, in villages without schools, most girls have never received any formal education. To address this problem, with assistance from bilateral donors including USAID, UNICEF provided support to the Ministry of Education to open ALCS in priority provinces aimed at providing education from grades 1 to 6 within three years. In addition, support was provided for meetings and networks of adolescent girls to help them gain knowledge and skills; build their agency, confidence, and self-esteem; and increase their capacity to access services and seek support to postpone marriage or to cope with its consequences.

The specific planned interventions under this objective, complementary to the existing efforts detailed above, included:

The key strategies for the AWLI programme included:

Community engagement and mobilization

This was a key strategy to achieve the result of empowerment of adolescents. It involved engagement and mobilization of key stakeholders such as religious and other influential leaders (for example Maliks), parents and the community at large. Community discussions were held to raise awareness on harmful traditional practices and develop action plans to prevent and address them at community level including plans to ensure that all school-age children are in formal schools/ accelerated learning centres, there are no marriages before age 18, adolescents are supported to access services for their protection and empowerment, and so on.

Building on existing structures

The programme implementation was done through existing mechanisms such as Accelerated Learnings Centres (ALCs), School Management Shuras (SMSs), Child Protection Action Network (CPAN) which is a forum mandated by the Ministry of Labour Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MOLSAMD) to respond to reported cases of child abuse, Community Development Committees (CDCs) etc. as much as possible. The partner CSO/s mapped the existing structures in the programme implementation areas and identified the most appropriate channels for delivery of programme interventions (which may vary depending on context and capacity).

Strong coordination with government agencies and other partners

Since the programme intended to capitalize on existing structures, regular coordination meetings at national, provincial and district levels were to be held for integrated programme implementation. It was critical to liaise with Ministry of Education (MoE), Provincial Education Directorates (PEDs) and District Education Departments (DEDs) along with government agencies related to child protection, health and nutrition in this process.

AWLI Programme Monitoring and Evaluation

The task of monitoring implementation of the AWLI programme was assumed by ActionAid International, the programme implementing partner consortium lead. ActionAid developed a monitoring framework that specified the key indicators to be tracked, data collection methods and frequency of data collection. The evaluation consultants were assigned the responsibility of analyzing the monitoring data and submitting periodic reports to submit monitoring reports to UNICEF.

Additionally, the evaluation consultants conducted a baseline assessment to establish benchmarks that would be utilized as a basis for generating rigorous evidence on the performance of the programme at the endline stage. The evaluation was initially intended to include both an impact evaluation (using Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) approach) of the cash transfer intervention in Ghor and Herat provinces and a summative evaluation of the social mobilization activities in all 5 programme provinces, but due to the inability to obtain a large enough sample of valid beneficiary households at the baseline stage, the RCT component was dropped and the endline evaluation will only cover the summative component.

Summative Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of the summative evaluation is to contribute to evidence-based and risk-informed programming on increasing access of out-of-school (OoS) adolescent girls to secondary education and changing societal perceptions on child marriage practices and girls' empowerment in Afghanistan.

The main audience for the evaluation will be the Government of Afghanistan, the U.S. Department of State – Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI), UNICEF, programme implementing partners, programme recipient groups and other stakeholders. By rigorously measuring and demonstrating the results of the AWLI project, UNICEF would like to gather evidence to facilitate learning based on the results of the programme, provide accountability to key stakeholders, and inform the design and implementation of future projects/programmes targeted at adolescents.

In regard to learning, the evaluation results are expected to deliver evidence on the relationship between financial incentives, education, and perceptions on child marriage/girls' empowerment. Considering limited evidence on the relationship between school attendance and changing perceptions on child marriage globally, these results are also expected to add value to the global movements to ending child marriage and increasing education of adolescent girls. Lessons learned and recommendations from the evaluation will also be used in developing the programme approach for other provinces and advocacy in support of Out of School (OoS) adolescent girls in Afghanistan.

Summative Evaluation Objectives

The evaluation's objectives are to:

- Measure the relevance, effectiveness, cohesion, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the AWLI programme in regard to increasing school enrolment of adolescent girls and stimulating social behaviour change related to perceptions of child marriage and girls' empowerment.
- Identify gaps in the programme results chain/ToC, lessons learned, and provide recommendations on how to design, implement and scale up similar programmes in the rest of Afghanistan.

Evaluation scope

The summative evaluation will cover both the social mobilization component of the programme in all 20 districts in the 5 provinces, plus the cash grant intervention in Herat. The cash grant intervention was initially meant to be implemented in both Ghor and Herat but was dropped in Ghor due to adverse implementation conditions. The evaluation will attempt to assess the extent to which the combination of both cash grants and social mobilization activities increased school enrolment among out of school adolescent girls in comparison to social mobilization activities alone.

The evaluation methodology should be based on mixed methods, participatory, gender, equity and human rights-based approaches. The evaluation will take an integrated approach by assessing the experiences of adolescent girls facing different types of discrimination and exclusion related to economic, ethnic, religious, physical and

intellectual impairments. It is imperative for the evaluation to identify opportunities to contribute to ensuring that future programme interventions will address equity, gender and human rights related issues.

Sampling Frame

The sampling frame for this study will be based on actual programme reach with regard to the target groups outlined earlier. The table below indicates the actual reach of the programme based on these benchmarks.

Planned programme activities (planned targets have been revised in June 2020 due to delay in implementation and movement restriction for COVID-19 pandemic)	Actual programme coverage (as of 31 August 2020)
1. Training of 5,000 facilitators from key stakeholders—including religious leaders, teachers, youth leaders and adolescents—on facilitation skills, community dialogue, and appreciative inquiry as well as on key issues, such as the harmful impacts of Early and Forced Marriage (EFM) and the provisions of the CRC, sharia/Islamic laws, the Afghan constitution and laws as well as other relevant frameworks related to early and forced marriage (EFM)/child marriage (CM).	Ongoing. 2,981 facilitators including religious leaders, Mullahs, teachers, youth leaders and adolescents who facilitate participation of adolescents in community mobilization trained at the district level
2. 20 workshops and 20 focus group discussions facilitated at the district and community level by those trained in a) above, to determine in each community the specific barriers and bottlenecks for preventing and ending child marriage and addressing the needs of married girls. This will in turn lead to consensus and collective agreement on the strategic approach and messaging for community dialogues and orientation sessions as well as for local media. The goal of these activities will be to promote new norms around the marriage of adolescent girls and identify mechanisms to support families in delaying marriage. Issues requiring attention at the level of provincial governor's office and various ministries will be identified and form part of the key messages for policy advocacy.	Completed. 20 workshops with 197 participants and 20 focus group discussions with 936 participants (495M/ 441 F) conducted at the district and community levels.
3. 4,490 Community dialogues (CD) with 88,000 participants conducted at village and district level focused on the harmful effects of EFM/CM, carried out quarterly by a group of facilitators with adolescent girls (and boys), families, Mullahs, religious leaders, teachers and youth leaders. These dialogues will result in timebound action plans with clear roles and responsibilities to be reviewed in the next community dialogue session three months later, with further elaboration of new activities on issues aimed at preventing and ending child labour in the community.	3,494 CD reaching 66,269 participants (33,152 M/ 33,117 F)/stakeholders carried out at the village and district levels with focus on harmful effects of EFM
4. 200 Gender segregated Reflect Circles (RCs): these are primary platforms for bringing proactive changes in gender perceptions and related behaviours with a focus on girls' education and ending the	200 RC established and functioning.

harmful traditional practices, focusing on child marriage, and gender-based violence.	
5. 40 Mini-media clubs set up in boys and girl's schools at district level to serve as an effective medium to support school communities, raise awareness on adolescent girls' and boys' rights, needs and interests, adolescent girls' and boys' education, violence free school.	50 mini-media clubs established (25 in girls' schools and 25 in boys' schools) and functioning.
6. 5 safe spaces for adolescent girls established in each district and promotion of close mobile-based networks using RapidPro technologies for peer discussions related to issues affecting them	5 safe spaces established at the provincial level (1 in each province). 2,158 adolescent girls were engaged through safe spaces. Activities on promoting girls' education and child rights through five Adolescent and Youth Networks (AYNs) are being conducted in five regions. U-Report has been rolled out in 2020 reaching over 3,000 adolescents.
7. Life skills education sessions for 18,000 adolescent girls - 10 sessions per district each year	10,710 of adolescent girls received life skills training and applied in their day-to-day lives.
8. Vocational education sessions for adolescent girls - 2 sessions per district each year	360 adolescent girls received livelihood training in Samangan Province. This activity was removed due to COVID-19 movement restriction and time limitation in remaining 4 provinces.
9. Communication and Information materials developed, and 20,000 copies distributed at district level: leaflets, picture stories and other material for advocacy and information sharing provided at community level	15,789 communication and information materials printed and distributed to the beneficiaries in communities.
10. 1,000 eligible households to receive cash grants in Ghor and Herat provinces	Cash grants provided to 472 eligible households only in Herat province.
11. Distribution of education supplies to adolescent girls	Hygiene and recreation kits to be provided to 50,000 adolescent girls in AWLI project areas.
12. Establishment of handwashing facilities in girls' schools	270 handwashing facilities to be provided to 135 girls' schools.
13. Sensitization of community members on COVID-19 risk mitigation	250 School Management Shuras, elders and community members to be sensitized on COVID-19 risk mitigation.

Evaluation Questions

The chosen evaluation criteria for the summative evaluation are relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The key evaluation questions listed below aren't exhaustive and will be refined further during the inception phase in collaboration with the evaluation team.

Relevance: Assessment of alignment of the AWLI interventions to the local context as well as national strategies and policies of Afghanistan and UNICEF, especially among the most deprived sections of the population, including validating existing adolescent programming ToC:

To what extent does the programme design and implementation fit the local context, including the conflict context, and what measures were taken to adapt to changes in the context?

Is the programme aligned with the national strategies and policies of Afghanistan and the UNICEF Global Strategic Plan 2018-2021?

To what extent does the programme address and meet the needs of adolescent girls and their families, especially those that are OoS?

Effectiveness: The extent to which the programmes intended results were achieved at the output level:

To what extent did UNICEF deliver on its intended outputs?

What were the major factors influencing the successful delivery of outputs?

To what extent were the programme interventions taken up by target programme beneficiaries?

Which factors impeded programme delivery and take-up and how could these have been overcome?

Did the programme effectively manage conflict-related risks?

Efficiency: The extent to which the programme's outputs were delivered in a timely and cost-efficient manner:

Were the programme outputs achieved according to the work plan and timeline?

Were the programme outputs achieved according to the budget and cost-efficiently?

What were the major factors influencing the efficient delivery of outputs?

Sustainability: the extent to which the AWLI interventions can be scaled up, and the capacity of Government partners to assume the responsibility of carrying these initiatives forward:

What strategies and interventions of the programme are most likely to be scaled up or sustained after the implementation of the programme?

What would facilitate or impede the scale-up of the AWLI intervention?

Have beneficiaries indicated any interest in seeing the programme scaled?

Coherence: The extent to which other interventions with similar objectives complement or contradict the programme and vice versa.

How compatible was the AWLI programme with **other interventions** aimed at:

achieving girl's empowerment?

increasing school attendance?

reducing child marriage?

Please include internationally-led, nationally-led, and local grassroots interventions. What synergies, linkages, contradictions, duplications, exist?

Impact: The extent to which the project has increased secondary school enrolment of out of school adolescent girls and changed social behaviours and attitudes towards child marriage:

- What difference has the project made in changing perceptions of the target groups on child marriage? Have they delayed marriage by raising awareness on the rights of adolescent girls to education, or for other reasons?
- Has the project made a difference in adolescent girls' lives by increasing their ability to make life choices?
- How successful has the combination of social mobilization activities and cash transfers been on increasing secondary enrolment rates of adolescent girls and changing social behaviour towards child marriage vis-à-vis social mobilization interventions alone?
- What were the effects, intended or unintended, that the programme had on sources of tension and sources of cohesion in the 20 districts where it worked, and how were these monitored over time?

Methodology

The utilization of a mixed methods approach, making use of both quantitative and qualitative data through a variety of methods such as household surveys, key informant interviews, and participatory methods, as well as routine monitoring and baseline data are recommended for this assignment. Triangulation of data sources and collection methods is important for verifying evidence along the programme results chain.

A rigorous evaluation design appropriate to the objectives of this evaluation and well suited to providing valid answers to the key evaluation questions should be proposed. Non-experimental quantitative techniques should be considered for the cash grant component of the programme, while qualitative methods will be a better option for the social mobilization component. Some considerations in this regard would include the theory of change (ToC) approach as a way of understanding how the programme planned to achieve change by mapping out links between processes and results at the outcome and impact levels. Evidence should be looked at in relation to key assumptions about how change would happen and in relation to other key influencers on change, including factors external to the programme.

In order to provide evidence of causality, given the existence of other interventions operating in the same time and space, approaches associated with contribution analysis may also be considered given the methodological challenges inherent in proving attribution. This would involve adding a further stage to the theory of change methodology, allowing existing evidence to be substantiated or challenged, and eliminating other possible causes for the results achieved.

Evaluability and Limitations

The project interventions should be evaluable based on comparisons with data on key programme indicators generated through the baseline assessment. Access to respondents and data collection sites will depend on challenges pertaining to security and accessibility, keeping in mind Do No Harm principles and the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Other equally important issues that should be considered in preparation for data collection include sensitive ethnic, religious, cultural and tribal norms of the target populations. The evaluation team will be responsible for verification of the baseline, end-line and monitoring data, as well as developing risk mitigation measures prior to commencing the field work activities.

A tentative Theory of Change (ToC) encompassing the whole portfolio of adolescent-focused programming has been developed through a related exercise, therefore the evaluation team will endeavour to underpin the evaluation within this framework and further develop it where gaps exist.

Evaluation Management

The evaluation will be managed by the Research & Evaluation Specialist under the supervision of the Chief of Social Policy, Evaluation & Research (SPEAR) Section, and under the overall oversight and guidance of the Representative of the UNICEF Afghanistan Country Office. The SPEAR Section will lead the evaluation process, put in place a quality assurance system, provide administrative and substantive backstopping support, and ensure appropriate liaison with the focal points for the evaluation both within UNICEF and with external stakeholders. It will also ensure that the evaluation is conducted in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System, as approved by the members of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) standards.

