

# External evaluation

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Strengthening of the Quality Infrastructure for Sustainable Economic  
Development in Nepal

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Executing agency(ies): Nepal Bureau of Standards and Metrology (NBSM), Department of  
Plant Resources (DPR), Department of Food Technology and Quality  
Control (DFTQC), Association of Pharmaceutical Producers of Nepal  
(APPON), Dairy Industries Association (DIA)

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This evaluation is an independent assessment. Its contents reflect the assessor's opinion which is not necessarily equivalent to PTB's view.

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**List of abbreviations**

APMP	Asia Pacific Metrology Programme
APPON	Association of Pharmaceutical Producers of Nepal
CW	Capacity WORKS
DDA	Department of Drug Administration
DFTQC	Department of Food Technology and Quality Control
DeGEval	German Evaluation Society - Gesellschaft für Evaluation
DIA	Dairy Industries Association
DPR	Department of Plant Resources
EU	European Union
FSSAI	Food Safety and Standards Authority of India
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HCD	Human Capacity Development
ITC	International Trade Centre
MoHP	Ministry of Health and Population
MoICS	Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies
MRLs	Maximum Residue Limits
NABL	National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories
NBSM	Nepal Bureau of Standards and Metrology
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LMIC	Lower-Middle-Income Country

PMWH	Paropakar Maternity and Women's Hospital
QI	Quality Infrastructure
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development -Development Assistance Committee
PR	Public Relation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TC	Technical Cooperation
ToT	Training of Trainers
WHO	World Health Organisation

## 1. Summary

The object of this evaluation is the project “Strengthening Quality Infrastructure for Sustainable Economic Development in Nepal”, a stand-alone module commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung, BMZ) and implemented by the National Metrology Institute of Germany (Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt, PTB). It builds on PTB’s long-standing cooperation with Nepal since 2007 and was originally planned for January 2022 to December 2023 with a budget of EUR 1.8 million. The project was extended twice—first cost-neutrally to December 2024, and then with an additional EUR 200,000 to December 2025.

The project objective is: Nepali Quality Infrastructure (QI) stakeholders offer demand-oriented services in economically and trade-relevant sectors. The project consists of three core intervention areas: (1) strengthening the national metrology and QI system, (2) enhancing food safety and (3) improving quality assurance in selected value chains. In addition, the project phase was used to support the initial set-up of the forthcoming health-sector project.

The module targets users of quality assurance services in industry and trade, supported through strengthened public QI institutions. Consumers benefit indirectly from safer products and improved food safety, while producers gain improved access to domestic and international markets. Direct effects apply to institutions and associations receiving tailored capacity development, enabling them to expand their service portfolios for broader target groups.

The political partner is the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies (MoICS). Implementing partners are the Nepal Bureau of Standards and Metrology (NBSM), the Department of Plant Resources (DPR), the Department of Food Technology and Quality Control (DFTQC), the Association of Pharmaceutical Producers of Nepal (APPON), and the Dairy Industries Association (DIA).

The evaluation assesses the project’s relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and contribution to higher-level development results in line with the OECD-DAC criteria and Capacity WORKS (CW) success factors. In addition, a specific evaluation question examined whether the soft-opening approach was an efficient and effective way to prepare the upcoming health project and under what conditions it is suitable for future interventions. The evaluation covers the period from January 2022 until the interview phase from September to November 2025. Violent demonstrations at the start of the evaluation significantly affected the process, requiring an extension of the interview phase. More severe, however, was the complete destruction of NBSM’s metrology laboratories and several government buildings. These events have direct implications for assessing the achievement of objectives and for evaluating the project’s sustainability.

### Assessment according to the OECD DAC criteria

Criterion	Evaluation of the criterion
1. Relevance	2.5
2. Coherence	1.5
3. Effectiveness	2.5
4. Efficiency	3.0
5. Impact	1.8
6. Sustainability	3.0

**Global assessment**

**2.4**

- Since effectiveness, impact or sustainability were rated "4" or worse, the global assessment is downgraded to "4" although the mean would actually be better than "4".
- No downgrading of the global assessment.

Relevance	The intervention was well aligned with national priorities, BMZ strategies, and the needs of target groups. However, shortcomings and limited adjustment to the project design and indicators during extensions reduced strategic precision.  Mark: 2.5
Coherence	The intervention is largely coherent with German development cooperation and complements partner efforts. Administrative and planning coordination with GIZ and KfW, strengthened collaboration with PTB projects, and targeted support to partner institutions demonstrate good alignment. However, strategic gaps within partner institutions and limited coordination with other donors reduce overall coherence.  Mark: 1.5
Effectiveness	While the outcome-level effectiveness was strong, output-level performance varied considerably due to highly uneven partner engagement. The quality of implementation was weakened by limited strategic guidance and steering, although cooperation among active partners was positive. Unintended potentials were leveraged, as response to the destruction of NBSM's laboratories is still pending given the short time frame.  Mark: 2.5
Efficiency	The project used its resources generally reasonably, delivering strong outputs with high-performing partners, but significant under-expenditure, staff turnover, and continued support to low-performing institutions reduced overall efficiency.  Mark: 3.0
Impact	The project may contribute to higher-level development changes in food safety, trade facilitation and the competitiveness of Nepali products, while also supporting improvements in pharmaceutical quality management. Long-term effects will depend on the broader political and economic environment.  Mark: 1.8
Sustainability	Sustainability varies markedly across partners: while DFTQC and APPON are well positioned to continue results, NBSM's destruction and low ownership at DIA and DPR significantly limit long-term continuation. The intervention strengthened capacities and resilience where partners were committed, but systemic risks such as funding shortages and staff rotation constrain durability.  Mark: 3.0

## 2. Introduction

### Subject of the evaluation

Project title	Strengthening of the QI for Sustainable Economic Development in Nepal
Programme	Stand-alone Technical Cooperation (TC) module
Project objective	Nepali QI stakeholders offer demand-oriented services in eco-nomically and trade-relevant sectors
Term	01/ 2022 – 12/2023, 1 <sup>st</sup> extension until 12/2024, 2 <sup>nd</sup> extension until 12/2025
Volume	1,800,000 EURO, plus 200,000 EURO for 2 <sup>nd</sup> extension
Evaluation period	01 June – 31 December 2025

The evaluation was conducted between June and December 2025 by a team of two independent external evaluators, and the report reflects results up to the end of the interview phase. The lead evaluator, based in Germany, is responsible for the overall methodology, strategic steering, and the analysis of international cooperation aspects. The technical evaluator, based in Nepal, focuses on assessing the technical and institutional implementation. The combination of local and international expertise ensures both contextual sensitivity and analytical independence.

The evaluation is guided by the OECD-DAC criteria (Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability) and is aligned with PTB’s evaluation policy and the BMZ evaluation guidelines. It also addresses the following specific evaluation question concerning the so called soft-opening which included the selection of future health-sector partners and initial advisory and preparatory work, with the aim of enabling immediate implementation once the new project begins in January 2026: “Was the soft-opening approach developed by the project a successful measure to efficiently and effectively prepare an upcoming project in a new sector? Under what circumstances is such an approach suitable for other future projects?”

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, combining desk research with semi-structured interviews and site visits. Document review began in July 2025, followed by virtual and on-site interviews between 4 September and 9 November 2025. Interviewees included PTB representatives, implementation partners, and technical experts. The interview schedule with a full list of interview partners is provided in Annex 2.

Following specific factors significantly influenced the conduct of the evaluation: At the start of the interview phase, violent riots triggered a curfew and led to the complete destruction of NBSM’s metrology laboratories, making on-site verification impossible; progress had to be assessed solely through interviews, and the interview phase was extended accordingly. In addition, the integration of a soft-opening component into the project design posed analytical challenges, as it lacked defined objectives and indicators and was therefore difficult to evaluate in terms of attribution. Finally, PTB’s long-standing engagement in Nepal since 2007 complicated the separation of long-term systemic developments from the specific effects of the current project phase.

The evaluation is designed to serve multiple user groups: PTB’s evaluation and project teams, the BMZ, and the Nepali partner institutions. Its aim is to provide accountability, support institutional learning, and inform the design of future interventions in Nepal and comparable country contexts.

### 3. Framework conditions and strategic approach of the project

#### 3.1. Framework conditions

**Political Framework Conditions:** Since the abolition of the monarchy in 2008, Nepal's political landscape has been marked by frequent changes in government, persistent political stagnation, and widespread corruption. Over the past decade, democratic institutions have become increasingly dysfunctional, contributing to growing public frustration—particularly among the younger generation. Structural economic challenges such as high unemployment, limited access to quality education and jobs, and a lack of long-term prospects have further eroded trust in the political system. Many young Nepalese see little future in their home country, while the economy remains heavily reliant on remittances from abroad. Public dissatisfaction has been fuelled by the perception of a small, well-connected elite benefiting disproportionately from the country's resources<sup>1</sup>.

This underlying discontent culminated in mass protests in early September 2025, after the government imposed a temporary ban on several social media platforms including Facebook, X, and YouTube. On 8 September 2025, thousands of mostly young people took to the streets in what became known as the “Gen Z protests,” expressing their frustration with political stagnation, corruption, and lack of economic opportunities. The police responded with force, leading to a rapid escalation of violence that resulted in 19 fatalities and numerous injuries. In the wake of these events, Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli resigned. The situation escalated further when protesters stormed the parliament building in Kathmandu and set it on fire, along with other key government institutions such as the Supreme Court and party headquarters<sup>2</sup>.

On 13 September, Nepal's President Ramchandra Paudel dissolved parliament and announced new elections for 5 March 2026. Until then, former Chief Justice Sushila Karki —known in the country as a long-standing anti-corruption advocate—will serve as Nepal's first female Prime Minister<sup>3</sup>. The current and incoming governments face significant challenges, including restoring security, rebuilding damaged institutions, responding to the demands of Gen Z protesters while easing broader concerns about Nepal's democracy, and ensuring accountability for the violence. The political situation remains unstable.