To assure quality, an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) will be constituted and include 6-8 UNICEF staff members, representatives from the Government and donors who will review evaluation deliverables and provide comments regularly on the evaluation's scope, methodology, findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Profiles of the Evaluators: An international consultant will be chosen to partner with UNICEF in conducting this evaluation. The individual will have extensive experience relevant to the evaluation of adolescent programmes and will, in collaboration with a national data collection partner firm, ensure the quality of the evaluation process, outputs, methodology, and timely delivery of all products.

Ethical Review

Evaluation methods and data collection tools involving children and sensitive topics must be approved by an external Institutional review Board (IRB) in Afghanistan. The evaluation team with the support of UNICEF ACO SPEAR Section will submit the final version of the inception report and data collection tools to an external IRB for approval before commencing fieldwork.

Evaluators are required to identify and consider any potential ethical issues and must disclose in writing any past experiences or relationships, including of their families and friends, to the object of the evaluation. Evaluators must exercise independent judgement and resist undue influence from any party, including:

1. Be partial and produce a comprehensive presentation strengths and weaknesses of the policy, programme and take due account of the view of stakeholders based on unbiased findings;
2. Illustrate evidence on verified findings and lessons learned;
3. Exercise honesty, integrity and respect for dignity and diversity;
4. Produce evaluation reports based on fair representation of knowledge, vulnerable groups, gender and ethnic groups.

Evaluators are required to receive consent from participants before involving them in the data collection process and respect their right to provide information in confidence. Evaluators must inform participants about the scope and limits of confidentiality and ensure that all information provided remains confidential. It is mandatory to prepare risk management plans to minimize potential harm to participants before starting the fieldwork.

Dissemination and advocacy of evaluation findings

Evaluators must obtain explicit permission from UNICEF prior to disclosing any evaluation materials or utilizing data collected under this assignment for other uses beyond this assignment. Data must be securely retained or disposed according to UNICEF's policy on the disposal of records.

The communication strategy to disseminate evaluation findings and promote their utilization among relevant stakeholders will include:

- Publishing an evaluation report and distributing it among partners.
- Publishing an article or story covering evaluation findings on UNICEF ACO website and SharePoint in English, Dari and Pashto.
- Holding knowledge exchange meetings including webinars and PowerPoint presentations with relevant stakeholders to share evaluation findings and exchange ideas on utilization of evidence generated.

UNICEF is responsible for monitoring the dissemination of evaluation products and the uptake of evaluation findings and recommendations by Government and implementing partners. The evaluation results should contribute to evidence-based policy making and programming for children in Afghanistan.

Evaluation Team

The evaluation will be led by an Individual consultant who will lead the implementation of the assignment and work in collaboration with/supervise a national research/data collection partner, under the overall supervision of the Evaluation Manager (Research & Evaluation Specialist). The consultant will be responsible for timely and quality deliverables. The Team Leader must be in possession of the following:

- An advanced degree (PhD) in education, economics, public policy, political science, sociology, or other social science related field.
- At least ten years' experience in leading the design and conduct of evaluations of programmes focusing on adolescent girls, education and child marriage;
- Experience in the education sector and evaluating education programmes in emergency contexts, preferably in Afghanistan;
- Demonstrated ability to supervise and quality assure the work of national partners or subcontractors in a context that is politically and culturally sensitive.
- Demonstrated ability to work at the community level and to conduct analyses and pitch recommendations at both the operational and policy levels.
- Demonstrated ability to engage with children in an appropriate and ethical manner.
- Familiarity with or past experience working with UNICEF and/or other similar UN organizations or development agencies working on education programmes;
- Good understanding of human rights, equity and gender-based approaches to programming and research;
- Demonstrated ability to deliver high-quality written work in the English language, and to engage effectively with stakeholders at all levels.
- Ability and willingness to travel to Afghanistan at various stages during the evaluation.

The national research/data collection partner will be recruited independently by UNICEF to support the consultant in conducting fieldwork/data collection and will be supervised by and report directly to the consultant.

Conditions of Work

ACO SPEAR Section will support the Evaluation Team in desk research and data collection through provision of required background documents and datasets, plus establishing contacts with relevant stakeholders. The consultant is expected to make at least one trip to Kabul, preferably during the inception phase, and UNICEF ACO will provide support in terms of transport to and from the airport, accommodation within one of UNICEF's guesthouse (payable by the consultant), transport to field locations (airfare to be paid by consultant but road transport provided by UNICEF) and other administrative/logistical support where possible. The consultant will, where available, also be provided with office space during their stay in-country.

Nature of Penalty Clause to be stipulated in the contract:

In all cases, the contractor may only be paid their fees upon satisfactory completion of services. In such cases where payment of fees is to be made in a lump sum, this may only be payable upon completion of the services to UNICEF's satisfaction and certification to that effect.

Budget Year:	Requesting Section/Issuing Office:	Reasons why consultancy cannot be done by staff:
2020	SPEAR	<i>UNICEF's Evaluation Policy stipulates that all evaluations are conducted by an external entity to promote the principles of independence and impartiality</i>

Consultant selection method:	Request for:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Roster) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Advertisement/Desktop Review/Interview) <input type="checkbox"/> Single Sourcing (exceptional, only in emergency situations, approval by Head of Office required)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New SSA <input type="checkbox"/> Extension/ Amendment		
Name (in case of single sourcing/extension) N/A	Justification or Refer to NFR (in case of single sourcing/extension) N/A		
Supervisor: <i>Ivan Ssenkubuge, Research & Evaluation Specialist, SPEAR Section</i>	Start Date: <i>4 months from signing of contract</i>	End Date: <i>80 days over a 4-month period</i>	Number of Days (working)

The **evaluation phases**, including duration and payment detail, are presented below.

Deliverables/Activities:	Timeframe	Payment Schedule
Inception Phase		
1. Conduct desk review of all documents, data, and information relevant to the AWLI programme including baseline and monitoring reports 2. Undertake in-country interviews with key informants from programme stakeholders 3. Develop sampling strategy and identify a valid evaluation sample 4. Validation of existing adolescent programming ToC and further development where gaps exist 5. Develop evaluation methodology, analytical framework, and data collection tools 6. Produce Inception Report and submit to ERG members for review and feedback. The report must be cleared by the ERG before it is finalized. The consultant will be required to revise the inception report based on comments provided. The inception report and evaluation methods must meet UNEG quality standards and norms.	25 Days	25%

Deliverables:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluation sample developed 2. Valid methodology and analytical framework 3. Data collection tools finalized, translated and programmed in Kobo/ODK/SurveyCTO 4. Draft inception report for feedback from ERG 5. Final Inception Report with feedback from ERG incorporated 6. Presentation of finalized Inception Report to ERG 		
Data collection phase		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop training materials for data collection team 2. Train data collection team recruited through national data collection partner firm on evaluation methods, protocols, and specific data collection tools. It is essential that the trainings cover ethical and quality assurance procedures of UNICEF 3. Assure the quality of the trainings for the fieldwork team members and their capacity to conduct quality data collection. 4. Conduct pilot testing outside main study areas. Data collection tools should be tested properly and adjusted according to the pilot test results, if necessary. 5. Supervise data collection, scrutinize and clean data, and submit daily progress reports to UNICEF. 6. Compile fieldwork report with initial findings from data collection exercises and other relevant information from the field and submit at the end of the field work. 	30 days	50%
Deliverables:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training report at conclusion of training of field teams 2. Weekly fieldwork progress reports 		

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Clean datasets, interview/FGD transcripts, photographs, and any other data collection outputs 4. Fieldwork report with all relevant study information |
|---|

Analysis & report writing phase		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data 2. Produce and share draft evaluation report with ERG 3. Revise draft evaluation report based on feedback from ERG. 4. Submit final evaluation report and present evaluation findings, lessons learned and recommendations to ERG and other stakeholders. 5. Present study findings, lessons learned, recommendations to stakeholders 	25 days	25%
<p>Deliverables:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clean data analysis files 2. Initial draft evaluation report for feedback from ERG 3. Revised draft evaluation Report with feedback from ERG incorporated 4. Finalized full evaluation report with study findings, lessons learned, recommendations, plus 2-4-page report summary/brief with infographics 5. PowerPoint presentation of evaluation findings, lessons learned, recommendations, etc. to programme stakeholders 		

G.2 ANNEX 2: Integration of gender, equity & human rights in the evaluation

Indicator	Yes	No	More Info needed
<input type="checkbox"/> i Reference and use of rights-based framework, and/or CRC, and/or CCC, and/or CEDAW and/or other rights related benchmarks in the design of the evaluation.	X		
<input type="checkbox"/> ii Clear description of the level of participation of key rights holders and duty bearers in the conduct of the evaluation (for example, a reference group is established, stakeholders are involved as informants or in data gathering).	X		
<input type="checkbox"/> iii Language is empowering and inclusive, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> avoiding gender <input type="radio"/> avoiding heterosexual, avoiding age, avoiding cultural and avoiding religious bias, among others; <input type="radio"/> use terminology of rights holders and duty bearers; <input type="radio"/> data is disaggregated by marginalized group; <input type="radio"/> differential results are assessed (distribution of results across different groups). 	X		
<input type="checkbox"/> iv Evaluation assesses the extent to which the implementation of the intervention addresses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> child rights and Leave No-one Behind. <input type="radio"/> Gender (and other excluded and marginalized groups). <input type="radio"/> disability and inclusiveness. 	X		
Question 22. Does the evaluation meet UN SWAP evaluation performance indicators? (Note: this question will be rated according to UN SWAP standards)?			
GEEW is integrated in the Evaluation Scope of analysis, and evaluation criteria and questions are designed in a way that ensures GEEW-related data will be collected.	X		
1. Does the evaluation assess whether sufficient information was collected during the implementation period on specific result indicators to measure progress on human rights and gender equality results?	X		
2. Does the evaluation include an objective specific to assessment of human rights and gender equality considerations or was it mainstreamed in other objectives?	X		

Indicator	Yes	No	More Info needed
3. Was a standalone criterion on gender and/or human rights included in the evaluation framework or mainstreamed into other evaluation criteria?			
4. Is there a dedicated evaluation question or sub-question regarding how GEEW was integrated into the subject of the evaluation?		X	The whole evaluation is about gender equality.
<input type="checkbox"/> ii A gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools, and data analysis techniques are selected. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a. Does the evaluation specify how gender issues are addressed in the methodology, including: how data collection and analysis methods integrate gender considerations and ensure data collected is disaggregated by sex? ○ b. Does the evaluation methodology employ a mixed-methods approach, appropriate to evaluating GEWE considerations? ○ c. Are a diverse range of data sources and processes employed (i.e. triangulation, validation) to guarantee inclusion, accuracy and credibility? ○ d. Does the evaluation methods and sampling frame address the diversity of stakeholders affected by the intervention, particularly the most vulnerable, where appropriate? ○ e. Were ethical standards considered throughout the evaluation and were all stakeholder groups treated with integrity and respect for confidentiality? 	X		The whole evaluation is about gender equality.
<input type="checkbox"/> iii The evaluation Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations reflect a gender analysis. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a. Does the evaluation have a background section that includes an intersectional analysis of the specific social groups affected by the issue or spell out the relevant normative instruments or policies related to human rights and gender equality? ○ b. Do the findings include data analysis that explicitly and transparently triangulates the voices of different social role groups, and/or disaggregates quantitative data, where applicable? 	X		Yes. Please see quality assurance section under methodology annex.

Indicator	Yes	No	More Info needed
○ c. Are unanticipated effects of the intervention on human rights and gender equality described?	X		
○ d. Does the evaluation report provide specific recommendations addressing GEWE issues,, and priorities for action to improve GEWE or the intervention or future initiatives in this area?	X		

G.3 ANNEX 3: Consulted Resources

National Sources

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International Fund for Agricultural Development

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Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues

<https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/secretary-of-state/office-of-global-womens-issues>

SPHERE standards

<http://www.spherehandbook.org/en/what-is-sphere/>

World Food Programmes Data on Afghanistan

<https://www.wfp.org/countries/afghanistan>

UNFPA Data on Afghanistan

<https://afghanistan.unfpa.org/en/node/15227>

UNICEF Social Indicators for Afghanistan

<https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/adolescent-health-and-development>;

<https://data.unicef.org/country/afq/>

The World Bank Data on Afghanistan

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/afghanistan>

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD>

G.4 ANNEX 4: Communities & Individuals Selection Criteria

The selection criteria for the three provinces was:

- 1) **Regional representation.** One province in all three regions was selected. There was one province located in the North (i.e., Samangan) and one in the East (i.e., Nangahar). However, there were three provinces located in the Western Region (i.e., Herat, Farah, Ghor). Herat was prioritized, however, as it was the only province with the unconditional grant component;
- 2) **Population density:** The province's population is an important element which directly influences the extent to which community engagement and social and behaviour change (SBC) interventions are effective. The two selected provinces in the East and North are primarily rural. Therefore, Herat was selected, because compared to the other two provinces in the Western Region (Farah and Ghor), it has the highest population density;¹⁷⁸ and
- 3) All provinces **must** be safe for the data collection teams.

The major sampling characteristics used to identify the three districts within Herat, Nangahar, and Samangan were:

- 1) **Natural Disasters:** Presence of critical risk factors which reflect exceptional hardships such as the prevalence of natural disasters (e.g., drought and floods) which would exacerbate poverty conditions. This would, in turn, put pressures on families to resort to engaging in negative coping mechanisms, such as early marriage;
- 2) **Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):** Communities which have IDPs provide a different context in which the programme works;
- 3) **Favourable (or Lack of) Economic Conditions:** This situation would influence the extent to which families may support themselves. For example, in Samangan province's district of Roi-do-ab, there is the coalmine industry which could help to alleviate poverty conditions;
- 4) **Peri-Urban versus Isolated Areas:** Communities residing in these two different areas would influence the extent to which families are aware of the perils of early marriage as well as the degree to which they resort to early marriage.
- 5) **Security situation.** All communities to be visited **must** be safe for travel for the data collection teams; and
- 6) Respondents in each selected province and district are not only familiar with the programme activities but may have experienced more than one component of the programme.

The process of sampling at the **sub-district levels** included the following steps:

- 1) QARA, with the assistance of the IP, conducted a review of all of the available "villages" or communities where the programme was implemented;
- 2) The team sampled individuals from all three out of four available communities to ensure representativeness, while meeting the sampling criteria of individuals having participated in at least two different programme activities. After it was discovered that not too many programme participants had experienced at least two programme activities, the team began to focus on those who had been exposed to the community-based livelihoods training, mini media club, been a recipient of an unconditional cash grant, and visited the safe spaces.
- 3) In Herat, many participants invited for an interview met the team at the community center, but in Samangan, the team went house to house. In Nangahar, the team undertook a combination of both methods to interview programme participants.

¹⁷⁸ Ghor is very rural, as it is the 27th most urbanized province in Afghanistan. Similarly, Farah, ranking as the 18th most urbanized province, has few urban dwellers. In contrast, Herat, ranks as the second most populated province in Afghanistan behind Kabul Province. Source: National Statistics and Information Authority, formerly known as the Central Statistics Organization (2021). Estimated Population of Afghanistan 2020-21, Table 3: Estimated Population of Country by Zone, Sex, and Residence in 2021, page 4.

G.5 ANNEX 5: List of Stakeholders Interviewed in Kabul, Herat, & Remotely

Name	Position	METHOD		Organization	Gender
		Interview	FGD		
UNICEF and UNFPA					
1. Sheema San Gupta	Deputy Representative	Interview \ Remote		UNICEF	Male
2. Ivan Ssenkubuge	Evaluation and Research Specialist	Interview		UNICEF	Male
3. Aye Aye Than	Youth & Adolescent Development Specialist	Interview		UNICEF	Female
4. Stanley Gwavuya	Chief Social Policy, Evaluation and Research Unit (SPEAR)	Report review		UNICEF	Male
5. Susan Yazdani	Education Officer, Herat	Interview		UNICEF	Female
6. Dr. Mohammad Nawrooz Ibrahimi	Child Protection Officer	Interview		UNICEF	Male
7. Anita Haidary	Education Specialist/Adolescent Focal - Eastern Region, Nangarhar	Interview		UNICEF	Female
8. Zahida Stanekzai	WASH Officer	Interview		UNICEF	Female
9. Abdul Karim Abid	Logistic and Supply Officer for Education Section	Interview		UNICEF	Male
10. Najiba Haidary	Community for Development Officer/Youth focal	Interview		UNICEF	Female
11. Veronica Njikho	Gender Specialist	Interview		UNICEF	Female
12. Dr. Noor Muhammad Murad	Adolescent and Youth Specialist,	Interview \ Remote		UNFPA	Male
13. Zakia Maroof	Nutrition Specialist	Interview		UNICEF	Female
14. Nienke Voppen	Programme Specialist-Cash Based Assistance and Social Protection	Interview		UNICEF	Female
15. Shahabuddin Hamdard	C4D Specialist	Interview		UNICEF	Female
16. Urs Nagel	Chief of SPEAR (from 2017-September 2018)	Interview \ Remote		UNICEF	Male
17. Lakshmi Balaji	Former Deputy Representative (from 2014-2016)	Interview \ Remote		UNICEF	Male

Name	Position	METHOD		Organization	Gender
		Interview	FGD		
18. Nasir Ahmad Samet, MD and MBA	Education Officer	Interview		UNICEF, Western Region Herat Province	Male
Civil Society Organizations					
19. Rayana Fazli	National Manager, Education (Program) Aga Khan Foundation	Interview \ Remote		UNICEF	Female
Partners					
20. Rayana Fazli	National Manager, Education Programme	Interview		Aga Khan Foundation	Female
21. Maliha Malikpour	Team Leader	Interview		ACTIONAID Afghanistan	Female
22. Ghafar Wafa	Provincial Coordinator Ghor	Interview		Organization of Human Welfare (OHW)	Male
23. Sayed Jouhar Shah Jalali	District Manager	Interview		Organization of Human Welfare (OHW)	Male
24. Shahabuddin Hamdard	Program Manager	Interview		Organization of Human Welfare (OHW)	Male
25. Reza Arman	Head of Programme	Interview		Organization of Human Welfare (OHW)	Male
26. Mr. Walayat Raihan	Executive Director	Interview		Empowerment Centre for Women (ECW)	Male
FGD1 Implementing Partners, Management					
27. Said Wase Sayedi	Executive Director Herat		FGD	Women Activities and Social Services Association (WASSA)	Male
28. Masoud Aref	M&E Officer		FGD	WASSA	Male
29. Hamid Nasibi	Programme Manager		FGD	WASSA	Male
FGD2 Implementing Partners, Non-Management					
30. Sajid	Facilitator		FGD	WASSA	Male
31. Afghan	Facilitator		FGD	WASSA	Male
32. Towab	Facilitator		FGD	WASSA	Male
33. Hamid Zadeh	District Officer		FGD	WASSA	Male
34. Hazrat	Change Agent		FGD	WASSA	Male
35. Massoud	M&E Officer		FGD	WASSA	Male
36. Wasima	Change Agent		FGD	WASSA	Female
37. Dr. Niyazi	Change Agent		FGD	WASSA	Male

Name	Position	METHOD		Organization	Gender
		Interview	FGD		
FGD3 Programme Participants					
38. Ravina	Adolescent girl, age 16		FGD	Mini Media Club	Female
39. Rardina	Adolescent girl, age 16		FGD	Mini Media Club	Female
40. Farzane	Adolescent girl, age 16		FGD	Mini Media Club	Female
41. Samira	Adolescent girl, age 16		FGD	Mini Media Club	Female
42. Forouhar	Adolescent girl, age 17		FGD	Mini Media Club	Female
43. Sadiqa Hashimi	Mini Media Club Facilitator		FGD	Mini Media Club	Female
FGD4 Programme Participants					
44. Narges Ahmadi	Adolescent girl, 17 years old		FGD	Safe Space	Female
45. Laila Temori	Adolescent girl, 18 years old		FGD	Safe Space	Female
46. Samira Amiri	Adolescent girl, 18 years old		FGD	Safe Space	Female
47. Zahra Ghulami	Counselor and survivor of child marriage, 29 years old		FGD	Safe Space	Female
FGD5 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Federal Level					
48. Alauis Sayed Alishoh	Child Health Advisor		FGD	IRoA, Ministry of Public Health	Male
49. Motawali Younusi	Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illness (IMNCI)		FGD	IRoA, Ministry of Public Health	Male
50. Rasoul Peerzad	Adolescent Health Senior Officer		FGD	IRoA, Ministry of Public Health	Male
FGD6 Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Provincial Level					
51. Noorullah Poogesh Karnail	In charge of Herat Department of Education, Planning Section		FGD	Directorate of Education	Male
52. Zabehullah Jami	In, In charge of Herat Education Monthly Magazine		FGD	Directorate of Education	Male
53. Basir Ahmed	Technical Officer		FGD	Directorate of Education	Male
54. Masoud Arif	In charge of Monitoring AWL activities		FGD	Directorate of Education	Male

G.6 ANNEX 6: Qualitative Sample at a Glance

QUALITATIVE SAMPLE AT A GLANCE

PROVINCES

HERAT



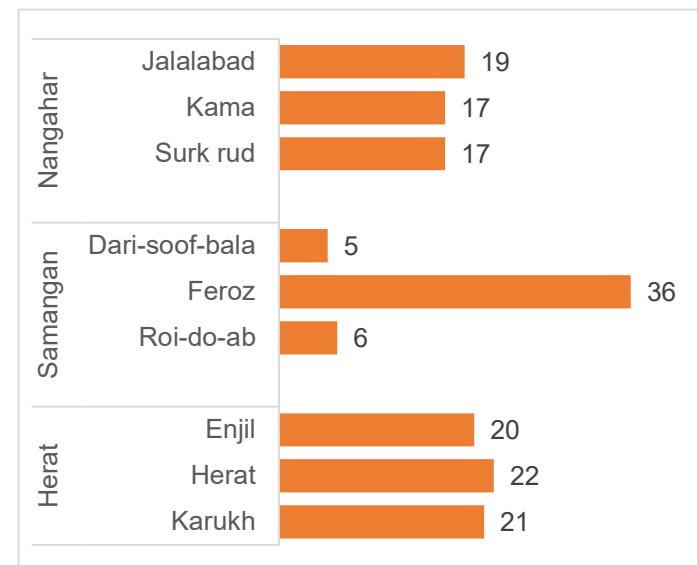
	FREQUENCY	% WITHIN GROUP SAMPLE	% OVERALL SAMPLE
Adolescent Female	27	42.9	39%
Parent-Mother	12	19.0	
Parent-Father	10	15.9	
Religious Leader	2	3.2	
Comm Leader	3	4.8	
Adolescent Male	7	11.1	
Sister	1	1.6	
Total	62	98.4	
Missing ¹⁷⁹	1	1.6	
Total	63	100%	
Adolescent Female	26	49.1	32%
Parent-Mother	8	15.1	
Parent-Father	5	9.4	
Religious Leader	3	5.7	
Comm Leader	3	5.7	
Adolescent Male	8	15.1	
Total	53	100%	
Adolescent Female	23	48.9	29%
Parent-Mother	9	19.1	
Parent-Father	5	10.6	
Religious Leader	3	6.4	
Comm Leader	2	4.3	
Adolescent Male	5	10.6	
Total	47	100%	
TOTAL	163	100%	
Female			66%
Male			34%

SEX

¹⁷⁹ Not clear if mother or father in Herat

OVERALL SAMPLE

n=163



Interviews for
Community-Based
Livelihood Training

3

Interviews for
Community-
Based Life Skills
Training

4

Interviews
for Multi-
Media Club

4

Interviews for
Safe Space

2

Interviews
with Cash
Grant

9

Community
Dialogues
combined with
Reflect
Circles

140

G.7 ANNEX 7: Data Collection Instruments

-Adolescent Girls

	<p>INTRODUCTION: My name is _____ . I am a researcher working for an Afghan research company called QARA, based in Kabul. We are conducting a review of the AWLI programme. We are speaking with a number of people from this community who benefitted from AWLI.</p> <p>PURPOSE: We would like to collect/know your thoughts on this work. Your experience is very valuable, and your feedback will help UNICEF to improve their work in the future. There is no right or wrong answer for the questions that we are going to ask you.</p>
<p>INFORMED CONSENT: Your participation is voluntary. None of your feedback will bear any negative consequences for future support from UNICEF, for your district, your community or yourself. If you agree to participate, at any moment, you can stop participating without any penalty. Being in this interview or not will not affect the benefits to you, your family, or community from UNICEF. We will keep your inputs anonymous.</p> <p>CONFIDENTIALITY: Everything that you tell is confidential, and no one-besides the research team (including the Team Leader, Supervisors, and translators)-will see this information. The information will be combined with other information to create general findings, and this interview should take less than one hour of your time. We are using a recording device only to assist in note-taking, and this recording will be destroyed after this evaluation is finished.</p> <p>AGREEMENT TO INFORMED CONSENT: Are you willing to be part of this qualitative interview? (verbal response only requested)</p>	

location

Province _____

District _____

gender

Female (code is 1)

age

Five Parts

Specific Questions

Introduction

Describe the different programme activities that you participated in [Mark all that is mentioned]:

- Community dialogue [Explore: how many have you been to?]
- Reflection Circles [Explore: how many have you attended?]
- Safe Spaces [Explore: how often gone to the safe spaces? What do you do there?]
- Mini-Media Club [Explore how often have you been to the club? What do you do there?]
- Exposed to any advocacy from a facilitator
- Life skills education sessions [How many sessions attended? All 10? Why not?]
- Other _____

[A] Expectations	In the beginning, I would like to know what were you expecting? [ask for each activity mentioned]
This section helps the respondent to remember what messages to which they were exposed.	Do you remember hearing any messages about why early marriage is harmful? Or Messages about the importance of educating girls? What was the message?
The adolescent has to remember the messages about:	Where did you hear these messages? What was the specific activity? Prompt the following activities.
(1) why early marriage is harmful; and (2) the importance of continuing education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Community dialogue? <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Circles ? <input type="checkbox"/> Mini Media clubs? <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Spaces? <input type="checkbox"/> Exposed to any advocacy from a facilitator
[B] SATISFACTION & Behaviour	After going through those activities, it is possible that they will remember other messages that were presented during that time. Note those messages as well.
This section measures if the adolescent was satisfied with her experiences. Also try to examine the interpersonal communication.	Now, thinking about these messages and activities, I would like to know how satisfied you were with these activities.
	Were these activities something that you were interested in?
	Did you have a chance to talk to anyone about early marriage? If yes, with whom did you talk about these important things? [Friend, parent, sibling]
	What about having the chance to talk to anyone about the importance of girls education? If yes, with whom did you talk about these important things? [Friend, parent, sibling]
	How did you communicate? [i.e., in person, WhatsApp, online]?
	If no, do you wish you could have someone to discuss these issues related to early marriage and education goals?
	Do this for each activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Community dialogue <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Circles <input type="checkbox"/> Mini Media clubs <input type="checkbox"/> Life skills education sessions <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Space
	In this exchange, please note that the adolescent can only recall that an exchange happened, and he or she may not be able to connect it to a specific activity.

This question measures the self-expression of delaying marriage.

This question measures the self expression of continuing schooling.

This question measures how the message(s) about delaying marriage may translate into action.

This question measure how the message(s) about pursuing education may translate into action.

[C] CHALLENGES

If possible, please give me an example where you were able to say that **early marriage was harmful**. [There should be a short story here]

If possible, please give me an example where you were able to say that **continuing schooling was important to you**. [There should be a short story here]

Do you have friends who are getting married early? [Y/N] Is this important?

Do you have friends who are continuing education? [Y/N] Is this important?