**Economic Framework Conditions:** Nepal intends to graduate from a Least Developed Country (LDC) to a Lower-Middle-Income Country (LMIC) by 2026, with an economy primarily driven by services, agriculture, and significant remittance inflows. The industrial sector is underdeveloped, and the country faces a persistent trade deficit. At the design of the project Nepal still suffered from the aftermath of the Covid pandemic. Since then, economic growth has been volatile: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) expanded by 5.6% in 2022, dropped to 2.0% in 2023 due to global shocks, tighter credit, and import restrictions, and partially recovered to 3.7% in 2024, supported by agriculture and industrial growth<sup>4</sup>. The reduction in spending of donors have also affected the economic development of Nepal<sup>5</sup>. The destruction of government institutions during the protests in September 2025 and the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ipg-journal.de/interviews/artikel/wut-allein-reicht-nicht-8535/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2025-09/nepal-proteste-tote>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c179qne0zw0o>

<sup>4</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=NP>

<sup>5</sup> <https://nepsetrading.com/blog/nepal-at-the-crossroads-as-major-foreign-aid-cuts-jeopardize-development-gains>

organisation of the new elections are expected to impact the country's economic development in the future.

**QI Framework Conditions:** At the start of the project in 2022, Nepal's QI system was limited, chronically underfunded, and lacked international recognition. QI services, particularly in the food and pharmaceutical sectors, were insufficient. Consumers often perceived domestic products as low quality and opted for imports, especially from India. Producers and exporters incurred additional costs by relying on foreign accredited laboratories, mainly in India, for compliance testing. National strategies such as the Nepal Trade Policy (2015) and Trade Integration Strategy (2016) explicitly identified this lack of internationally accredited domestic services as a major barrier to trade and export growth. However, little interest was shown by the relevant ministries.

Since 2022, several positive regulatory developments have taken place: The Trade Integration Strategy was updated in 2023 to include a detailed analysis of QI gaps and corresponding actions. Further, revisions to Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) in 2023 and the introduction of the new Food Hygiene and Quality Act in 2024 strengthened food safety regulations and significantly increased the demand for pesticide residue testing. In 2025, the government introduced a new Trade Policy identifying the improvement of quality standards as one of six key measures. The policy outlines plans to develop infrastructure for grading, quality control, modern laboratories, and quarantine inspection systems.

Following these legislative changes, the government provided increased financial support - particularly to DFTQC - enabling the institution to carry out its mandated testing responsibilities. At the same time, however, budget reductions implemented since 2023 have constrained the broader QI-system, limiting the ability of institutions to expand services or retain qualified personnel. The reduction of donor's spending has further weakened support, especially for institutions within the health sector.

During the violent protests in September 2025, NBSM's metrology laboratories were completely destroyed, disrupting essential QI services. It is currently unclear when operations can resume, and the organisation is expected to lose its accreditations. Recovery is likely to take at least a year and is heavily dependent on external funding. Reallocating national funds to rebuild the destroyed public infrastructure and finance new elections will likely affect the budgets of other QI institutions as well.

### 3.2. Strategic approach of the intervention

The overarching objective is to enable Nepali QI stakeholders to provide demand-oriented services in economically and trade-relevant sectors. This is based on the assumption that improved institutional capacities and collaboration across public and private actors will lead to enhanced service provision, greater trust in domestic products, and improved market access.

The intervention is structured around three core areas:

**Strengthening the national metrology and QI system:** This component focuses on building technical and organisational capacities of national institutions such as NBSM and DPR. It aims to support the development of new, internationally relevant QI services and improve internal management systems. The hypothesis is that these institutions, once better equipped and managed, can offer reliable services to meet the needs of producers and regulators.

**Enhancing food safety:** The second intervention area targets the improvement of laboratory capacities within DFTQC and its provincial laboratories. It assumes that upgrading analytical capabilities and ensuring compliance with new legal frameworks (e.g. with regard to MRLs) will

contribute to safer food products and better protection for consumers. Strengthened regulatory enforcement also enhances credibility in export markets and facilitates export processes.

**Improving quality assurance in selected value chains:** This area engages private-sector actors, such as the pharmaceutical sector business association APPON and the dairy industry association DIA, in strengthening their members' internal quality assurance systems. The intervention is based on the idea that providing demand-oriented, sector-specific advisory and training services can encourage producers and service providers to develop sustainable quality practices.

Across all three areas, the project applied a capacity development approach, combining technical assistance, smaller infrastructure upgrades, and training. Outputs included new or upgraded services, improved testing capabilities, and enhanced knowledge of quality standards. These outputs contribute to the outcome level by enabling QI actors to offer demand-driven services, thereby reducing dependency on foreign testing and supporting compliance with national and international regulations.

During the second project extension, activities outside the original project scope were added to prepare the ground for an upcoming health-sector project. While not reflected in the results model, these soft-opening activities provided initial capacity support to new partners and offered strategic continuity.

The intervention logic can be found in Annex 1.

## 4. Evaluation methodology

### 4.1. Evaluation design

The evaluation applies a theory-based approach and uses a mixed-method design, combining qualitative and quantitative elements. It follows PTB's evaluation standards and the OECD-DAC criteria (Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability). A core principle is triangulation to validate findings across multiple data sources and perspectives.

The data collection consisted of two components:

**Desk research:** This includes a comprehensive review of project documentation provided by PTB (e.g. progress reports, planning documents, expert reports, monitoring data) as well as relevant national strategies and legislation. Additional contextual information were drawn from credible external sources, such as World Bank, ADB, newspapers, and government reports.

**Primary data collection:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders. Given the limited time and resources, a joint sampling process between PTB and the evaluators identified the most relevant interview partners. Interviews were conducted both on-site in Nepal and virtually. As consequence of the protests and violations which started on the first day of the planned visits some of the interviews in Nepal were also conducted virtually. The two evaluators divided the interviews based on their roles and areas of expertise. A core set of guiding questions was applied in a conversational format and tailored to each interviewee. Please refer to Annex 3 for the set of guiding questions.

Interview data and document reviews were analysed through structured content analysis based on the evaluation matrix and OECD-DAC criteria. Findings were triangulated across different sources to confirm consistency, and any discrepancies are reported transparently.

The methodology enabled a flexible and context-sensitive approach and combined the perspectives of local and international evaluators to balance proximity and neutrality. However, limitations include

reliance on self-reported information and partial documentation quality. Field time was limited and under the impression of the protests which started right after the start of the evaluation, which have partially restricted direct observation. These risks were mitigated through triangulation, clear documentation of gaps, and validation with stakeholders.

This approach was chosen to provide a systematic, robust assessment within the available timeframe and resources. It aligns with PTB standards for independent evaluations and is well suited to capture complex institutional and systemic changes in technical cooperation.

#### **4.2. Data sources; data quality**

The evaluation is based on a combination of secondary and primary data sources. All requested documents were made available to the evaluators via PTBbox. Additional information was provided by the project team and partners upon request throughout the mission, ensuring that the evaluators were well informed.

The core project documents – including the project proposal with annexes, implementation agreement, annual progress reports, and selected expert reports – were generally of good quality in terms of content and relevance for the evaluation. These documents offered useful insights into the strategic orientation, progress, and operational challenges of the project.

Documents related to Capacity WORKS were only partially completed. Key planning instruments such as the stakeholder mapping, SWOT analysis, and process landscape were developed at the project outset. However, some of the ongoing documentation, particularly the results matrix and operational planning sheets, missed informational content. The results matrix included numeric targets without accompanying narrative or descriptions, making it difficult to trace the related activities. As a result, some discrepancies were noted between the indicator results reported in the annual progress report and those in the results matrix. The Capacity WORKS self-assessment was carried out only once at the start of the evaluation, which limited its relevance for analysing the project's development and progress.

Several reports were written in German, making it difficult for the Nepalese evaluator to review them without relying on translation tools, whose accuracy could not be verified. A few expert reports varied in their depth and clarity, limiting their informational value for the analysis. In some cases, overviews and summaries from the project team were incomplete or submitted with delays.

Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews with all key stakeholders. The interviews were conducted in a constructive and open atmosphere and provided valuable qualitative insights that complemented the document analysis. However, the outbreak of protests at the beginning of the interview phase led to the postponement of on-site interviews, and the interview with the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) could no longer be arranged. Additionally, due to the destruction of the NBSM laboratory during the unrest, it was not possible to validate some of the results achieved during the project implementation period.

## 5. Evaluation results

### 5.1 Status of the transformation process (OECD/DAC)

#### Marking scale for the evaluation of the OECD/DAC criteria

Evaluation	Grade	Description
very successful	1	very good result, far above expectations
Successful	2	good result, entirely meets expectations
successful to a limited extent	3	satisfactory; results are below expectations, but mainly positive
rather unsuccessful	4	unsatisfactory result; below expectations; negative results prevail despite several positive results
mainly unsuccessful	5	negative results clearly prevail despite several positive partial results
entirely unsuccessful	6	the project has failed completely; situation has rather deteriorated

#### 5.1.1 Relevance

##### Dimension 1: To what extent is the intervention's design geared to country-specific, regional, and global policies and priorities of the partners and the BMZ?

Overall, the intervention is very well aligned with the national priorities of the partner country, the strategic objectives of the BMZ, and considers the relevant political and institutional framework conditions.

At the time of project planning, the Nepal Trade Policy (2015) and the Nepal Trade Integration Strategy (2016) explicitly identified the lack of internationally accredited QI services as a major constraint to export competitiveness and economic diversification. The project design responded directly to this diagnosis by aiming to strengthen national metrology and QI systems, improve food safety, and enhance quality assurance in selected value chains. During implementation, the 2023 revision of the Trade Integration Strategy confirmed the ongoing relevance of QI. In parallel, regulatory reforms such as the revision of MRLs in 2023 and the introduction of the new Food Hygiene and Quality Act in 2024 significantly increased the need for accredited pesticide residue testing, a capacity the project helped strengthen at DFTQC. Additionally, Nepal's new Trade Policy (2025) prioritised improvements in product quality, infrastructure for grading and testing, and the establishment of modern laboratories and quarantine systems. Given Nepal's low export levels and the strategic need to improve QI services for economic growth and market access, the intervention remains highly relevant throughout its implementation period.