[D] Quick Survey

Indicate how you feel about the four statements:

1. “I see early marriage going away in the future...”
2. “My family is/parents are changing their thinking about early marriage.”
3. “My family is/parents are changing their thinking about continuing my education.”
4. My Imam [community leader] is ready to change about early marriage”

AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE

Translated items are in this picture below:

	<p>INTRODUCTION: My name is _____ . I am a researcher working for an Afghan research company called QARA, based in Kabul. We are conducting a review of the AWLI programme. We are speaking with a number of people from this community who benefitted from AWLI.</p> <p>PURPOSE: We would like to collect/know your thoughts on this work. Your experience is very valuable, and your feedback will help UNICEF to improve their work in the future. There is no right or wrong answer for the questions that we are going to ask you.</p>
<p>INFORMED CONSENT: Your participation is voluntary. None of your feedback will bear any negative consequences for future support from UNICEF, for your district, your community or yourself. If you agree to participate, at any moment, you can stop participating without any penalty. Being in this interview or not will not affect the benefits to you, your family, or community from UNICEF. We will keep your inputs anonymous.</p> <p>CONFIDENTIALITY: Everything that you tell is confidential, and no one-besides the research team (including the Team Leader, Supervisors, and translators)-will see this information. The information will be combined with other information to create general findings, and this interview should take less than one hour of your time. We are using a recording device only to assist in note-taking, and this recording will be destroyed after this evaluation is finished.</p> <p>AGREEMENT TO INFORMED CONSENT: Are you willing to be part of this qualitative interview? (verbal response only requested)</p>	

location	Province_____	District_____
gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Female (code is 1)	
age		
FOUR PARTS	Specific Questions	
Introduction	Describe the different programme activities that you participated in [Mark all that is mentioned]:	
This section measures the scope of utilization of services.	<input type="checkbox"/> Unconditional Grant [Received grant? Yes/No; What date?] <input type="checkbox"/> Community dialogue [Explore: how many have you been to?] <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Circles [Explore: how many have you attended?] <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Spaces [Explore: how often gone to the safe spaces? What do you do there?] <input type="checkbox"/> Mini-Media Club [Explore how often have you been to the club? What do you do there?] <input type="checkbox"/> Exposed to any advocacy from a facilitator <input type="checkbox"/> Life skills education sessions [How many sessions attended? All 10? Why not?] <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
This happened last year, and so it will take a few minutes to recall.		

[A] Expectations	In the beginning, when you and your family first heard about the unconditional cash grant, I would like to know what were you expecting? There should be a story here.
[B] Exposure to Messages This section helps the respondent to remember what messages to which they were exposed.	Do you remember hearing any messages about funding to support girls' education with the grant? What were the messages?
[C] ACCESSING THE GRANT	How did you and your family go and receive the grant? There should be a story here.
Process of receiving the funds	Were you treated with respect when you received the money? Did you know about a hotline to voice a complaint? If yes, did you use it? How were the funds given to you?
Money management	Did you put the funds in the bank?
[D] UTILIZATION OF THE GRANT	Describe how your family used the grant? What did you buy? There should be a story here. If the funds were used as intended, the input should set her apart from the others who did not receive funding. Note the example that is provided here.
[D] importance OF Having Decision-Making Power This section measures if the adolescent was satisfied with her experiences. Also try to examine how important the grant was in pursuing education. This question measures the self-expression of delaying marriage. This question measures the self-expression of	Now, please tell me how the funds were used [Probe: for continuing your education]? There should be a story that begins with..."We used the funds to do x...." or Were these funds important for your family? Yes or No...If yes, how important were the funds.... There should be a story that begins with...."Without this money, I would not have the opportunity make a decision to study more in school..." If no...Please tell us why the funds were not important. If possible, please give me an example where you were able to say that early marriage was harmful . [There should be a short story here] If possible, please give me an example where you were able to say that continuing schooling was important to you . [There should be a short story here]

continuing
schooling.

This question
measures how the
message(s) about
delaying marriage
may translate into
action.

This question
measure how the
message(s) about
pursuing education
may translate into
action.

[E] CHALLENGES

Do you have friends who are getting married early? [Y/N] Is this important?

Do you have friends who are continuing education? [Y/N] Is this important?

[F] Quick Survey

Indicate how you feel about the four statements:

5. "I see early marriage going away in the future..."
6. "My family is/parents are changing their thinking about early marriage."
7. "My family is/parents are changing their thinking about continuing my education."
8. My Imam [community leader] is ready to change about early marriage"

AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE

Translated items are in this picture below:

	<p>INTRODUCTION: My name is _____ . I am a researcher working for an Afghan research company called QARA, based in Kabul. We are conducting a review of the AWLI programme. We are speaking with a number of people from this community who benefitted from AWLI.</p> <p>PURPOSE: We would like to collect/know your thoughts on this work. Your experience is very valuable, and your feedback will help UNICEF to improve their work in the future. There is no right or wrong answer for the questions that we are going to ask you.</p>
<p>INFORMED CONSENT: Your participation is voluntary. None of your feedback will bear any negative consequences for future support from UNICEF, for your district, your community or yourself. If you agree to participate, at any moment, you can stop participating without any penalty. Being in this interview or not will not affect the benefits to you, your family, or community from UNICEF. We will keep your inputs anonymous.</p> <p>CONFIDENTIALITY: Everything that you tell is confidential, and no one-besides the research team (including the Team Leader, Supervisors, and translators)-will see this information. The information will be combined with other information to create general findings, and this interview should take less than one hour of your time. We are using a recording device only to assist in note-taking, and this recording will be destroyed after this evaluation is finished.</p> <p>AGREEMENT TO INFORMED CONSENT: Are you willing to be part of this qualitative interview? (verbal response only requested)</p>	

location	Province_____	District_____
gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male (code is 0)	
age		
Five Parts	Specific Questions	
Introduction	[A] Think back to the beginning when you first heard about the programme.	
This section measures the scope of utilization of services.	Let the respondent think back to those days. It will take a minute or two to recall. If they have trouble remembering, ask them. Please describe the different programme activities that you participated in [Mark all that is mentioned]:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Community dialogue [Explore: how many have you been to?] <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Circles [Explore: how many have you attended?] <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Spaces [Explore: how often gone to the safe spaces? What do you do there?] <input type="checkbox"/> Mini-Media Club [Explore how often have you been to the club? What do you do there?] <input type="checkbox"/> Exposed to any advocacy from a facilitator <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
This happened last year, and so it will take a few minutes to recall.		

[A] Expectations	In the beginning, I would like to know what were you expecting? [ask for each activity mentioned]
This section helps the respondent to remember what messages to which they were exposed.	Do you remember hearing any messages about why early marriage is harmful? Or Messages about the importance of educating girls? What was the message? Can you give me an example?
The adolescent has to remember the messages about:	Where did you hear these messages? What was the specific activity? Prompt the following activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Community dialogue? <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Circles ? <input type="checkbox"/> Mini Media clubs? <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Spaces?
(1) why early marriage is harmful; and (2) the importance of continuing education	After going through those activities, it is possible that they will remember other messages that were presented during that time. Note those messages as well.
[B] SATISFACTION & Behaviour	Now, thinking about these messages and activities, I would like to know how satisfied you were with these activities.
This section measures if the adolescent was satisfied with her experiences. Also try to examine the interpersonal communication..	Were these activities something that you were interested in? Did you have a chance to talk to anyone about early marriage? If yes, with whom did you talk about these important things? [Friend, parent, sibling] What about having the chance to talk to anyone about the importance of girls education? If yes, with whom did you talk about these important things? [Friend, parent, sibling] How did you communicate? [i.e., in person, WhatsApp, online]?
	If no, do you wish you could have someone to discuss these issues related to early marriage and education goals? Do this for each activity..... <input type="checkbox"/> Community dialogue <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Circles <input type="checkbox"/> Mini Media Club <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Space

In this exchange, please note that the adolescent can only recall that an exchange happened, and he may not be able to connect it to a specific activity.

If possible, please give me an example where you were able to say to someone else that early marriage was harmful. [There should be a short story here]

This question measures how the message about delaying marriage may translate into action.

This question measures how the message(s) about pursuing education may translate into action.

[c] what would determine the future?

Do you have friends who are getting married to a young bride? [Y/N] How do you feel about this? Do you think that this is important?

If possible, please give me an example where you were able to say [to someone] that girls being able to **continue schooling was important**. [There should be a short story here]

No right or wrong answer, in your opinion, what does it take to end child marriage or early marriage in Afghanistan?

[D] Quick Survey

Indicate how you feel about the four statements:

9. "I see early marriage going away in the future..."
10. "My family is/parents are changing their thinking about early marriage."
11. "My family is/parents are changing their thinking about continuing my education."
12. My Imam [community leader] is ready to change about early marriage"

AGREE (1)	NO OPINION (2)	DISAGREE (3)

	<p>INTRODUCTION: My name is _____ . I am a researcher working for an Afghan research company called QARA, based in Kabul. We are conducting a review of the AWLI programme. We are speaking with a number of people from this community who benefitted from AWLI.</p> <p>PURPOSE: We would like to collect/know your thoughts on this work. Your experience is very valuable, and your feedback will help UNICEF to improve their work in the future. There is no right or wrong answer for the questions that we are going to ask you.</p>
<p>INFORMED CONSENT: Your participation is voluntary. None of your feedback will bear any negative consequences for future support from UNICEF, for your district, your community or yourself. If you agree to participate, at any moment, you can stop participating without any penalty. Being in this interview or not will not affect the benefits to you, your family, or community from UNICEF. We will keep your inputs anonymous.</p> <p>CONFIDENTIALITY: Everything that you tell is confidential, and no one-besides the research team (including the Team Leader, Supervisors, and translators)-will see this information. The information will be combined with other information to create general findings, and this interview should take less than one hour of your time. We are using a recording device only to assist in note-taking, and this recording will be destroyed after this evaluation is finished.</p> <p>AGREEMENT TO INFORMED CONSENT: Are you willing to be part of this qualitative interview? (verbal response only requested)</p>	

location	Province _____	District _____
gender	<input type="checkbox"/> FATHER (code is 0)	MOTHER (code is 1)
age		
Five Parts	Specific Areas to Ask Questions About	
Introduction	Describe the different programme activities that you participated in [Mark all that is mentioned]:	
This section measures the scope of utilization of services	<input type="checkbox"/> Community dialogue [How many have you been to?] <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection Circles [How many have you attended?] <input type="checkbox"/> Shurah <input type="checkbox"/> Exposed to any advocacy from a facilitator <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

For each activity mentioned, ask the following questions:

[A] Expectations This section measures the most important messages that the person can	Now, I want you to think back to the beginning when you first heard about the programme What were you expecting?
---	---

remember...This may take some time..	Let the respondent think back to those days. If they have trouble remembering, ask them to remember the activity again.	
This section helps the respondent to remember what messages to which they were exposed. [B] SATISFACTION & Behaviour	Do you remember hearing any messages about why early marriage is harmful? Or Messages about the importance of educating girls? What was the message? Can you give me an example?	
This section measures if the respondent was satisfied with his or her experiences. Also try to examine the interpersonal communication..	Now, thinking about these messages and activities, I would like to know how satisfied you were with these activities.	
Relevance	Were these activities something that you were interested in?	
	Was the programme design appropriate? If yes, what were the or desirable components? If no, what were the undesirable components?	
	Do you know how the people were targeted to participate in the programme? If yes, how well was this job done [Probe: implementation was done as community wished or without their engagement] If no, skip to the next question.	
Effectiveness	Can you give an example of a time when you used some of the skills that you learned from the programme activities? Yes/No. If yes, please explain.	
Challenges	What were the challenges in each of those activities you described?	
Impact	In your opinion, how much of a difference is this work making in your community?	
[E] CHALLENGES	No right or wrong answer, in your opinion, what does it take to end child marriage or early marriage in Afghanistan?	
	Indicate how you feel about the four statements:	
	13. "I see early marriage going away in the future..."	YES (1)
	14. "I do not agree with early marriage."	No (0)
	15. "I want my daughter to continue her education."	
	16. My Imam [religious or community leader] is ready to change about early marriage"	

Coded as "1" for yes and "0" for no.

KIIs-UNICEF-Management

Introduction: Hello, my name is _____ an Independent Evaluator. We are conducting an evaluation of the AWLI programme.

The **purpose** of the summative evaluation is to contribute to evidence-based and risk-informed programming on increasing access of out-of-school (OoS) adolescent girls to secondary education and changing societal perceptions on child marriage practices and girls' empowerment in Afghanistan.

Informed consent: Your participation is **voluntary**. You can stop at any time or say no.

Confidentiality: Everything that you tell is confidential, and no one will see this information. The information will be combined with other information to create general findings, and this interview should take no more than 30-45 minutes of your time.

Do you agree to take part in this interview? The respondent must agree.

To begin, tell me about your role and how long you have been working in Afghanistan.

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	QUESTIONS
UNICEF	<p>Tell us how this programme began?</p> <p>How did this office decide on the five provinces: 1) Nangarhar; 2) Samangan; 3) Ghor; 4) Herat; and 5) Farah?</p> <p>If possible, please tell me about the messages that are used for this programme: Probe: [How they were developed; Materials distribution? Methods to measure effectiveness of the materials. Where the stakeholders who saw or used this information have the opportunity to weigh in ?]</p> <p>Please tell me about the vocational education sessions for adolescent. From your perspective, how has this programme evolved over the years? How has the programme adapted its targeting of vulnerable groups? [Probe for the effectiveness of modalities used]</p> <p>In your opinion, please describe the importance of this programme in addressing early marriage and the promotion of girl's schooling in Afghanistan?</p> <p>How can the implementation of the programme be improved?</p> <p>Do you know of any other early marriage programmes ongoing in Afghanistan? [Probe for examples]</p> <p>What are the most notable challenges? Please give an example.</p>

What are the key factors that would strengthen the sustainability of this programme?
KII's-UNICEF Sector Offices

Introduction: Hello, my name is _____ an Independent Evaluator. We are conducting an evaluation of the AWLI programme.

The **purpose** of the summative evaluation is to contribute to evidence-based and risk-informed programming on increasing access of out-of-school (OoS) adolescent girls to secondary education and changing societal perceptions on child marriage practices and girls' empowerment in Afghanistan.

Informed consent: Your participation is **voluntary**. You can stop at any time or say no.

Confidentiality: Everything that you tell is confidential, and no one will see this information. The information will be combined with other information to create general findings, and this interview should take no more than 30-45 minutes of your time.

Do you agree to take part in this interview? The respondent must agree.

To begin, tell me about your role and how long you have been working in Afghanistan.

STAKEHOLDER GROUPS	QUESTIONS
UNICEF – Other Sectors	Tell me how your office contributed to AWLI. [Probe: There is a cross disciplinary aspect to adolescent programming throughout this UNICEF office. Examine the synergies that have evolved over the past year].
Adolescent Education	Please tell me about the messages that are used for this programme: Probe: [How they were conceived?; Materials distribution? Methods to measure effectiveness of the materials? Where the stakeholders who saw or used this information have the opportunity to weigh in ?] [Need samples to take to the field]
Support from Gender	In your view, how relevant has this programme been?
Adolescent Health	What are the most notable challenges in programming in this area? Give an example.
Adolescent Hygiene	How can the implementation of programme be improved? What are some of the lessons learned that you can share?
Adolescent Nutrition	What are the other early marriage programmes ongoing in Afghanistan?
Adolescent Protection	What would you like to see from this evaluation?
	In your opinion, what will it take to reduce early marriage in Afghanistan?
For Unconditional Cash Grant Modality only	What are the key factors that would strengthen the sustainability of this programme component?
For the Procurement of Supplies only	What were the supplies procured for the last phase of this project? [Confirm timing in December 2020]

KIIs-IRoA

Introduction: Hello, my name is _____ an Independent Evaluator. We are conducting an evaluation of the AWLI programme.

The **purpose** of the summative evaluation is to contribute to evidence-based and risk-informed programming on increasing access of out-of-school (OoS) adolescent girls to secondary education and changing societal perceptions on child marriage practices and girls' empowerment in Afghanistan.

Informed consent: Your participation is **voluntary**. You can stop at any time or say no.

Confidentiality: Everything that you tell is confidential, and no one-besides the research team (including the Team Leader, Supervisors, and translators)-will see this information. The information will be combined with other information to create general findings, and this interview should take no more than 30-45 minutes of your time. We are using a recording device only to assist in note-taking, and this recording will be destroyed after this evaluation is finished.

Do you agree to take part in this interview? The respondent must agree.

To begin, tell me about your role and how long you have been working in this institution.

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	QUESTIONS
Central Level	How much interaction with the programme have you had? Give an example. How relevant do you see this programme in Afghanistan? How effective do you believe the activities are? What are the challenges? [Probe: reaching out to most vulnerable]. What could have been improved?
Provincial Level	In your opinion, what will it take to reduce early marriage in Afghanistan? How much interaction with the programme have you had? Give an example. How relevant do you see this programme in Afghanistan? How effective do you believe the activities are? What are the challenges? Give an example. What recommendations for improving the: Workshops, community dialogues; training-if any, other would you give? Please give examples. How practical is it to reach out to the most vulnerable? In your opinion, what will it take to reduce early marriage in Afghanistan?

KIIs-IPs

Introduction: Hello, my name is _____ an Independent Evaluator. We are conducting an evaluation of the AWLI programme.

The **purpose** of the summative evaluation is to contribute to evidence-based and risk-informed programming on increasing access of out-of-school (OoS) adolescent girls to secondary education and changing societal perceptions on child marriage practices and girls' empowerment in Afghanistan.

Informed consent: Your participation is **voluntary**. You can stop at any time or say no.

Confidentiality: Everything that you tell is confidential, and no one-besides us at QARA (including the Team Leader, Supervisors, and translators)-will see this information. Since this is a focus group, we advise you to keep the information from this meeting confidential. The information will be combined with other information to create general findings, and this interview should take no more than 30-45 minutes of your time. We are using a recording device only to assist in note-taking, and this recording will be destroyed after this evaluation is finished.

Do you agree to take part in this interview? The respondent must agree.

To begin, tell me about your role and how long you have been working in this institution.

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	QUESTIONS
Central Level	<p>Note the person's role.</p> <p>How relevant do you see this programme in Afghanistan?</p> <p>Describe the activities your organization carried out and where.</p> <p>How effective do you believe the activities are?</p> <p>What are the challenges? [Probe: reaching out to most vulnerable].</p> <p>What could have been improved? Or the Lessons Learned</p> <p>In your opinion, what will it take to reduce early marriage in Afghanistan?</p>
Provincial Level	<p>Interviews with implementers / facilitators:</p> <p>Note the person's role.</p> <p>How do you go about your work? [Probe: Workshops, community dialogues, training, reflection circles, materials distribution]</p> <p>What are your challenges in those activities you described?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Workshops2. Facilitating dialogues among the community;3. Training [Life skills education sessions]4. Reflection Circles5. Vocational skills/Life Skills6. Mini Medial Clubs <p>Recommendations for improving the: Workshops, community dialogues; Life skills education sessions; other.</p> <p>In your opinion, what will it take to reduce early marriage in Afghanistan?</p>

KIIs-Community & Religious Leaders

	<p>INTRODUCTION: My name is _____ . I am a researcher working for an Afghan research company called QARA, based in Kabul. We are conducting a review of the AWLI programme. We are speaking with a number of people from this community who benefitted from AWLI.</p> <p>PURPOSE: We would like to collect/know your thoughts on this work. Your experience is very valuable, and your feedback will help UNICEF to improve their work in the future. There is no right or wrong answer for the questions that we are going to ask you.</p>
<p>INFORMED CONSENT: Your participation is voluntary. None of your feedback will bear any negative consequences for future support from UNICEF, for your district, your community or yourself. If you agree to participate, at any moment, you can stop participating without any penalty. Being in this interview or not will not affect the benefits to you, your family, or community from UNICEF. We will keep your inputs anonymous.</p> <p>CONFIDENTIALITY: Everything that you tell is confidential, and no one-besides the research team (including the Team Leader, Supervisors, and translators)- will see this information. The information will be combined with other information to create general findings, and this interview should take less than one hour of your time. We are recording this conversation to assist us in note-taking, and it will be destroyed after this evaluation is finished.</p> <p>AGREEMENT TO INFORMED CONSENT: Are you willing to be part of this qualitative interview? (verbal response only requested)</p>	

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	QUESTIONS
Location	Province _____
Gender	
Age	
Introduction This section measures the scope of utilization of services	Describe the different AWLI programme activities that you participated in [Mark all that is mentioned]: <input type="checkbox"/> Community dialogue [How many have you been to?] <input type="checkbox"/> Workshops [How many workshops have you attended?] <input type="checkbox"/> Reflect Circles <input type="checkbox"/> Heard Advocacy from [IP Facilitator] <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
[A] Expectations	Now, I want you to think back to the beginning when you first heard about the programme What were you expecting?

Let the respondent think back to those days. It will take a minute or two to recall. If they have trouble remembering, ask them to remember the activity again.

This section helps the respondent to remember what messages to which they were exposed.

Do you remember hearing any messages about why early marriage is harmful? Or Messages about the importance of educating girls? What was the message? Can you give me an example?

[B] SATISFACTION & Behaviour

This section measures if the respondent was satisfied with her experiences. Also try to examine the interpersonal communication..

Relevance

Now, thinking about these messages and activities, I would like to know how satisfied you were with these activities.

Were these activities something that you were interested in?

Was the programme design appropriate? If yes, what were the or desirable components? If no, what were the undesirable components?

Do you know how the people were targeted to participate in the programme? If yes, how well was this job done [Probe: implementation was done as community wished or without their engagement] If no, skip to the next question.

Effectiveness

Can you give an example of a time when you used some of the skills that you learned from the programme activities? Yes/No. If yes, please explain.

Challenges
Challenges

What are the challenges in each of those activities you described?

No right or wrong answer, in your opinion, what does it take to end child marriage or early marriage in Afghanistan?

Impact

In your opinion, how much of a difference is this work making in your community?

Quick Opinion Poll

Indicate yes or no for the following two statements:

YES (1)

NO (0)

"I see early marriage going away in the future..."

"As a religious leader in my community, I am ready to change about early marriage."

Coded as "1" for yes and "0" for no.

G.8 ANNEX 8: List of Qualitative Interviews

Nangahar			Samangan			Herat		
Jalalabad (n=18)	Kama (n=16)	Surk rud (n=17)	Dari-soof-bala (n=5)	Feroz (n=33)	Roi-do-ab (n=6)	Enjil (n=14)	Herat (n=11)	Karukh (n=14)
3-7-AD-F9	3-9-AD-F7	3-8-AD-F3	2-6-AD-F2	2-5-AD-F16	2-4-PF1	1-2-PF3	1 duplicate	1-3-AD-F5-GR
3-7-AD-F10	3-9-AD-M1	3-8-AD-F4	2-6-AD-M1	2-5-AD-F17	2-4-PM1	1-2-PM1	1-1-AD-F2	1-3-AD-F6-GR
3-7-AD-M1	3-9-AD-M2	3-8-AD-F5	2-6-PF1	2-5-AD-F18	2-4-RL1	1-2-PM2	1-1-AD-F1-GR	1-3-AD-F7
3-7-AD-M2	3-9-CL1	3-8-AD-F6	2-6-PM1	2-5-AD-M1	2-4-AD-F1	1-2-PM3	1-1-RL2	1-3-AD-F8
3-7-AD-M3	3-9-PF1	3-8-AD-F7	2-6-AD-F1	2-5-AD-M4	2-4-AD-F2	1-2-RL1	1-1-PF3	1-3-AD-F9
3-7-AD-M4	3-9-PF2	3-8-AD-F8		2-5-CL1	2-4-AD-M1	1-2-AD-F1-GR	1-1-PF2	1-3-AD-M2
3-7-CL1	3-9-PF3	3-8-AD-M1		2-5-CL2		1-2-AD-F3	1-1-PF1	1-3-CL1
3-7-PF1	3-9-PM1	3-8-AD-M2		2-5-PF2		1-2-AD-F5	1-1-AD-F11	1-3-PF1
3-7-PF2	3-9-PM2	3-8-CL1		2-5-PF3		1-2-AD-F8-GR	1-1-AD-F8	1-3-PF2
3-7-PM1	3-9-RL1	3-8-PF1		2-5-PF4		1-2-AD-M1	1-1-AD-F5	1-3-PM2
3-7-RL1	3-9-AD-F1	3-8-PF2		2-5-PF5		1-2-AD-M2	1-1-AD-F4	1-3-RL1
3-7-AD-F1	3-9-AD-F2	3-8-PF3		2-5-PF6		1-2-AD-M3	1-1-AD-F3	1-3-AD-F1-GR
3-7-AD-F2	3-9-AD-F3	3-8-PM1		2-5-PF7		1-2-CL1		1-3-AD-F2-GR
3-7-AD-F3	3-9-AD-F4	3-8-PM2		2-5-PF8		1-2-PF1		1-3-AD-F3
3-7-AD-F4	3-9-AD-F5	3-8-RL1		2-5-PM1				1-3-AD-F4
3-7-AD-F5	3-9-AD-F6	3-8-AD-F1		2-5-PM2				
3-7-AD-F6		3-8-AD-F2		2-5-PM3				
3-7-AD-F7				2-5-RL1				
				2-5-RL2				
				2-5-AD-F2				
				2-5-AD-F3				
				2-5-AD-F4				
				2-5-AD-F5				
				2-5-AD-F6				

Nangahar			Samangan			Herat		
				2-5-AD-F7				
				2-5-AD-F8				
				2-5-AD-F9				
				2-5-AD-F10				
				2-5-AD-F11				
				2-5-AD-F12				
				2-5-AD-F13				
				2-5-AD-F14				
				2-5-AD-F15				

G.9 ANNEX 9: List of Codes Under Each Evaluation Criteria

RELEVANCE

ALIGN_L=alignment of the AWLI interventions to the local context
ALIGN_N= alignment with the national strategies and policies
TARGET=focus on most deprived sections of the population
ALIGN_FIT= fit the local context, including the conflict context
RESPONSIVE_ACTIONS=measures were undertaken by the IP to adapt to changes in the context
ALIGN_UNICEF= alignment with the Global Strategic Plan 2018-2021
MEET_NEEDSA= meet the needs of adolescent girls and their families
MEET_NEEDSB= especially those that are OoS

EFFECTIVENESS

PROCESS_RC= intended results were achieved for reflect circles
PROCESS_CD= intended results were achieved for community dialogues
PROCESS_MMC= intended results were achieved for mini-media clubs
PROCESS_Cash= intended results were achieved unconditional cash grants
PROCESS_SS [safe space]= intended results were achieved safe spaces
PROCESS_LIVE [Livelihood training] = intended results were achieved
PROCESS_LS [Life skills training= intended results were achieved]
NADA
PROCESS (+) factors= influencing the successful delivery of outputs
PROCESS (-) factors- influencing the hindrance of the delivery of outputs
PROCESS_OTHER= AWLI interventions taken up by target programme beneficiaries

PROCESS (-) factors- influencing the hindrance of the delivery of outputs and how overcome

EFFICIENCY

EFFICIENCY_Time= achieved according to the timeline
E_PROCESS (+) factors=affecting achievements
E_PROCESS (-) factors=affecting achievements
EFFICIENCY_Budget= achieved according to the budget
B_PROCESS (-) factors=affecting achievements

SUSTAINABILITY

SCALIBILITY=Likelihood of interventions can being scaled up
SUSTAINABILITY= Likelihood of interventions can being sustainable (includes: Sub-codes: Recommendations from stakeholders)
Sub-codes: Recommendations from stakeholders (which facilitate or impede the scale-up of the AWLI intervention)
Sub-codes: Recommendations from stakeholders (beneficiaries indicated any interest in seeing the programme scaled)
Sub-codes: Recommendations from stakeholders (and interventions of the programme are most likely to be scaled up or sustained after the implementation of the programme)