The intervention also addressed pressing sector-specific needs. NBSM, as Nepal's national metrology institute, is responsible for providing internationally traceable calibration services but had only limited capacities in areas such as mass, temperature, and volume. Expanding these services is essential for industry and regulatory compliance. DFTQC, as the national food safety agency, faces high demand for pesticide residue analysis at a time when contamination in food is a major public concern and rising cancer rates highlight the urgency of reliable testing. In the pharmaceutical sector, domestic

producers face strong competition from foreign industries, and Nepalese products are often perceived as inferior. Despite adherence to World Health Organisation (WHO) good manufacturing practices, substantial improvements in quality systems remain necessary, as well as stronger public communication about the sector's strengths. The project design directly addressed these gaps.

The intervention's design also aligns well with Nepal's political and institutional context, addressing particularly limited technical capacities. Its flexible, capacity-focused approach allowed adaptation to evolving needs, though recent political unrest demonstrated the fragility of the institutional environment.

From the perspective of German development cooperation, the project with its focus on sustainable economic development is closely aligned with BMZ's country strategy for Nepal (2016), sector strategies, and global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). It contributes to the "Just Transition" approach of the 2023 Asia Strategy by promoting reliable, quality-assured services that foster local value creation and economic resilience.

## **Dimension 2: To what extent is the intervention's design geared to the needs and capacities of the target groups?<sup>6</sup>**

The intervention's objectives are very well aligned with the needs and capacities of direct and indirect target groups.

Companies from the industrial and trade sectors benefit directly from improved services at NBSM and DFTQC. For example, DFTQC's expanded pesticide testing enables easier food exports by reducing testing costs and delays. The expertise gained by DFTQC has been further expanded to analysis of food supplement. The building industry benefited from NBSM's accreditations in mass and uniformity of zinc coating in zinc coated iron. Pharmaceutical companies profit from tailor-made relevant quality assurance training and a harmonised Quality Risk Management Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) developed with APPON. By implementing them they have improved production standards and market acceptance. Institutional partners received training to deliver the services which are expected by their customers effectively. DFTQC staff, for instance, now operates new instruments and offers pesticide testing aligned with updated food safety regulations. These strengthened institutions act as intermediaries, passing benefits to the wider economy and consumers. Nepali consumers, as an indirect target group, for example benefit from improved food safety and higher-quality pharmaceuticals. APPON's awareness campaign promotes trust in locally produced medicines, which are both good quality and more affordable than Indian imports due to government price controls.

The project benefited vulnerable groups by improving access to safe, affordable pharmaceuticals and food. Low-income households profit from regulated local drug prices, while enhanced pesticide testing at DFTQC improves food safety, which is particularly relevant for people with poor health. Women also benefited equally through improved service access.

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<sup>6</sup> The evaluation must clearly define the target group of the measure at the outset. In addition, it must be explained whether the measure relates or should relate to particularly vulnerable individuals, groups or organisations. According to this assessment, the second question of the dimension strong/weak/not should be included in the evaluation. In this respect, a human rights perspective should also be adopted here, which defines rights holders and duty bearers. Helpful documents: Gender & Safeguard System, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment, Integrated Peace and Conflict Analysis.

**Dimension 3: To what extent is the intervention's design appropriately, realistically and plausibly geared towards achieving the intervention's objective?**

Overall, the intervention's design was satisfactory with some exceptions for the original timeframe but lacked necessary adjustments during its extensions, limiting its effectiveness and traceability.

The initial design clearly linked capacity development in metrology, food safety, and quality assurance to improved service delivery in economically relevant sectors. The intervention logic was coherent and realistic for a two-year duration, aligning with the planned phase-out of bilateral cooperation with Nepal. Indicators at outcome level were mostly SMART and achievable within this short timeframe.

However, some indicators lack specificity, which is reflected in inconsistent result reporting. In several cases, figures in the results matrix differ from those in the annual progress reports and from the evaluation findings. For example, this is evident in outcome indicator three, where the term "measures" seems to have been interpreted differently by stakeholders, and it remains unclear whether the target required ten businesses each to use two new measures or ten businesses collectively to use two measures.

At output level, indicators primarily tracked activities and short-term outputs (e.g. training sessions, comparison measurements), offering limited insight into sustainability, institutional resilience, or behavioural change. Key aspects such as service utilisation and accreditation were not measured.

During the two project extensions, neither the impact logic nor the indicators were revised, despite notable changes in the project scope. For example, DFTQC significantly exceeded its pesticide testing target, detecting already over fifty substances more by 2023 compared to the original planned ten. The soft-opening of a new health-sector project also marked an extension of the focus that was not reflected in the results framework. As a result, several achievements are not captured in the monitoring system, reducing its relevance over time.

Furthermore, the inclusion of numerous partner institutions—including partners with lower level of engagement such as DPR and DIA—stretched the project's organisational capacity. A more selective approach would have allowed more effective support to more active partners.

The intervention's objective of strengthening QI is well aligned with social, environmental, and economic development goals (please refer to 5.7 for detailed analysis).

**Dimension 4: To what extent has the intervention's design responded to changes in the environment and adapted to the needs?**

Overall, the intervention showed limited responsiveness to changing conditions during implementation, with some positive exceptions.

The project showed some flexibility in its activities by responding to partner needs rather than following a rigid plan, but opportunities to adjust the project design and results logic during implementation were largely not used.

The project maintained cooperation with all initially involved partners throughout the whole implementation phase, including those with limited engagement such as DPR and DIA. Despite the lack of visible progress, their roles and contributions were not adjusted. This points to a limited strategic use of steering instruments and insufficient adaptation to partner engagement.

In addition, indicators were not updated in response to contextual changes or implementation progress. For instance, some indicators had already been achieved before the first project extension -

such as the pesticide testing capacities at DFTQC - yet remained unchanged. This led to a results framework that did not accurately reflect the project's evolving scope or ambition.

The intervention's response to the decision to continue bilateral cooperation with Nepal was a positive example of strategic adaptation. The soft-opening of the new health sector initiative used the extension period for preparatory work, enabling a seamless transition. However, this step should have been accompanied by adjustments to the project logic and monitoring system. As a result, some relevant achievements remained undocumented and not formally accountable.

**Summary:** Overall, the project's relevance is assessed as successful to a limited extent (grade 2.5). The intervention was well aligned with national priorities, BMZ strategies, and the needs of target groups. However, shortcomings and limited adjustment to the project design and indicators reduced strategic precision.

### Summarized evaluation

Criterion	Evaluation dimension	Weighting	Appraisal
Relevance	The intervention's design is geared to country-specific, regional and global policies and priorities of the partners and the BMZ.	25 %	1
	The intervention's design is geared towards the needs and capacities of the target groups	25 %	1
	The intervention's design is realistically and plausibly geared towards achieving the intervention's objective	25 %	4
	The intervention's design has responded to changes in the environment and adapted to the needs.	25 %	4
Global assessment of the relevance			2,5

### 5.1.2 Coherence

**Dimension 1: Internal coherence: Within German development cooperation, to what extent was the intervention designed and implemented in a complementary manner, based on a division of tasks?**

Overall, the project demonstrates very good internal coherence within German development cooperation.

During the planning of the current phase, GIZ was consulted and contributed to the preparation. However, during implementation, no technical collaboration took place, as there was no thematic overlap between the PTB project and GIZ or KfW. Cooperation occurred primarily at the administrative level: the national PTB advisor is co-located in the GIZ office, and GIZ manages financial transactions

for the project. Regular sector and embassy meetings ensured consistent exchange, and all partners described the working relationship as very constructive.

Synergies nonetheless exist at the strategic level. By strengthening Nepal's QI system - particularly food safety testing - PTB indirectly supports agricultural value chains in rural areas, where GIZ implemented its GRAPE programme. Improved testing capacities enable agricultural producers to comply with export requirements, making PTB's work highly relevant for GIZ-supported agribusinesses, even without direct operational cooperation. KfW became relevant in the planning of the upcoming health-sector project during the soft-opening phase. Here, coordination between PTB and KfW was strong: KfW will invest in laboratory infrastructure for the Paropakar Maternity and Women's Hospital (PMWH), while PTB will support its development of quality management of laboratory and accreditation, creating clear complementarities for the new project.

The project was complemented by PTB's regional MEDEA 3.0 and global M4DT-IC initiatives. While initial coordination was limited, cooperation improved significantly after the appointment of a new Director of Metrology at NBSM in 2023. Under her leadership, NBSM actively participated in MEDEA 3.0 through the Asia Pacific Metrology Programme's (APMP) Developing Economies' Committee and in M4DT-IC's digital process management group. These engagements strengthened institutional capacities, e.g. by the support of the development of a customer portal, aligned national efforts with international standards and made NBSM visible in the international metrology community.

The intervention is consistent with international and national norms and standards.

**Dimension 2: External coherence: To what extent does the intervention's design and implementation complement the partner's own efforts and is coordinated with other donors' activities?**

The intervention's design and implementation partially complemented the partners' own efforts and showed limited coordination with other donor activities.

The project supported partner institutions based on their specific requests, thereby aligning with the principle of subsidiarity. For instance, DFTQC received targeted capacity development for pesticide residue testing following a bilateral agreement with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). APPON's efforts to strengthen the image of domestic pharmaceutical products were supported through organisational development and the preparation of an awareness campaign to promote domestic pharmaceutical products. and to raise the awareness for quality-related aspects in the pharmaceutical production. NBSM was supported through specialised trainings in its pursuit of accreditation. However, for DIA the activities didn't seem demand driven. The association and its members showed limited interest in the provided consultancy and trainings, as quality assurance is not currently a priority for them due to the difficult economic situation in the dairy sector.

A structural weakness across most public partners is the absence of long-term strategies, which hampers the project's potential to support institutional development. High staff turnover further reduces continuity and impact. While the project's flexible approach was generally welcomed, several institutions expressed uncertainty regarding their allocated share of the project budget. This lack of clarity limited their ability to plan and align internal resources.

Coordination with other donors took place primarily at the information-sharing level. A notable example is the European Union (EU)/International Trade Centre (ITC) project, which funded equipment for DFTQC, while PTB provided complementary training on its use. Although synergies were created, there was no structured cooperation. The project generally utilised existing systems of the partner

institutions for implementation, but joint monitoring or accountability systems with donors or partners were not established.

**Summary:** The intervention is largely coherent with German development cooperation and complements partner efforts, despite its stand-alone character and limited operational cooperation during implementation. Administrative coordination with GIZ, planning coordination with KfW, strengthened collaboration with PTB projects, and targeted support to partner institutions demonstrate good alignment. However, strategic gaps within partner institutions and limited coordination with other donors reduce overall coherence. Overall rating: 1.5 – successful.

### Summarized evaluation

Criterion	Evaluation dimension	Weighting	Appraisal
Coherence	Internal coherence: Within German development cooperation, the intervention was designed and implemented in a complementary manner, based on the division of tasks.	50 %	1
	External coherence: The intervention's design and implementation complement the partner's own efforts and are coordinated with other donors' activities.	50 %	2
Global assessment of the coherence			1.5

### 5.1.3 Effectiveness

**Dimension 1: To what extent has the intervention achieved its objective (at outcome level) according to the indicators agreed upon?**

Outcome indicator	Degree of fulfilment (in %)	Appraisal (A-C)*	Justification
<p><i>The Nepal Bureau of Standards &amp; Metrology (NBSM) offers a total of two additional internationally accreditable services in the field of metrology and conformity assessment</i></p> <p>Initial value: (79) 81 Target value: (81) 83 Current value (08/2025): 83</p>	100	A	<p>Mass coating of zinc in zinc coated iron sheet</p> <p>Measuring of uniformity of zinc coating in zinc coated iron</p>

<p><i>Ten additional substances can now be detected within the scope of pesticide and antibiotics residue analyses in foodstuffs by the central laboratory of the Department of Food Technology and Quality Control (DFTQC)</i></p> <p>Initial value: 29 Target value: 39 Current value (10/2025): 123</p>	<p>100</p>	<p>A</p>	<p>123 pesticides are accredited by the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) in the areas of fruit and vegetables, tea and tea products, coffee and cocoa products and spices and condiments.</p> <p>Training and proficiency testing for antibiotic residues are planned, but they will not be completed before the project ends.</p>
<p><i>Ten businesses from the pharmaceutical or dairy industry are now using two new measures provided by their respective industrial federation to improve their quality management.</i></p> <p>Initial value: 0 Target value: 10 Current value (10/2025): 1 new measure that is used by 27 businesses</p>	<p>50</p>	<p>B</p> <p>The indicator is not specific. It does not clearly define what qualifies as a "measure" or how "use" should be verified, making its achievement difficult to assess reliably. Moreover, it is not clear if ten businesses use one measure each or together two measures.</p>	<p>A harmonised Quality Risk Management SOP was developed and introduced to APPON's members. Twenty-seven businesses have submitted implementation reports.</p> <p>2 training sessions on process validation were conducted with more than 185 participants; however, it remains unclear to what extent participants have applied the knowledge in practice. Moreover, these trainings were conducted by PTB rather than APPON.</p> <p>The Training of Trainers (ToT) of 11 persons in the dairy industry hasn't resulted in a new service of DIA. Some of the participants use the gained knowledge in their new job but not for DIA. A second training is planned until the end of the project phase. However, it is not clear if this will result in a new service as participants</p>

			have already followed new career paths.
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\*: Appraisal: A = adequate indicator; B = slight objections; C = poor indicator, to be revised if applicable

**Dimension 2: To what extent have the intervention’s activities, inputs and outputs considerably contributed to achieving the intervention’s objective (at outcome level)?**

The project’s activities and outputs contributed unevenly to the achievement of the objective “Nepalese QI stakeholders offer demand-oriented services in economically and trade-relevant sectors.” Effectiveness varied significantly across partner institutions, largely due to differences in ownership, staffing stability, and external conditions.

**NBSM:** Seven trainings on pressure, balance and on-site calibration strengthened staff competencies, and inter-laboratory comparisons demonstrated that five metrologists were able to perform the new calibration services. Additional trainings on ISO/IEC 17025 and ISO 9001 supported NBSM’s preparation for accreditation scope extension. Further, the project has supported NBSM to start model approval of the metrology instruments which contributes to enforce the Standard Measurement and Weights Act 1968 of Nepal. Participation in regional and global conferences further strengthened NBSM’s technical network and visibility. These outputs strongly contributed to the project objective: NBSM was ready to offer new and economically relevant calibration services, as pressure calibration is relevant for the manufacturing and energy sectors. However, the violent protests in September 2025 destroyed NBSM’s metrology laboratories. As a result, services cannot be offered in the near future, and accreditation will probably lapse. The planned procurement of the force calibrator was not carried out due to the lack of a suitable room - an outcome that proved positive in hindsight, given the subsequent destruction. The knowledge gained remains, but the physical infrastructure must be rebuilt. Effectiveness is therefore high in terms of capacity development but currently low in terms of sustained service delivery.

Positive internal factor: New motivated management. Negative external factor: destruction of laboratories

**DPR:** The project provided equipment (FID for GC-MS, sample digester, hydrogen generator) to enable analysis of major components of four additional essential oils. However, repeated leadership changes and low institutional engagement prevented effective cooperation. Misplacement of the Y-splitter during relocation rendered the equipment non-functional for the purpose, and DPR showed limited interest in receiving further training. As a consequence, the output was not achieved and DPR has not contributed to the project objective.

Negative internal factors: low ownership, frequent leadership changes, technical mismanagement

**DFTQC** achieved strong results. Four pesticide-residue analysis trainings were conducted, followed by participation in three proficiency tests for pesticides in fruits, vegetables and tea, which yielded good results. DFTQC can now test 123 pesticides - accredited by NABL - far exceeding initial expectations. The revision of MRLs in 2023–2024 and the certificate of recognition from FSSAI substantially increased demand for pesticide testing, further enhancing the relevance of the project’s support. A training on antibiotic residue analysis is planned for early 2026, after which DFTQC intends to participate in proficiency testing in this area, too.

In 2022 and 2023 two training measures per year involving 74 participants strengthened awareness of ISO 17025, documentation and quality management. These inputs contributed to the Biratnagar laboratory achieving accreditation. No activities took place in 2024, but in 2025 two trainings in Decision Rule and Quality Assurance in hybrid mode were conducted. One more training is planned

after the end of the project phase. Limited hands-on support as a consequence of online training restricted the practical application of the skills gained.

Positive external factors: new bilateral agreement with FSSAI; updated MRL regulations; increased government financing

**APPON** showed substantial progress. Technical trainings on cleaning validation, process validation, data integrity and quality risk management improved quality assurance practices in member companies although the success of these trainings were not measured by the project. Two mock audits - implemented as one-to-one coaching - supported firms preparing for requirements from the Department of Drug Administration (DDA). Working groups established in 2024 produced a harmonised Quality Risk Management SOP, which is now used by 27 companies. Institutionally, two organisational development workshops led to the development of a professional awareness campaign. Together with the newly organised and partially project sponsored Pharma Conclaves, this is expected to strengthen the reputation of Nepalese pharmaceutical products among both government stakeholders and consumers.

Positive internal factors: strong leadership; active member companies

**DIA:** Effectiveness at DIA remained weak. The dairy sector's challenging economic situation limited companies' ability to invest in quality assurance. Of the four companies selected initially, only one began consultancy support but did not progress meaningfully or apply for certification.

Out of 11 multipliers which were trained in the ToT six were interviewed. Out of these six, four participants apply their learning in their current workplaces but none in advisory roles for DIA. Some of the participants have left the country in the meanwhile. The original planned second training round is planned to take place until the end of the project period. As information about the training was not available at the end of the evaluation period this could not be considered in the evaluation.

Negative factors: sector crisis, limited capacities, language barriers, low institutional ownership

### **Dimension 3: To what extent has the quality of the intervention's implementation considerably contributed to achieving the intervention's objective (at outcome level)?**

Overall, the quality of implementation contributed to the achievement of the project's objective to a moderate extent.

Documents related to Capacity WORKS were only partially completed. Key planning instruments such as the stakeholder mapping, SWOT analysis, and process landscape were developed at the project outset. However, some of the ongoing documentation, particularly the results matrix and operational planning sheets, missed informational content. The results matrix included numeric targets without accompanying narrative or descriptions, making it difficult to trace the related activities. As a result, some discrepancies were noted between the indicator results and activities reported in the annual process report and those in the results matrix and the operational planning sheets. The Capacity WORKS self-assessment was carried out only once at the start of the evaluation, which limited its relevance for analysing the project's development and progress.

**CW Strategy factor:** The strategic quality of the intervention was limited. The COVID pandemic limited in-person dialogue and joint planning. Individual objectives were discussed with each institution, and partners were asked to prioritise their needs. However, indicators were largely defined by PTB, and no overarching results model integrating all five partners was established. As a result, the project operated as a collection of parallel sub-projects rather than a coherent joint strategy. Even where partners formally shared an output - such as DIA and APPON under Output 3 - there was no substantive linkage between their activities.

Capacity development formed the core of the project's approach, but an explicit capacity development strategy covering individual, organisational and systemic levels was not developed. Reflection group meetings ensured transparency and allowed partners to understand one another's objectives, but they did not replace strategic steering. There were no regular strategic review or annual planning meetings to reassess objectives, despite two project extensions and significant contextual changes. Objectives and indicators remained unchanged throughout the entire implementation period, limiting the project's ability to adapt its strategy to evolving needs.