IMPACT

VALUE_EDUCATION
EMOTION_EDUCATION
VALUE_EARLY MARRIAGE
EMOTION_EARLY MARRIAGE
Sub-codes: examples of continuing schooling and delaying marriage
Sub-codes: examples of life changes (if any)
Sub-codes: examples of continuing schooling and delaying marriage [tensions reduced in house] and [tensions reduced in community]
ACTION_EARLY MARRIAGE
ACTION _EARLY MARRIAGE

Explanation where and how the above codes were applied. Subcodes (or child codes) are second-order tags assigned after a primary code to detail or enrich the entry. The method is appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies, but particularly for ethnographies and content analyses, studies with multiple participants and sites, and studies with a wide variety of data forms. Sub-coding is also appropriate when general code entries will later require more extensive indexing, categorizing, and subcategorizing into hierarchies or taxonomies, or for nuanced qualitative data analysis. (page 13)

EVALUATION CRITIA AND KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUBQUESTIONS	QUALITATIVE CODING USED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS
Q1: RELEVANCE	
Q1. Assessment of alignment of the AWLI interventions to the local context as well as national strategies and policies of Afghanistan and UNICEF, especially among the most deprived sections of the population, including validating existing adolescent programming ToC.	ALIGN_L=alignment of the AWLI interventions to the local context ALIGN_N= alignment with the national strategies and policies TARGET=focus on most deprived sections of the population
Q1.1 To what extent does the programme design and implementation fit the local context, including the conflict context, and what measures were taken to adapt to changes in the context?	ALIGN_FIT= fit the local context, including the conflict context RESPONSIVE_ACTIONS=measures were taken to adapt to changes in the context
Q1.2 Is the programme aligned with the national strategies and policies of Afghanistan and the UNICEF Global Strategic Plan 2018-2021?	ALIGN_UNICEF= alignment with the Global Strategic Plan 2018-2021
Q1.3 To what extent does the programme address and meet the needs of adolescent girls and their families, especially those that are OoS?	MEET_NEEDSA= meet the needs of adolescent girls and their families MEET_NEEDSB= especially those that are OoS
Q2: EFFECTIVENESS	
Q 2.1 To what extent did UNICEF deliver on its intended outputs?	This coding method uses gerunds (“-ing” words) exclusively to connote observable and conceptual action in the data. Processes also imply actions intertwined with the dynamics of time, such as things that emerge, change, occur in particular sequences, or become strategically implemented. Process coding is appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies, but particularly for grounded theory research that extracts participant action/interaction and consequences. ¹⁸⁰ The following child codes were created (for each programme component) PROCESS_RC= intended results were achieved for reflect circles PROCESS_CD= intended results were achieved for community dialogues PROCESS_MM= intended results were achieved for mini-media clubs

¹⁸⁰ Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Part II, page

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUBQUESTIONS	QUALITATIVE CODING USED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS
	PROCESS_LS [Life skills training= intended results were achieved] PROCESS_SS [safe space]= intended results were achieved safe spaces PROCESS_Cash= intended results were achieved unconditional cash grants PROCESS_LIVE [Livelihood training] = intended results were achieved
Q 2.2 What were the major factors influencing the successful delivery of outputs?	PROCESS (+) factors= influencing the successful delivery of outputs PROCESS (-) factors- influencing the hindrance of the delivery of outputs
Q 2.3 To what extent were the programme interventions taken up by target programme beneficiaries?	PROCESS_OTHER=AWLI interventions taken up by target programme beneficiaries
Q 2.4 Which factors impeded programme delivery and take-up and how could these have been overcome?	PROCESS (-) factors= influencing the hindrance of the delivery of outputs and how overcome PROCESS (+) factors= influencing the successful delivery of outputs PROCESS (-) factors= influencing the hindrance of the delivery of outputs.
Q3. EFFICIENCY	
The extent to which the programme's outputs were delivered in a timely and cost-efficient manner	
Q 3.1 Were the programme outputs achieved according to the work plan and timeline?	EFFICIENCY_Time= achieved according to the timeline E_PROCESS (+) factors=affecting achievements E_PROCESS (-) factors=affecting achievements
Q 3.3 Were the programme outputs achieved according to the budget and cost-efficiently?	EFFICIENCY_Budget= achieved according to the budget B_PROCESS (-) factors=affecting achievements
Q 3.3 What were the major factors influencing the efficient delivery of outputs?	Triangulated with the following codes: VALUE_EDUCATION EMOTION_EDUCATION VALUE_EARLY MARRIAGE EMOTION_EARLY MARRIAGE ACTION_EARLY MARRIAGE ACTION_EARLY MARRIAGE ¹⁸¹
Q4. SUSTAINABILITY	

¹⁸¹ Explanation of these codes is located below.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUBQUESTIONS	QUALITATIVE CODING USED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS
Q4. The extent to which the AWLI interventions can be scaled up, and the capacity of Government partners to assume the responsibility of carrying these initiatives forward.	SCALABILITY=Likelihood of interventions being scaled up SUSTAINABILITY= Likelihood of interventions being sustainable Sub-codes: Recommendations from stakeholders
Q 4.1 What strategies and interventions of the programme are most likely to be scaled up or sustained after the implementation of the programme?	Sub-codes: Recommendations from stakeholders
Q 4.2 What would facilitate or impede the scale-up of the AWLI intervention?	Sub-codes: Recommendations from stakeholders
Q 4.3 Have beneficiaries indicated any interest in seeing the programme scaled?	Sub-codes: Recommendations from stakeholders PROCESS_CASH PROCESS_LIVE FACTORS_CASH= (-) and (+) factors- influencing the hindrance and success of the delivery of this component. EXAMPLES
Q5. COHERENCE	
Q5. The extent to which other interventions with similar objectives complement or contradict the programme and vice versa. How compatible was the AWLI programme with other interventions aimed at:	This was performed through text analysis from internet sites. See bibliography for list of internet sites where information was secured to address this question.
5.1 achieving girl's empowerment?	
5.2 increasing school attendance?	
5.3 reducing child marriage?	
5.4 Please include internationally led, nationally-led, and local grassroots interventions. What synergies, linkages, contradictions, duplications, exist?	
Q6 IMPACT	
Q6 The extent to which the project has increased secondary school enrolment of out of school adolescent girls and changed social behaviours and attitudes towards child marriage.	Coding will cover affective methods that tap into the more subjective experiences we encounter with our participants: (1) Emotion, (2) Values, and (3) action coding coding.(Ibid., page 7) Emotion Coding: Perhaps obviously, this method labels the emotions recalled and/or experienced by the participant or inferred by the researcher about the participant. Emotion coding is particularly appropriate for studies that explore intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions. It also provides insight into the participants' perspectives, worldviews, and life conditions. Note that a

EVALUATION CRITIA AND KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUBQUESTIONS	QUALITATIVE CODING USED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS
	<p>participant himself or herself may sometimes label the emotion, and thus, it should be In Vivo coded in quotation marks.</p> <p>Value Coding: is the application of three different types of related codes onto qualitative data that reflect a participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs, representing his or her perspectives or worldview. A value (V:) is the importance we attribute to ourselves, another person, thing, or idea. An attitude (A:) is the way we think and feel about oneself, another person, thing, or idea. A belief (B:) is part of a system that includes values and attitudes, plus personal knowledge, experiences, opinions, prejudices, morals, and other interpretive perceptions of the social world. Values coding is appropriate for studies that explore cultural values, identity, intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions in case studies, appreciative inquiry, oral history, and critical ethnography.</p> <p>Action Coding: is the application of an activity or action that the participant describes once he or she had learned their new skill(s) from the programme.</p>
Q 6.1 What difference has the project made in changing perceptions of the target groups on child marriage? Have they delayed marriage by raising awareness on the rights of adolescent girls to education, or for other reasons?	ACTION_EARLY MARRIAGE ACTION _EARLY MARRIAGE
Q 6.2 Has the project made a difference in adolescent girls' lives by increasing their ability to make life choices?	ACTION_EARLY MARRIAGE ACTION _EARLY MARRIAGE
Q 6.3 How successful has the combination of social mobilization activities and cash transfers been on increasing secondary enrolment rates of adolescent girls and changing social behaviour towards child marriage vis-à-vis social mobilization interventions alone?	Not able to answer
Q 6.4 How has raising awareness on the harmful effects of child marriage contributed to adolescent girls being able to attend school and subsequently enhanced their chances of delaying marriage?	ACTION_EARLY MARRIAGE ACTION _EARLY MARRIAGE
Q 6.5 What were the effects, intended or unintended, that the programme had on sources of tension and sources of cohesion in the 20 districts where it worked, and how were these monitored over time?	Sub-codes: examples of continuing schooling and delaying marriage [tensions reduced in house] and [tensions reduced in community]
N.B 1. While the evaluation may not be able to comprehensively answer this overarching Q6, due to limited data, nuanced self-reported insights about perceived changes (in the family and the	This method extracts attributions or causal beliefs from participant data about not just how but why particular outcomes came about. The analyst searches for combinations of antecedent and mediating variables that

EVALUATION CRITIA AND KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND SUBQUESTIONS	QUALITATIVE CODING USED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS
community) will be gathered through the use of qualitative methods. Specifically, the KIIs will generate specific examples of how the programme has changed perceptions about early marriage and the importance of continuing girl's education.¹⁸²	<p>lead toward certain pathways and attempts to map a three-part process as a CODE 1 > CODE 2 > CODE 3 sequence. Causation coding is appropriate for discerning motives, belief systems, worldviews, processes, recent histories, interrelationships, and the complexity of influences and effects on human actions and phenomena.</p> <p>This method may serve grounded theorists in searches for causes, conditions, contexts, and consequences. It is also appropriate for evaluating the efficacy of a particular program or as preparatory work before diagramming or modeling a process through visual means such as decision modeling and causation networks. (<i>Ibid</i>, page 12)</p>
N.B 2. There is a lack of evidence that can prove that the number of marriages have been delayed or reduced [Q6.4] and that there have been relative increases in the number of adolescent girls attending secondary school [Q6.3].	

¹⁸² These examples will not be representative of the entire programme. Also note that adolescents are not as articulate compared to adults, and so their "stories" may not be very detailed. Finally, given the sensitivity of the topic, some interviewees may not be willing to discuss private matters; Many do not even discuss such issues with their parents or guardians much less with a researcher who is not known to them. As noted in the limitations section, given the need for informed consent, some interviewee responses may not be very explicit or elaborate.

G.10 ANNEX 10: Letter for Ethical Approval

RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL

1 April 2021

Dr. Tristi Nichols
Project Director
1245 Park Street
Peekskill, New York 10566

RE: Ethics Review Board findings for: *Summative Evaluation of Afghan Women's Leadership Initiative (AWLI) in Support of Adolescent Girls* (HML IRB Review #366AFGH21)

Dear Dr. Nichols,

Protocols for the protection of human subjects in the above study were assessed through a research ethics review by HML Institutional Review Board (IRB) on 22 March – 01 April 2021. This study's human subjects' protection protocols, as stated in the materials submitted, received **ethics review approval**.

You and your project staff remain responsible for ensuring compliance with HML IRB's determinations. Those responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- ensuring prompt reporting to HML IRB of proposed changes in this study's design, risks, consent, or other human protection protocols and providing copies of any revised materials;
- conducting the research activity in accordance with the terms of the IRB approval until any proposed changes have been reviewed and approved by the IRB, except when necessary to mitigate hazards to subjects;
- promptly reporting any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others in the course of this study;
- notifying HML IRB when your study is completed.

HML IRB is authorized by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Research Protections (IRB #1211, IORG #850, FWA #1102).

Sincerely,



D. Michael Anderson, Ph.D., MPH
Chair & Human Subjects Protections Director, HML IRB
cc: Minaa Rayan, Ivan Ssenkubuge, Stanley Gwavuya, Penelope Lantz, JD
HML IRB
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List of qualitative interviews carried out in each province and district.

G.11 ANNEX 11: Parental Permission Form and Child Assent Form

PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT FORM

PERMISSION FOR PARTICIPATING IN QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW:

Participant's Number: _____

Province: _____ District: _____

- 1) I am the legal parent/legal guardian of the child named above. I understand that the programme Afghan Women's Leadership Initiative is being evaluated by independent consultants from QARA, and they would like to speak with my child. The interview is recorded only to assist in note-taking, and I understand that it will be destroyed after this evaluation is finished.
- 2) I understand that participation is voluntary, and my child may choose to not respond to any or all questions or may withdraw anytime without consequences.

My decision is indicated by my check mark and signature below.

Please check the appropriate box and sign below.

I **DO** give permission to include my child's voice, images, and tape as s/he participates in the qualitative interview conducted at _____ [location].

I **DO NOT** give my permission to include my child's voice, images, and tape as s/he participates in the qualitative interview conducted at _____ [location].

Signature/Marking of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

CHILD ASSENT FORM

PERMISSION FOR PARTICIPATING IN QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW

Participant's Number: _____

Province: _____ District: _____



We are QARA and Dr. Tristi Nichols, and we are doing an evaluation or study to understand your experience in being a part of AWLI programme. We are asking you to take part in the study, because [Name one of the Implementing Partners-Women Activities and Social Services Association-WASSA, Organisation for Humanitarian Welfare-OHW, Empowerment Centre for Women-ECW] recommended your name as someone to speak with.



First, we ask a question. Then we try to find the answer.



Important things to know...

You get to decide if you want to take part.....You can say 'No' or you can say 'Yes'. No one will be upset if you say 'No'.

If you say 'Yes', you can always say 'No' later. Just so you understand, you can say 'No' at anytime.

Your parent(s)/guardian(s) were asked if it is OK for you to be in this study. Even if they say it's OK, it is still your choice whether or not to take part.

We will keep all your answers private. Only people from QARA working on the study will see them. We are using a recording device only to assist in note-taking, and this recording will be destroyed after this evaluation is finished.



You should know that: You can ask any questions you have, now or later. If you think of a question later, you or your parents can contact me at (provide contact information for researcher(s), and advisor if graduate student).