Overall, while elements of joint planning existed, the project lacked a unified strategic framework, an explicit capacity development strategy, and systematic adaptation processes - all of which reduced the strategic effectiveness of the intervention. (mark: 4)

**CW: Cooperation factor:** The cooperation factor shows a mixed but generally positive picture. Engagement across the five partners varied considerably: NBSM, DFTQC and APPON participated actively and contributed meaningfully to implementation, while DPR and DIA showed low ownership, limited responsiveness and irregular participation in reflection group meetings.

At the same time, the project strengthened communication and cooperation among the more engaged partners. The regular reflection group meetings functioned well, enabling partners to better understand each other's roles and challenges and fostering constructive exchange - particularly between private-sector actors and QI institutions. Spontaneous initiatives, such as NBSM's voluntary training for the pharmaceutical sector or DFTQC's outreach to DIA, demonstrate that the project helped build trust and encouraged practical collaboration beyond formal project activities.

Overall, although partner contributions differed significantly, the project generated positive cooperation dynamics among those who were actively involved. (mark: 2)

**CW - Steering structure factor<sup>7</sup>:** The steering structure functioned well as an operational exchange platform but offered limited strategic guidance. The reflection group meetings, held twice a year, enabled partners to share progress, discuss challenges and build trust, leading to some constructive collaboration. However, the MoIC - assigned as the political partner - participated only once and did not assume its steering role. As a result, the structure lacked political backing and did not provide strategic direction. Systematic monitoring was not used, and objectives and indicators were not adjusted despite two project extensions.

Overall, steering remained largely administrative rather than strategic, driven by PTB and the most engaged partners. (mark: 4)

**CW – Processes factor:** At the start of the project, a process landscape was developed that outlined output, cooperation and learning processes. However, external sector processes - such as regulatory developments or changing institutional mandates - were not systematically integrated. As a result, links between project activities and broader QI system dynamics remained only partially defined.

Cooperation process functioned adequately in practice, supported mainly by regular reflection group meetings and direct communication with engaged partners. Stronger institutions such as DFTQC and APPON adjusted their internal processes and used project inputs effectively, while weaker partners made limited organisational changes.

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<sup>7</sup> Results based monitoring (CW Tool 22) and the operation plan (CW Tool 24) can be used to achieve the indicators of this factor. An elaborate description of the mandatory CW tools and their intended use during project implementation can be found in the document: EVA\_32\_CW in PTB\_EN\_240105

Overall, basic processes were in place, but insufficient institutionalisation and weak adaptation reduced their strategic value. (mark: 3)

**CW – Learning and Innovation Factor:** The project supported several technical and institutional innovations, particularly at DFTQC and APPON, where new analytical methods, harmonised SOPs and stronger organisational processes were introduced.

Reflection group meetings facilitated useful exchange between institutions, but documentation and knowledge management were inconsistent, and lessons were not regularly translated into follow-up actions. A positive example is APPON, which publishes training materials on its website for its members.

Overall, learning processes occurred, but their institutionalisation remained limited due to the lack of structured knowledge management. (mark: 3)

**Dimension 4: To what extent has the intervention leveraged potentials of unintended positive results and reacted to risks and/or the occurrence of (unintended) negative results?<sup>8</sup>**

The project made good use of unintended positive developments, but no response to NBSM's destruction was possible within the limited remaining timeframe.

A positive development arose from the government's strengthened food safety regulations and the long-prepared mutual recognition with FSSAI, both of which increased national attention to QI. These changes created substantial demand for DFTQC's expanded testing capacities, enabling the institution to analyse far more pesticides than originally envisaged. DFTQC has further expanded its analytical capabilities on analysis of food supplements. The new food act has mandated DFTQC to enforce the quality of food supplements. DFTQC responded effectively to these new requirements by strong leadership, improved equipment and staff commitment. The project leveraged the potential by the training provided – particularly in the usage of the technical equipment provided by the government and the EU/ITC.

The most severe negative development was the complete destruction of NBSM's metrology laboratories during the September 2025 protests, resulting in the loss of equipment and infrastructure and likely leading to the loss of accreditation. The consequences are already visible: Nepal currently lacks national calibration services, forcing private companies, hospitals and public institutions - including DFTQC - to rely on services abroad, primarily from India. These services are often more expensive or of lower quality, with significant negative implications for all sectors dependent on reliable measurements. PTB, the partners, BMZ, and the Embassy are currently considering how to proceed in light of the situation at NBSM. Given the short timeframe between the protests and the evaluation, the project had not yet been able to finalize a response to this situation.

**Summary:** While the outcome-level effectiveness was strong, output-level performance varied considerably due to highly uneven partner engagement. The quality of implementation was weakened by limited strategic guidance and steering, although cooperation among active partners was positive. Unintended potentials were leveraged, but a response to the destruction of NBSM's laboratories is still

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<sup>8</sup> If there are no unintended, positive or negative results and the project has not carried out any monitoring of unintended results, this dimension should generally be rated with a "2". A "1" can only be awarded if unintended results have been monitored. Positive unintended results cannot compensate for negative ones; the occurrence of positive and negative unintended results must be presented transparently in the evaluation.

pending given the short time frame. Overall, effectiveness is assessed as successful to a limited extent (3).

### Summarized evaluation

Criterion	Evaluation dimension	Weighting	Appraisal
<b>Effectiveness</b>	The intervention has achieved its objective (at outcome level) according to the indicators agreed upon.	25 %	2
	The intervention's activities, inputs and outputs have considerably contributed to achieving the project's objective (at outcome level).	25 %	3
	The quality of the intervention's implementation has considerably contributed to achieving the intervention's objective (at outcome level).	25 %	3
	The intervention has leveraged potentials of unintended positive results and reacted to risks and/or the occurrence of (unintended) negative results. <sup>9</sup>	25 %	2
Global assessment of the effectiveness			2.5

#### 5.1.4 Efficiency

Out of the total budget of 2,000,000 €, 1,269,699 € had been spent as of 4 September 2025, with an additional oblige of 397,121 €. All three outputs remained under budget, with the largest underspend in Output 1, primarily due to the non-procurement of a force calibrator.

The project team consisted of a project coordinator, a project assistant, a national project advisor, and four integrated short-term advisors covering different technical areas. Additional short-term experts supported specific activities. Only minor procurements were financed through the project.

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<sup>9</sup> Positive and negative unintended effects should be weighed against each other. If no unintended effects can be identified and there was no corresponding monitoring system, a "2" should be awarded here. If such a monitoring system was in place, a "1" can also be awarded here.

**Dimension 1: To what extent can the use of resources by the intervention be deemed reasonable with regard to the outputs achieved (production efficiency)?<sup>10</sup>**

Overall, the intervention used its financial and human resources satisfactory to deliver the planned outputs.

The majority of funds were invested in capacity-building measures that were delivered cost-efficiently and were well received by participants. The use of online formats and local trainers further improved efficiency. The project also facilitated the effective use of previously underutilised equipment at partner institutions, such as the LC-MS/MS, thereby enhancing production efficiency. The planned procurement of a force calibrator for NBSM was not implemented due to the lack of an adequate room, avoiding misallocated spending. In hindsight, this also turned out to be positive, as the device would have been destroyed during the demonstrations.

For the less active partners, production efficiency was very low. Although only limited resources were allocated to DPR, the support provided to DIA did not lead to meaningful outputs. Despite several consultancies, the dairy company did not proceed toward certification. In the ToT measure 11 multipliers were trained out of which 6 were interviewed. Only 4 of them were applying their knowledge in their jobs, and none of them used it in the form of the intended DIA service.

Only 63% of the planned budget had been used by the beginning of September 2025. This significant under-expenditure indicates that in addition to the force calibrator more planned activities could not be implemented as foreseen. Reason for this might have been significant staff turnover in Braunschweig which delayed activities and created inefficiencies. Several experts reported a lack of a stable counterpart, leading to slower progress and higher coordination efforts.

Under the minimum principle, most outputs could not have been delivered with significantly fewer resources. The activities were lean, and cost-intensive components - such as laboratory equipment - were only procured when necessary and feasible. Under the maximum principle, however, efficiency could have been improved by reallocating resources away from partners with persistently low engagement, particularly DPR, and investing more heavily in institutions with high absorption capacity.

**Dimension 2: To what extent can the use of resources by the intervention be deemed reasonable regarding the achievement of the intervention's objective/outcome (allocation efficiency)?**

The use of resources was satisfactory with regard to achieving the intervention's overall objective.

For partners with a high engagement level, the allocation of resources was highly efficient. Investments in DFTQC directly strengthened national capacity in pesticide testing, resulting in substantial contributions to the outcome. Similarly, resources allocated to APPON led to improved quality management practices and institutional strengthening. Support to NBSM enabled progress toward accreditation and new calibration services, although the destruction of the laboratories prevented these results from becoming operational.

It is also noteworthy that the active partners made substantial own contributions. NBSM independently financed its accreditation scope extension, while DFTQC allocated budget for accreditation,

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<sup>10</sup> The evaluation dimension "production efficiency" refers to the appropriateness of the relationship between inputs and outputs. The evaluation dimension "allocation efficiency" refers to the appropriateness of the relationship between the inputs and the results achieved by the intervention. The "efficiency" criterion relates both to the intervention's design and implementation and to the results it achieves.

proficiency testing, internal quality control and calibration. APPON organised two Pharma Conclaves, and its members paid fees for the trainings.

Allocation efficiency was lower in the case of DPR and DIA. Although the project provided equipment and training opportunities, both organisations faced structural and contextual constraints that limited their ability to make full use of the support. A more targeted reallocation of resources toward institutions with higher absorptive capacity could potentially have strengthened overall outcome achievement. In addition, frequent personnel changes affected continuity and slowed implementation, which further reduced the effectiveness of investments.

Despite considerable under-expenditure, the project budget was increased in its second extension in 2024. The justification for this increase is not evident. In addition, soft-opening activities were carried out without being reflected in the indicator framework, and associated costs are not transparent in the financial overview, making it difficult to assess their efficiency.