Sign this form only if you:

1. have understood what you will be doing for this study,
2. have had all your questions answered,
3. agree to take part in this research

Dr. Tristi Nichols

Date: April 2021



Verbal Agreement Parent(s) or Legal Guardian(s)

Field enumerator explaining study Signature/Printed Name

Date: April 2021

G.12 ANNEX 12: Description of Ethical Safeguards

QARA was commissioned to provide data collection support for AWLI Summative Evaluation across three provinces, Herat, Nangarhar and Samangan.

This annex outlines how the data collection process was completed, including references to (i) respect for dignity and diversity, (ii) fair representation [accuracy], (iii) compliance with codes for vulnerable groups, although this was not necessary), and (iv) confidentiality, and (v) avoidance of harm.

The right to self-determination or ensuring that evaluation participants may proactively contribute to the evaluation, was not fulfilled due to limited time.¹⁸³

(1) PREPARING FOR DATA COLLECTION

Field Researchers Training

Data collection training happened in three phases. The first training was carried out by the Team Leader virtually to the QARA core research team. In two virtual sessions the Team Leader trained the core research team on the overall scope of the AWLI program and the main objective of the summative evaluation. The second training was led by the QARA core research team with all the team members to make sure they have fully grasped the purpose of the evaluation and are comfortable with the evaluation tools. The third training was a refresher training that happened at the provinces before the start of the data collection.

Training Core Research Team

Team Leader delivered two training sessions using a remote platform. The first session included the introduction of the AWLI program. In this session ,the QARA core research team was introduced to the Team Lead, Dr. Nichols and vice versa. Through this virtual training, the Team Lead provided an overview of AWLI program design, theory of change, program activities, and ethical procedures for data collection, storage, and transmission.

The second session included a discussion on qualitative research methods and AWLI research instruments. This training, also led by the Team Leader on 4th April 2021, included the core research team, field team, translators and transcribers. The training was started with overview of the qualitative research methods, purposeful sampling method, and various strategies and practices of conducting qualitative field interviews. The process of conducting the interview included setting up the interview, where the interviewer explains the purpose of the interview, obtaining consent form and moving on with assuring confidentiality. And most importantly making sure the interviewer feels comfortable throughout the interview. The training ended with questions and answers on the research instruments and feedback was given on the mock interviews.

Training Field Researchers

This training was for field researchers via zoom call. The training content included an overview of AWLI program activities and research instruments in local languages Dari and Pashto. The core team made sure field researchers fully understand the ethical procedures, confidentiality, anonymity, and informed consent. The team also focused on the different strategies used in the field to conduct a qualitative interview. The process of conducting the interview was explained at greater length. For example, in order to make the interviewee feel comfortable to share her experiences without any concern, the interviewer should follow a structured process

¹⁸³ *Equity In Program Evaluation? Part 1: Self-Determination*, accessed at: <https://proco.coop/equity-in-program-evaluation-part-1-self-determination/>; Fetterman, D. (2001). *Empowerment evaluation and self-determination: A practical approach toward program improvement and capacity building*. In N. Schneiderman, M. A. Speers, J. M. Silva, H. Tomes, & J. H. Gentry (Eds.), *Integrating behavioral and social sciences with public health* (p. 321–350). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10388-016>

that includes setting up the interview, being polite and silent when the participant tells her story and keep on debriefing whenever required. The training ended with questions and answers about the AWLI program activities, research instruments, and techniques for conducting the interview in the field.

Field Refresher Training

The core research team arranged a refresher training in each province prior to the start of the field work. Our previous experience suggests that having a refresher training increases the quality of the data collection and reduces technical errors.

The refresher training covered the overall program activities, the purpose and the implementation process. But the focus is more on ensuring researchers are comfortable with the instruments and can create a friendlier environment in which the interviewees feel comfortable to share their stories and talk about sensitive issues. The core team emphasized the importance of obtaining consent from the research participants and confidentiality of the data. Voluntary participation of beneficiaries was reiterated to the researchers and specific instructions were provided to the researchers. The session was concluded with a few mock interviews.

(2) DATA COLLECTION

Selection of Research Participants

The Team Leader provided QARA with the sample framework that outlined the number of KIIs and FGDs in the sample districts. In addition to the breakdown of participants at the district level, and the requirement for KIIs was that participants were supposed to have been engaged with in at least two different activities.

In support of **face validity**, QARA was accompanied by the IP staff to identify the beneficiaries.

Ethical Considerations

QARA followed strict ethical procedures during field work. Each researcher had been through multiple rounds of ethics training during their work at QARA. Confidentiality of the data, anonymity, and voluntary participation of the research participants and how to handle sensitive information are part of the training content. And before each field work, the researchers were provided with a refresher training on the importance of ethical procedures.

Voice recorded interviews were transferred via OneDrive password protected drives. The confidentiality of the voices was explained with the transcribers' team before sharing the audios to them. All the audio recorded interviews to be deleted after the transcriptions are quality checked.

Data Management

Audio files of interviews were shared by the field team with QARA HQ via our online platform, and our quality control team began working immediately upon receipt of the first files, in order to expedite the process to the greatest extent possible. Transcription team lead supervisor reviewed the audio interviews for any missing, inconsistent, or irrelevant information, incorrectly articulated questions, topics avoided by the respondents, and other potential problems. This QC review provided the supervisor with an opportunity to remove from the study interviews that were judged to be potentially inaccurate. The supervisor shared their observations with the field teams as a QA measure to improve the quality of collection when possible.

Transcription: After the audio interviews were certified to be accurate by the QC, they were shared with the transcription team. Transcribed interviews were reviewed by the supervisor, who checked them for any missing or inaccurate information, or inconsistencies with the audio files. Additionally, the QC paid special attention to vernacular used by the respondents in rural areas that required clarification. Once approved, transcriptions were passed on to the translation team. For instance, we had to bring a native Herati on board to transcribe the interviews in Herat to make sure that transcription does not omit anything because of the differences in the dialect.

Field researchers are part of the quality assurance team who have validated the transcribed interviews. The translation team did not start translation unless the content of the audio is validated by the researchers who have completed the interview. Upon their arrival back to the office from fieldwork, the researchers reviewed the transcribed material to make sure data is accurately transcribed. This process took several days but it is an added layer to ensure quality control and content accuracy.

Translation: After the transcribed interviews were verified by the researchers, the translation team began their work. All translation team members have extensive experience translating research interviews. The team took context and cultural nuance into account, both of which are essential to producing quality work. We often randomly select 10 percent of the translated interviews and match the English content with the transcription. However, on this assignment we have checked every single file with the original scripts and in some cases with the audio file. We focused a lot on the quality of the translated files since the Team Leader will be using the translated files for the further analysis. We purposefully included the translators in all of the team members training that was led by the Team Leader, and so they were familiarized with terminology and the vernacular of this project.

(3) QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS TO ENHANCE DATA CREDIBILITY

QARA developed a Field Quality Assurance Plan to closely monitor AWLI data collection process step by step, including researcher training, data gathering, data transfer, transcriptions, translations, and post-fieldwork debriefing.

Training to Gather High Quality Data

Since the researchers are key instruments in qualitative research, the first step of assuring quality was to train researchers to equip them with resources needed to successfully carry out the field work. To assess their skills of conducting good interviews, field researchers were required to role play in the mock interviews. Moreover, the researchers are trained on how to handle incidents that interrupt the normal interview process and how to ensure a smooth continuation of an interview if interviewees lost interest.

Data Transfer, Transcription, and Translation

Transfer of the data to HQ from the field was seamless, using password protected files. Finally, during the transcription of interviews, QARA ensured that the data file reflected a 100 percent match in content compared to the audio files. This ensured that the transcriptions were verbatim. A similar practice was applied to the translation process.

Post-Fieldwork Debriefing

Upon the completion of fieldwork, all team leads and team members able to travel to Kabul returned to QARA headquarters for debriefing. In accordance with best practices developed over years of conducting evaluations, the team shared stories and observations from the field, to provide contextual insight into the main challenges. This post-fieldwork debriefing session proved to be one of the most important steps in the research process. An understanding emerged regarding why interviewees in different communities may have responded differently to the same questions, and why certain respondents adopted a particularly positive or critical tone.

G.13 ANNEX 13: Summary of Planned Targets and Achievements

The below table gives an overview of progress made during 30 September 2015 to 31 December 2020, including key objectives and planned activities. In July 2020, UNICEF and S/GWI agreed to a reprogramming to account for challenges faced by the AWLI project, including security, low capacity of IPs and the COVID-19 pandemic. These resulted in a revision of targets, listed under the 'revised target' column below.

Planned Activity	Planned target	Revised target	Result Achieved as of November 2020
1A) Training of facilitators at district level	5,000	No change	Partially achieved. A total of 4,228 (3,558 males and 670 females) facilitators were trained including 2,870 religious leaders, 85 female religious scholars, 157 adult and 50 youth facilitators, 209 AWLI project staff and community officers, 207 change agents, 650 other stakeholders.
1B) Workshop and focus group discussions	20 workshops with 197 participants 20 FGDs with 1,000 participants	No change	Achieved: 20 workshops with 197 (103 male and 94 female) participants completed. Achieved: 20 FGD conducted with 936 participants (498 males and 438 females) participants by ActionAid Consortium and Government partners in targeted districts. This activity was conducted in 2019.
1C) Community dialogue involving all stakeholders	5,000 CD with 100,000 participants	4,463 Community Dialogue sessions with 76,037 (38,024 F/ 38,013 M) participants	Partially achieved: 4,463 community dialogue sessions were conducted with 76,037 participants (50 per cent female) in all 20 districts. The planned target was partially achieved due to some villages in Ghor and Nangahar provinces being inaccessible due to insecurity and armed clashes.
1D) Reflect Circle	200 gender segregated RCs – 10 RCs per district	No change	Achieved. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 Reflect Circles formed in 20 districts. • 1,297 RC quarterly meetings conducted with 42,553 (20,956 males, 21,597 females) participants.
1E) Mini-media clubs	40 mini-media clubs	No change	Achieved. 50 mini-media clubs established at 25 girls' schools and 25 boys' schools at district Level and rolled out. Establishment of mini-media clubs in schools were delayed due to school closures. 10 more clubs were established with extra funds from operating costs.
1F) Communication and information material	20,000 leaflets printed and distributed	No change	Achieved. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and information materials for girls' education and the prevention of child marriage were printed in Dari and Pashto languages and distributed to beneficiaries. • Anaemia and MHM materials developed by UNICEF and the MoPH were reprinted and distributed in the AWLI project areas.

Planned Activity	Planned target	Revised target	Result Achieved as of November 2020
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the availability of funds, the following materials were printed and distributed to the project beneficiaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 157,000 anaemia brochures - 20,000 WASH comic books - 135,000 prevention of Child Marriage brochures - 22,000 prevention of Child Marriage posters - 135,000 girls' education brochures - 22,000 girls' education posters
2A) Cash grants for adolescent girls to enroll and stay in secondary school	Two Cash Grant Modalities developed.	No change	Partially achieved: Cash Grant Modalities were developed and finalised for Herat and Ghor provinces along with communication strategies. However, implementation only went ahead in Herat province.
2B) Cash grants for adolescent girls out of school to enrol and stay in ALCs	3,000 beneficiaries	950 beneficiaries	<p>Partially achieved: 472 household with adolescent girls (10-15 years old) received an unconditional and unrestricted cash transfer of 19,500 AFN (approx. USD 255) to support adolescent girls' education.</p> <p>The cash grant in Ghor was dropped and funds were allocated to the provision of recreation/learning materials for adolescent girls.</p>
2C) Training Package on Adolescent Health and Well-being	1 training package	No change	Achieved: Life skills training package developed and implemented.
2D) Safe spaces and networks for adolescent girls	5 Safe Space Centres 5 Adolescent and Youth Networks	No change	<p>Achieved. Five Safe Space Centres established in all five provinces and functioning. 4,846 adolescent girls and young women used safe space services.</p> <p>Activities on promoting girls' education and child rights through AYNs conducted in five regions.</p>
2E) Life skills education for adolescent girls	18,000 adolescents trained	10,710 adolescents trained	Achieved: Life Skills sessions conducted for 14,463 adolescent girls.
2F) Community based vocational training for adolescent girls	2,760 adolescent girls	360 adolescent girls	<p>Achieved: 360 adolescent girls trained.</p> <p>This activity was conducted only in Samangan province and cancelled in other project areas as the DoLSA suspended this activity due to COVID-19 movement restrictions.</p>
3A) Secondary analysis of	1	No change	Achieved: Desk review of secondary data integral part of inception mission for AWLI programme

Planned Activity	Planned target	Revised target	Result Achieved as of November 2020
recent surveys and studies			evaluation. Secondary data complemented primary data collected for baseline.
3B) Conduct complementary national surveys to fill data-gaps	2 surveys	No change	Achieved: 1. Mid-Term Evaluation of Increasing Access to Basic Education and Gender Equality Programme, Afghanistan (2015-2019) – completed. 2. Adolescents in Afghanistan: Portfolio Evaluation through Gender Lens – completed.
3C) Documentation of lessons learned and good practices	5 good practices/lessons learned documented	No change	Achieved. Case studies are attached in Annex 1.
3D) Monitoring and Evaluation			Ongoing: Monitoring of programme activities is ongoing and conducted through UNICEF Kabul and zonal teams, extenders and implementing partners. A summative evaluation is being conducted through other funding sources. Received inception report. Field work expected to start in early April 2021.
4A) Distribution of education supplies to adolescent girls	50,000 girls		Completed: 35,842 Hygiene kits and 1,800 recreation kits were procured and distributed to formal schools and CBE in five project provinces. A total of 97,000 adolescent girls will receive hygiene kits and use recreation kits by the end of March 2021 when schools are reopened. Each hygiene kit can be used for 2 to 4 adolescent girls and recreation kit can facilitate around 40 adolescents.
4B - Establishment of handwashing facilities for girls' schools	50 schools		Achieved: Based on the availability of funds, 270 handwashing facilities were provided for 135 girls' schools. Approximately 123,000 adolescent girls have benefited from the handwashing facilities.
4C - Sensitization of community members on COVID-19 risk mitigation	250 community members		Completed: 250 School Management Shuras, elders and community members were sensitised on COVID-19 risk mitigation.