**Summary:** The project used its resources generally reasonably, delivering strong outputs with active partners, but significant under-expenditure, staff turnover, and continued support to less active institutions reduced overall efficiency. Considering these factors, the intervention is rated successful to a limited extent (3).

#### Summarized evaluation

Criterion	Evaluation dimension	Weighting	Appraisal
Efficiency	The use of resources by the intervention is deemed reasonable with regard to the outputs achieved (production efficiency).	50 %	3
	The use of resources by the intervention is deemed reasonable with regard to the achievement of the objective/outcome (allocation efficiency).	50 %	3
Global assessment of the efficiency			3

#### 5.1.5 Higher-level development results

**Dimension 1: To what extent have the intended higher-level development changes taken place or are expected to take place in the near future?<sup>11</sup>**

An increase in overall quality awareness in Nepal, comprising policy, industry and consumer level can be observed. Several higher-level development changes can plausibly be expected in the near future. The most significant relates to strengthened food safety, improved trade facilitation and enhanced competitiveness of Nepali products. DFTQC's expanded testing capacity - now covering far more pesticides than originally planned - combined with the mutual recognition agreement with FSSAI,

<sup>11</sup> Potential sources: Country strategy and the programme objectives or, in addition, from relevant development policy strategies, development policy indicators and SDGs

enables Nepali exporters to conduct mandatory food safety tests domestically. This allows perishable goods to cross the border without delay, reducing spoilage, transport costs and administrative burdens. These developments plausibly contribute to increased export efficiency, higher profitability for producers and greater income stability for farmers and food processors.

Consumers benefit socially from improved food safety and reduced exposure to harmful pesticide residues. Over time, this is expected to lead to positive public health effects, especially for low-income households that have limited access to medical care. Environmentally, reduced pesticide use may contribute to decreased soil and water contamination.

In the pharmaceutical sector, improved quality management systems and harmonised SOPs are likely to strengthen and expand domestic production in line with international standards and practices.. If locally produced medicines gain further acceptance, consumers - particularly vulnerable groups - will benefit from affordable, high-quality products. Expanded production also has potential to create skilled employment.

Overall, the interaction of economic (competitiveness), social (consumer health) and environmental (reduced harmful residues) outcomes is largely positive, with no major trade-offs identified.

**Dimension 2: To what extent have the results achieved by the intervention (at outcome level) contributed to the intended or implemented higher-level changes.**

The project plausibly contributed to these higher-level development results by providing the technical foundation.

At DFTQC, as one component trainings enabled the institution to meet the requirements of the bilateral recognition agreement. These internal capacities were essential for the operationalisation of faster and more reliable cross-border trade procedures. Similarly, project inputs to the pharmaceutical sector - trainings, mock audits and organisational development for APPON - supported quality improvements that can translate into higher consumer trust and stronger local value creation.

Given PTB's engagement in Nepal since 2007, its long-term commitment and continuous support to QI institutions may also have contributed to structural changes: the government now places greater emphasis on quality infrastructure, and food safety regulations have been strengthened.

**Dimension 3: To what extent has the intervention contributed to positive and not to negative unintended higher-level development changes?<sup>12</sup>**

No positive or negative unintended higher-level development changes have been observed during the evaluation process nor mentioned by the interview partners. No explicit monitoring of these higher-level development changes was available. This dimension is therefore evaluated successful.

**Summary:** The project may contribute to several higher-level development changes, particularly in overall quality awareness, food safety, trade facilitation and the competitiveness of Nepali products, while also supporting improvements in pharmaceutical quality management. These contributions are

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<sup>12</sup> *If there are no unintended, positive or negative results and the project has not carried out any monitoring of unintended results, this dimension should generally be rated with a "2". A "1" can only be awarded if unintended results have been monitored. Positive unintended results cannot compensate for negative ones; the occurrence of positive and negative unintended results must be presented transparently in the evaluation.*

plausible and grounded in strengthened institutional capacities, although long-term effects will depend on the broader political and economic environment. Overall rating: 1.8 – successful.

### Summarized evaluation

Criterion	Evaluation dimension	Weighting	Appraisal
Higher-level development results	The intended higher-level development results have taken place or are expected to take place.	25 %	1
	The results achieved by the intervention (at outcome level) have contributed to the intended or implemented higher-level results.	50 %	2
	The intervention has contributed to positive and not to negative unintended higher-level development changes.	25 %	2
Total assessment of the higher-level development results			1.8

### 5.1.6 Sustainability

#### Dimension 1: To what extent do the partners, target groups and organizations involved have the capacities required to ensure that positive results are continued?

The ability of partners and target groups to sustain the project's results varies considerably across institutions. Several partners have developed relevant technical and organisational capacities, but long-term continuity is threatened by financial, structural and political uncertainties.

**DFTQC** shows comparatively strong prospects: Its staff can independently perform the newly introduced pesticide residue methods, and participation in proficiency testing has strengthened laboratory routines. Their mandate is clear, government recognition of food safety has increased, and additional public funding in recent years demonstrates political support. However, sustaining these gains depends heavily on the ministry's ability to maintain laboratory budgets after the protests, as national resources will be required for rebuilding destroyed public infrastructure and to conduct new elections.

**APPON** exhibits very high institutional willingness. The association has strengthened its organisational capacity, developed an awareness campaign and established structured dialogue with government authorities. Its members benefit economically from improved quality management, creating strong incentives to continue activities.

By contrast, **NBSM** currently faces the most severe obstacles. The complete destruction of its metrology laboratories eliminates the material basis for service provision and accreditation. Although the institution retains skilled staff and benefits from growing governmental recognition of QI, the extent

to which it will receive reconstruction funding remains uncertain. Staff rotation, a systemic feature of Nepal's public administration, further threatens long-term capacity retention.

**DIA** and **DPR** have limited prospects of sustaining results. The dairy sector remains structurally weak, companies face financial constraints, and the association has demonstrated low ownership and limited engagement. DPR likewise did not engage meaningfully in training or equipment use, undermining the continuity of results.

A sustainability concept was commissioned in July 2025. It contains a list of activities and measures – jointly developed with the partners – to close gaps and help partners continue applying the knowledge and practices gained during the project. While the idea is assessed very positive, the process started too late. Finalised only in September, it leaves insufficient time for implementation, limiting the effectiveness, efficiency, and long-term sustainability of an otherwise well-designed measure.

**Dimension 2: To what extent has the intervention considerably contributed to the capacity of partners, target groups and other organizations involved to continue the positive results?**

The intervention contributed substantially to strengthening individual and institutional capacities at DFTQC, NBSM (prior to destruction) and APPON.

Through training programmes, method development and mock audits, the project enhanced technical expertise that will remain with staff regardless of organisational disruptions. For disadvantaged populations – such as low-income consumers – improved food safety and more affordable domestic pharmaceuticals represent long-term social benefits.

The project also contributed to institutional resilience. DFTQC's expanded testing scope positions it to adapt to future regulatory requirements. APPON's organisational development process strengthened its strategic planning capacities, enabling the association to continue core activities independently. The newly established working groups acquired knowledge that can be applied to develop additional harmonised SOPs, although some external support will still be required. At NBSM, despite the loss of infrastructure, the intervention helped build a solid knowledge base that provides an important foundation for reconstruction.

However, resilience remains weak where institutional ownership was low (DIA, DPR) and where systemic risks such as staff rotation, limited budget, and insufficient strategic planning persist.

**Dimension 3: To what extent are the results of the intervention durable?**

Under current conditions, the durability of results differs widely across partner institutions.

Results at DFTQC and APPON can be considered durable, as technical skills, established procedures and institutional motivation are expected to persist. In contrast, durability at NBSM is uncertain due to the destruction of laboratories and unclear reconstruction funding. The long-term sustainability of results in the dairy sector will largely depend on how the pool of trained QA experts is integrated into DIA's future activities, which could not yet be assessed at the time of the interviews. The durability of results at DPR is low given limited ownership and structural constraints.

Key risks include financial shortages, staff rotation, and the absence of long-term institutional strategies. Positive potentials lie in the increased governmental recognition of QI and the opportunity to rebuild NBSM's systems according to international standards. These potentials can secure long-term sustainability if sufficient funding and political commitment materialise.

**Summary:** Sustainability varies markedly across partners: while DFTQC and APPON are well positioned to continue results, NBSM's destruction and low ownership at DIA and DPR significantly

limit long-term continuation. The intervention strengthened capacities and resilience where partners were committed, but systemic risks such as funding shortages and staff rotation constrain durability. Overall, sustainability is rated successful to a limited extent (3).

### Summarized evaluation

Criterion	Evaluation dimension	Weighting	Appraisal
<b>Sustainability</b>	The partners, target groups and organizations involved have the capacities required to ensure that positive results are continued.	33.33 %	3
	The intervention has considerably contributed to the capacity of partners, target groups and other organizations involved to continue the positive results.	33.33 %	3
	The results of the intervention are durable.	33.33 %	3
Total assessment of the sustainability			3

### 5.1.7 Summary of the intervention's contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

#### Universality, shared responsibility and accountability

The intervention contributes directly to Nepal's progress toward the SDGs, particularly SDG 8 (sustainable economic growth), SDG 9.1 (industrial infrastructure), SDGs 17.6, 17.9, 17.11 (technology transfer, capacity development, and trade), SDG 2.4 (food safety) and SDG 3.7 (quality of healthcare products). By strengthening QI capacities, the intervention supports national implementation of Nepal's SDG strategy.

The intervention was largely embedded in the systems and structures of partner institutions. It built on existing administrative, laboratory, and regulatory frameworks and strengthened them through targeted capacity development. For example, DFTQC was able to utilise equipment financed by other donors and the government more effectively after receiving PTB-supported training on pesticide residue analysis.

Coordination with other development partners remained mostly administrative, yet complementary. Regular exchanges with GIZ, KfW, and other donors ensured information-sharing and avoided duplication.

### **Interplay of economic, environmental and social development**

The intervention pursued a holistic approach to sustainable development by simultaneously addressing economic competitiveness, environmental protection and social well-being. Strengthening pesticide testing capacity at DFTQC enhances public health (social), reduces harmful pesticide use (environmental), and supports export competitiveness of agri-food products (economic).

Positive interactions are particularly visible in the pharmaceutical sector: improved quality management contributes to safer products for consumers (social), strengthens domestic industry and employment (economic), and reduces environmental risks associated with poor manufacturing practices (environmental).

No significant negative interactions between the three sustainability dimensions were identified. Instead, the intervention created mutually reinforcing benefits - better regulations, safer products, and stronger industries.

### **Inclusiveness/Leave no one behind**

The intervention is broadly consistent with international norms promoting the inclusion of vulnerable groups. Although not explicitly targeted at disadvantaged populations, several positive effects emerged.

Low-income households benefit from the availability of safe, high-quality domestic pharmaceuticals, which are more affordable than imported products. Improved pesticide monitoring reduces exposure to harmful residues, benefitting groups with pre-existing health vulnerabilities disproportionately. Strengthened food safety controls also protect children, elderly persons and people with chronic illnesses - groups most affected by unsafe food products.

Moreover, the intervention contributed to resilience by building institutional capacities that indirectly safeguard vulnerable populations. Stronger national QI institutions ensure long-term access to safer food and medicines, independent of external support. No negative effects on disadvantaged groups were identified.

## **6. Assessment of specific evaluation questions**

**Was the soft-opening approach developed by the project a successful measure to efficiently and effectively prepare an upcoming project in a new sector? Under what circumstances is such an approach suitable for other future projects?**

Overall, the soft-opening approach applied by the project provided a useful preparatory mechanism for launching a subsequent intervention in a new sector; however, its final effectiveness and efficiency can only be fully assessed once the follow-up project is formally implemented. The approach demonstrated clear advantages in terms of relationship-building, early needs assessment, and accelerated project readiness, but its applicability to future projects is context-dependent and limited.

**Contribution to efficient and effective project preparation:** The soft-opening covered a two-year period during which two expert missions to Nepal and several online consultations were conducted to identify potential partners, understand sector needs, and initiate initial advisory support. This early engagement allowed PTB to explore a new thematic field - the health sector - and to assess which institutions had the mandate, interest, and absorptive capacity to participate in the future project. By

the end of this preparatory phase, several partners had been consulted, initial capacity gaps were identified, and first trust-building steps had been taken.

The early interaction will probably reduce the usual “start-up friction” of new projects. Typically, the first project year is spent gaining access to institutions, establishing working relationships, aligning expectations, and negotiating work plans. Through the soft-opening, this introductory phase may be significantly shortened, allowing the follow-up project to begin implementation more rapidly and focus immediately on technical outputs. Key elements - such as clarifying institutional roles, initiating dialogue with senior management, and understanding approval procedures - were completed ahead of time.

Furthermore, the longer engagement period provided more flexibility for coordination among stakeholders. It enabled PTB to synchronise its plans with KfW, which is also active in the health sector, and to explore complementary roles - for instance, PTB focusing on accreditation and KfW on infrastructure investments. Such alignment would have been more difficult within the short inception phase of a regular project.

**Limitations and uncertainties:** Despite these advantages, the ultimate success of the soft-opening can only be judged once the new project is launched. If the follow-up project effectively bypasses the typical initiation phase and partners are immediately prepared to engage in technical activities, the soft-opening will have proven its value. Conversely, if significant relationship-building still needs to occur - or if partner institutions have changed due to staff turnover or political shifts - the additional resources invested may not translate into efficiency gains.

Another limitation concerns cost transparency. The soft-opening was not reflected in the indicator framework, and the financial overview does not clearly distinguish costs related to this preparatory work. This reduces accountability and makes it difficult to assess resource efficiency.

**Suitability for future projects:** The soft-opening approach is only suitable under specific conditions. It works best when PTB is already established in the country, when an upcoming project requires a shift into a new sector, and when sufficient time and budget flexibility allow preparatory work to be embedded in an ongoing phase. Given these prerequisites, its applicability remains limited to a small number of future projects.

## 7. Lessons learned

One topic for internal discussion at PTB which might also be relevant in other projects: All partners and stakeholders spoke very positively about the national advisor, emphasising the value of her continuity, coordination role in Nepal, and strong technical expertise and project knowledge. At the same time, her involvement in strategic project coordination appears limited. Given the frequent turnover in project coordination, it would be advisable to integrate her more closely into strategic processes to help maintain continuity and avoid delays in implementation.

## Recommendations

### Recommendations to partners

**NBSM:** Building on the substantial knowledge developed in recent years, the reconstruction phase offers an opportunity to establish a well-designed, future-oriented organisation aligned with the needs of industry and government. Developing a clear strategic plan with defined priorities and milestones will help guide this process and strengthen the basis for targeted discussions with government and donors. A focused approach to resource mobilisation - rather than accepting support without strategic fit - will ensure that new structures effectively serve NBSM's core functions. (5.1.6)

### Recommendations to the project team

- Ensure that indicators for the upcoming health project are fully SMART and that all stakeholders share a clear, common understanding of what is being measured, in order to avoid monitoring inconsistencies and evaluation challenges. (4.2, 5.1.1)
- Conduct annual planning meetings with all partners that review progress, identify necessary adjustments, and jointly plan the upcoming year to improve transparency and strategic alignment. This will help ensure timely adaptations and maintain continuity despite staff turnover. (5.1.3)
- Update indicators when the project environment changes and define explicit objectives and corresponding indicators for any newly introduced components, particularly when additional funding is allocated, to provide clear guidance for implementation, monitoring and evaluation. (4.2, 5.1.1, 5.1.3, 5.1.4))
- Apply all Capacity WORKS tools consistently throughout the entire project cycle—not only during planning—to strengthen adaptive management, maintain continuity, and reduce information loss caused by staff turnover. (4.2, 5.1.1, 5.1.3)
- Prepare the full set of required documents (as per PTB's checklist) in advance and ensure they are complete and available at the kick-off meeting with the evaluation team, enabling a prompt and efficient start of the evaluation. (4.2)

### Recommendations to the International Cooperation Department (Group Q.3)

- Introduce a standardised and well-structured filing system from the outset of each project, including clear naming conventions and folder structures, to ensure smooth handovers and facilitate easy access to essential information. (4.2)
- Standardise the format of expert reports and require that they are written in English, including both an assessment of progress and concrete recommendations to the project team, to enhance transparency, usability and continuous improvement of project activities. (4.2)

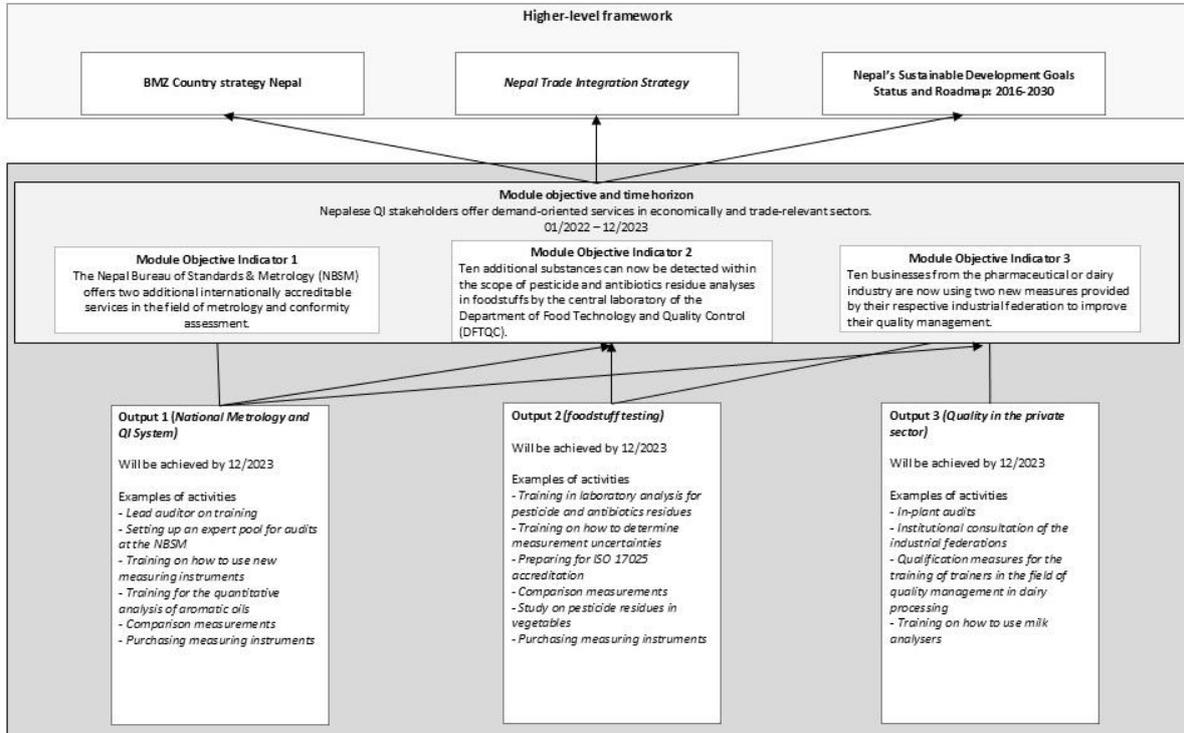
### Recommendations to the evaluation unit of Working Group Q.01

- Maintain the practice of assigning an evaluation team consisting of a lead evaluator with strong methodological expertise and a technical evaluator with sector-specific knowledge in metrology or related fields as this combination strengthens the validity and practical relevance of evaluation results. (2)
- Consider streamlining the OECD-DAC assessment dimensions by reducing overlaps between relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact, as these boundaries can be difficult to distinguish in practice. (5)
- Reduce the complexity of the current instructions to avoid confusion and consider introducing a concise best-practice document instead to provide clearer guidance and practical orientation. (all)

## **8. Annexes to the evaluation report**

1. Intervention logic
2. Interview schedule of data acquisition including list of contact persons
3. Interview guidelines