G.14 ANNEX 14: Descriptions of Programme Processes

The following activities (and their frequency) were undertaken by the Implementing Partner (IP).

1. Community Dialogues; Frequency: Quarterly & monthly meetings (1.5 hours)
2. Reflect Circles; Frequency: Monthly meetings (1.5 hours)
3. Safe Spaces; Frequency: Ongoing
4. Community-based Life Skills Training; Frequency: Monthly
5. Mini Media Clubs; Frequency: Ongoing during the school year
6. Unconditional Cash Grant; Frequency: One-off occurrence
7. Livelihood Activities; Frequency: Ongoing only in Samangan

Prior to implementation, the IP's first activity undertaken was a focus group discussion (FGDs) held in each district, where the programme objectives were introduced through community engagement activities. It was during this time that the IP selected the villages which were most receptive to the AWLI's programme objectives. Each activity is briefly described below.

1. Community Dialogues

These activities took place every three months, and messages focused on education, literacy, child and early marriage, gender equality, and child rights. These messages were developed based on guidelines in Dari Language, which perceived as clear and useful.

2. Reflect Circles

During this activity, the community was able to discuss the problems of that community. The topics covered were early marriage and promoting girls' education. Ten males and 10 females were "recruited" to take part in this activity. Their selection was based on the following criterion: These individuals:

- Were influential in the village;
- Literate;
- Could connect easily with others, through interpersonal communication; and
- Could share their views without hesitation (outspoken).

In the case of WASSA, the facilitators reported the need to develop an "entry exam" to confirm whether the person selected for this role had the basic level of literacy.

The Reflect Circle was facilitated by two persons (facilitators), and the exercise focused on discussing problems of that village; A Problem Tree and Solutions Tree would emerge from this exercise. These issues were then carried forward to the district level all the way up to the provincial level (if pursued). There was a female and male Shurah (council), which is an informal network, who would carry these issues forward.

The other NGOs within the consortium reported a slightly different outreach, but the modality is practically the same. For example, there were only 10-12 people participating in this activity. Moreover, stakeholder interview data indicates that topics were raised, discussed, followed by how to resolve this issue (e.g., early marriage, limited access to education, limited decision making in community). There is limited evidence about how issues were carried further to the sub-district and even to the provincial level.

3. Mini Media clubs

This is an activity open to all the students attending the formal school. Typically, students exchange their views, test their voices with the microphones, and develop confidence to speak in public. The facilitator transmits the following messages:

- How to manage conflicts in the home, and at the club, and they could share and discuss how to resolve issues; and

- If there are fights with mom and sister in laws, resulting in the inability to concentrate in school and or mental health issues, then they should seek help from the facilitator.

4. Safe Spaces

Stakeholder interviews indicate that at these locations, there are laptops and mobile phones provided for the girls to use when they come and visit. These facilities were open during the day. Inside these facilities, a Social Counsellor conducts sessions with girls in the morning and afternoons. In Herat, morning sessions were in a group with roughly 10-20 adolescent girls, and discussions focused on depression, anger issues, pregnancy, and early marriage. Sessions followed a question-and-answer format. In the afternoons, the Social Counsellor engages with adolescents on a one-on-one basis in sessions that range between 10 to 30 minutes. The issues discussed are:

- Sexual and reproductive health
- Child marriage
- Abuse
- Gender-based violence and victims of early marriage
- Psychosomatic [psychological] issues

5. Community-based Life Skills Training

This activity was for only for females. This activity focused on life skills, namely (1) conflict resolution; (2) how to spend money on basic needs; and (3) sanitation and hygiene. Training took place in the same communities as where the Community Dialogues and Reflect Circles took place.

6. Unconditional Cash Grants

There were 472 households with adolescent girls (10-15 years old) which received an unconditional cash grant of 19,500 AFN (USD 255) to support adolescent girl's education. These households came from four districts – Herat, Injil, Zinda Jan and Karukh where the AWLI project is being implemented. Prior to the cash disbursement, the IP in Herat, WASSA, had organized various sessions with the communities including local government representatives, and clearly communicated that the cash transfer was specifically for education purposes, targeting families with adolescent girls only. The financial service provider (FSP) Afghan Besim Mobile Money Company (ABMMC) was contracted to distribute cash directly to the beneficiaries, based on payment lists provided by WASSA and approved by UNICEF. The Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) sampled 230 out of 472 families.

7. Community-based Livelihood Training

This activity cancelled in all provinces except for Samangan. The government's (Ministry of Labour) requirement was for six months, and the curriculum was only for four months. There were over multiple vocational activities designed to lead to occupations planned. Some included:

- Tailoring;
- Hand Embroidery;
- Dairy Processing;
- Food Processing; and
- Gardening (Strawberries) from Cultivation to Processing.

In addition to the seven programme components, there was a fourth objective of providing key supplies to adolescent girls affected by COVID-19. Therefore, the provision of supplementary hygiene materials and recreation kits to adolescent girls and boys in both formal schools and CBEs was intended to prepare adolescent girls to return to schools/Community Based Education (CBEs). Below are the contents of these kits.

Contents of Recreational Kits

Item	Quantity	No. of people to be assisted per unit	Total # of pop reached/used
Recreation kit-in-a-carton, 2016	1,800	40	72,000
WASH consumable hygiene kit	24,881	4	99,524
Handwashing Stations 1500Litre	270	500	135,000
Total Beneficiaries:		306,524	

Contents of Hygiene Kits

The hygiene kits included:

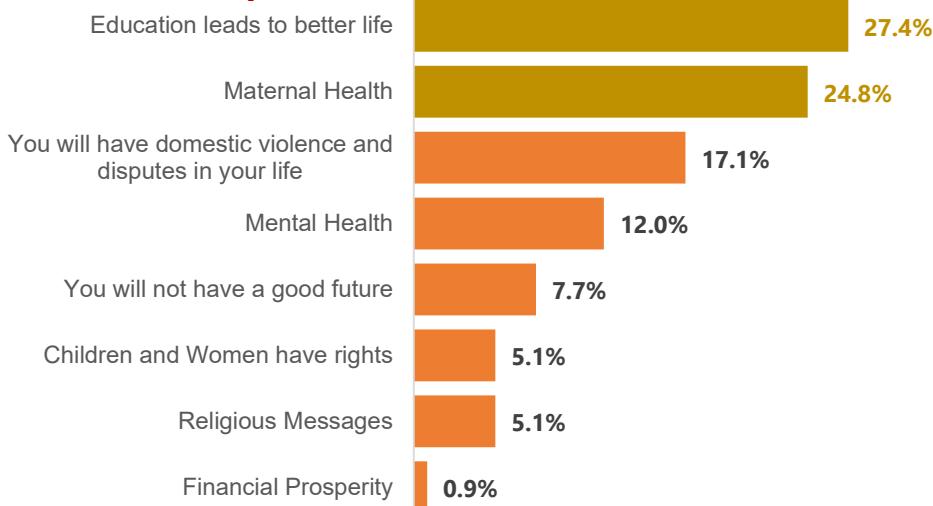
1. Hand washing soap, 18 pcs
2. Laundry Soap, 36 pcs
3. Sanatory pads, 10 boxes
4. Soap case, plastic, 1 each

G.15 ANNEX 15: Supplementary Data on Messages Heard

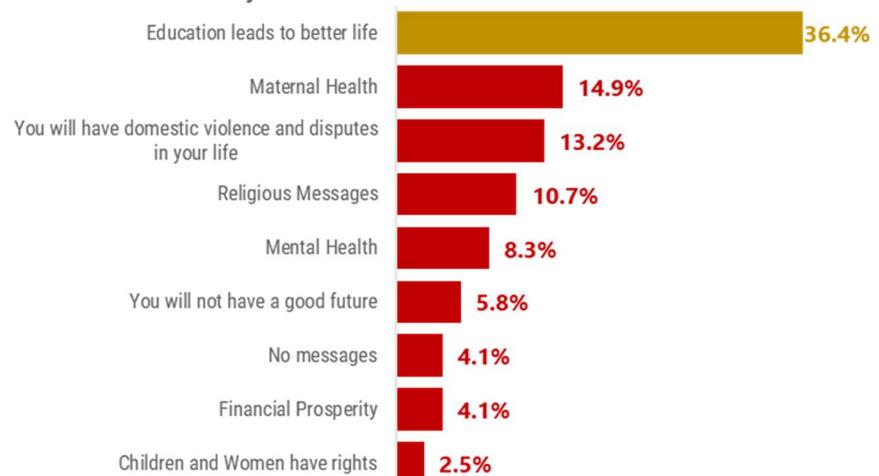
The ranking of messages according to each Province. In each province, the messages about the importance of **education** rank as the highest, while messages about **maternal health-related issues** trail behind. The third highest ranking message varies from “domestic violence”, religious messages, and no real message (not remembering any one message).

n=163

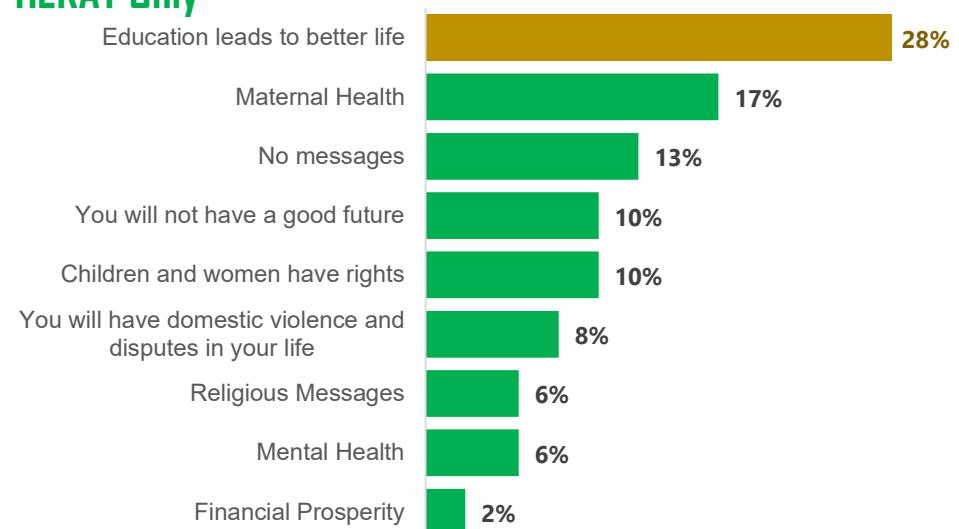
SAMANGAN Only

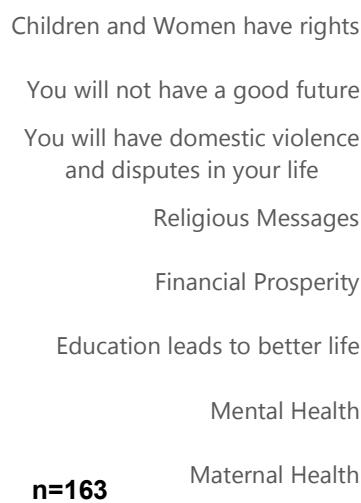


NANGAHAR Only



HERAT Only





Samangan Only

Children and Women have rights

9%

0%

You will not have a good future

12%

16%

You will have domestic violence and disputes in your life

29%

32%



Nangahar Only

No messages

12%

5%

Religious Messages

18%

37%

Financial Prosperity

6%

16%

Education leads to better life

85%

79%

Mental Health

15%

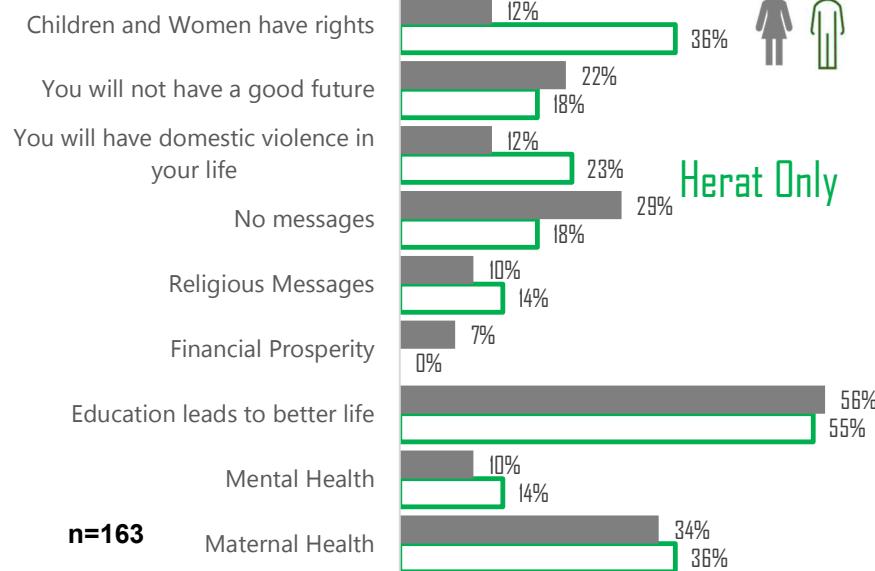
26%

Maternal Health

32%

37%

n=163



Herat Only

The ranking of messages according to each province by gender. With the exception of Samangan, the messages about the importance of education rank the highest, although there does not appear to be any relative difference between men and women in all three provinces. Messages connecting maternal health issues to early marriage ranked the highest in Samangan.

However, after the importance of continuing education messages, women appear to remember maternal health-related issues (in Herat and Nangahar) and education leads to a better life (Samangan). The third highest ranking messages are “domestic violence”(Samangan), mental health (Samangan), religious messages (Nangahar), and no real message (Herat).

Finally, in Samangan, men perceived that when marrying too young, the one’s life will have disputes and domestic violence, whereas in Herat and Nangahar, the messages connecting early marriage to maternal health ranked second, followed by a split between: (1) children and women have rights (Herat); and (2) religious messages (Nangahar).

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