## Annex 1 – Intervention logic



**Annex 2 – 2. Interview schedule of data acquisition including list of contact persons**

Time	Organisation	Interview Partner	Title/Role
<b>Thursday, 04.09.2025</b>			
7:30 – 9:30	PTB	Mr Marius Metz	Project Coordinator
11:00 -12:00	PTB	Mr Uwe Miesner	Head of Section & Interim Project Coordinator
12:30 – 13:15	PTB	Ms Kathrin Schabelski & Ms Kira Wolf	Project Assistant Former Project Assistant
<b>Friday, 05.09.2025</b>			
10:00 – 12:15	PTB	Ms Poonam Thapa	National Senior Project Advisor
13:30 -14:30	PTB	Ms Franziska Wende	Former Project Coordinator
<b>Monday, 08.09.2025</b>			
9:30 -10:30	PTB	Dr. Christina Förg-Wimmer	International Senior Expert (Component 3 - Pharma + Soft Opening)
14:00 – 15:00	PTB	Prof. Dr. Ulrich Sack	International Senior Expert (Soft Opening)
15:30 – 16:30	PTB	Dr. Ulrike Lechner	International Senior Expert (Components 1, 2 + Sustainability Concept)
<b>Tuesday, 09.09.2025</b>			
9:00 – 10:00	PTB	Dr. Julia Micklinghoff	International Senior Expert (Component 3 and Sustainability Concept)
<b>Friday, 12.09.2025</b>			
13:30 – 14:00	PTB	Ms Anna Kalkuhl	Former Project Coordinator MEDEA Project
<b>Monday, 15.09.2025</b>			
11:30 – 12:30		Dr Richard Ellner	Short Term Expert Diary
<b>Tuesday, 16.09.2025</b>			
10:30 – 11:00	PTB	Ms Laura Donath	Project Coordinator M4DT-IC Project
<b>Friday, 19.09.2025</b>			
8:00 – 9:00		Mr Tawat Changpan	Short Term Expert on Pressure
9:30 – 10:30	GfL	Ms Stefanie Krüger Dr Günther Kempe	Short Term Experts on Food Testing
20:00-20:30		Mr. Alok Jain	Former NABL, Director Capacity Development
<b>Sunday, 21.09.2025</b>			
11:00-11:30	DFTQC	Mr. Mahipal Vaidya	DDG
11:30-12:30	DFTQC	Mr. Kamal Regmi	Senior Food Research Officer
12:30-13:00	DFTQC	Mr. Buddha Bahadur Kuwar	Food Research Officer
13:30-14:00	DFTQC	Mr. Sushan Niraula	Food Research Officer
14:30-15:00	DFTQC	Mr. Prakshit Raj Shakya	Food Research Officer
15:30-14:00	DPR	Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Rai	Director General
14:00-15:30	DPR	Mr. Saroj Chaudhari	Deputy Director General
	DPR, Natural Product Laboratory	Mr. Devi Bhandari	Senior Research Officer

Time	Organisation	Interview Partner	Title/Role
<b>Tuesday, 23.09.2025</b>			
11:00-13:00	QbD Pharma Pvt. Ltd	Mr. Summit Shrestha	Director
	QBD Pharma Pvt. Ltd.	Mr. Ananda Chaudhari	QA Manager
14:00-15:00	Ohm Pharma Pvt. Ltd.	Ms. Prashansa Shrestha	General Manager
	Ohm Pharma Pvt. Ltd	Ms. Deependra Birta	QA Manager
	Ohm Pharma Pvt. Ltd	Ms. Namrata Neupane	AQA Manager
<b>Monday 06.10.2025</b>			
7:15 – 7:45	KfW	Ms. Raisha Shakya	Health Sector Specialist
<b>Friday 10.10.2025</b>			
11:45 – 12:15	GIZ	Ms Paulina Campos	Country Representative
<b>Sunday, 12.10.2025</b>			
11:00-12:00	NBSM	Ms. Maunta Manandhar	Senior Metrologist
12:00-12:30	NBSM	Mr. Ujwal Adhikari	Metrologist
12:30-13:00	NBSM	Ms. Pabitra Koirala	Metrologist
13:30-14:00	NBSM	Ms. Roshan Gautam	Metrologist
14:30-15:00	NBSM	Mr. Bishal Jirel	Metrologist
15:00-15:30	NBSM	Mr. Prakash Basnet	Ast. Metrologist
<b>Thursday, 16.10.2025</b>			
9:30-10:30	NPHL	Dr. Ranjan Raj Bhatta	Director
	NPHL	Dr. Sumida Tiwari	Consultant Pathologist
	NPHL	Ms. Elisha Sapkota	Clinical Chemist
	DIA and Rajdhani Dairy	Raj Kumar Dahal	President of DIA and MD of Rajdhani Dairy.
	Dairy Industry Association	KP Bastola	Office Secretary
<b>Sunday, 19.10.2025</b>			
11:00-12:00	NBSM	Ms. Jyoti Joshi	Director General
	NBSM	Mr. Prabhat Kumar Singh	Deputy Director General
	NBSM	Mr. Tara Dutta Bhatta	Deputy Director General
15:00-16:00	NABIC	Mr. Bhushan Shah	Team Leader
<b>Tuesday, 28.10.2025</b>			
11:30-12:00	MOICS	Mr. Krishna Bahadur Raut	Secretary
10:30-11:00	MOICS	Mr. Bipin Acharya	Joint Secretary
12:00-12:15	MOICS	Ms. Suveksha Sapkota	Mechanical Engineer
14:00-14:30	Department of Drug Administration	Mr. Narayan Dhakal	Director General
15:00-16:00	National Certification and Management Pvt. Ltd	Mr. Janardhan Ghimire	Managing Director
	National Certification and Management Pvt. Ltd	Ms Ishuja Aryal	Microbiologist

Time	Organisation	Interview Partner	Title/Role
<b>Wednesday, 29.10.2025</b>			
11:00-12:00	Paropakar Maternity and Women's Hospital	Dr. Karishma Malla Vaidya	Consultant Pathologist
	Paropakar Maternity and Women's Hospital	Dr. Yashmin Shrestha	Consultant Pathologist
	Paropakar Maternity and Women's Hospital	Dr. Saurav Lal Joshi	Consultant Pathologist
13:00-13:30	Regional Food Safety and Quality Control Office, Biratnagar	Ms. Richa Humagain	Food Research Officer
15:00-16:00	APPON	Mr. Biplav Adhikari	President
<b>Thursday, 30.10.2025</b>			
9:45 – 10:30	German Embassy	Mr Benjamin Seidel	Head of Development Cooperation and Economics
<b>Sunday, 02.11.2025</b>			
20:00-20:30	Freelancer	Ms. Namuna Khatiwada	ToT Participant/Multiplier
	DDC	Mr. Nawaraj Adhikari	ToT Participant/Multiplier
<b>Monday, 03.11.2025</b>			
20:00-20:30	NBSM	Krishna Poudel	Director
<b>Saturday, 08.11.2025</b>			
9:00-9:15	Student, Master in Food and Nutrition Science, Padmakanya Campus	Ms. Paleshwong Gumaju Shresths	ToT Participant/Multiplier
10:00-10:15	Panchsheel Dairy	Ms. Sharmila Luitel	ToT Participant/Multiplier
11:00-11:15	The Soaltee Kathmandu	Ms. Sajina Maharjan	ToT Participant/Multiplier
11:30-11:45	Ananda Ban Hospital	Mr. Kanchan Gautam	ToT Participant/Multiplier
<b>Sunday, 09.11.2025</b>			
12:00-13:00	DFTQC	Dr. Matina Vaidya	Director General
3:00-4:00	DFTQC	Shivsagar Chaudhary	Senior Food Research Officer

In some cases, further exchange by phone and email took place after the interviews.

## Annex 3 – Interview Guidelines

### 1. Introduction

Brief explanation of the evaluation purpose and the procedure

### 2. Background of the interviewee

- Would you please briefly describe your area of work and your involvement in the project?

### 3. Relevance

- In your view, what challenges, needs and/or priorities in your institution or sector has the project addressed?
- To what extent have the project activities responded to national strategies or sector-specific priorities?
- Would you give examples of how the project supported your institution/your sector/target groups in meeting its goals?
- Were there any needs or target groups you feel were not sufficiently addressed? If yes, which?
- Have the needs of your institution/sector changed during the project phase? If yes, how has the project adapted its strategy?

### 3. Coherence

- Would you describe any collaboration or coordination that took place with other development partners and other PTB projects, such as MEDEA, SAARC or M4DT-IC?
- What synergies between the project and other ongoing interventions can you describe?
- To what extent have you been involved in activities on a regional level, e.g. Asia Pacific or South Asia?
- Can you provide examples of successful regional cooperation?
- What were the main learnings from these activities?
- What plans do you have to continue the regional cooperation?
- How has the project complemented and supported your own work or strategy? (principle of subsidiarity)?
- To what extent has the project's design been geared to the use of existing structures of partners/other donors for implementing the activities?

### 4. Effectiveness

- From your perspective, which project activities were particularly successful or useful? Why?
- What changes have you observed in your institution as a result of the project?
- How would you describe the contribution of the project to your daily work or services?
- Would you provide examples of how the results of the project have been applied in practice?
- Which new demand-oriented services do you offer now as result of this project?
- How often have these new services been demanded for by the target groups?
- Were there any activities or outputs that did not achieve their intended results? If so, why?
- Do you see any unexpected / negative results of the project? If yes, which ones?
- How would you describe the planning and implementation of the project activities?
- How did you participate in the project design?
- Did you have annual planning meetings with all partners and road maps?
- Has a monitoring system been put in place that enabled effective project management? Would you please describe how it worked.
- How have you perceived the quantity and quality of communication between the relevant stakeholders of the project? Can you give examples?

### 5. Efficiency

- How well have project resources (e.g. time, staff, budget) been used effectively in your opinion?
- How do you assess the progress of the project within the last 3.5 years?
- Were there delays or inefficiencies, and how were they addressed?
- Would you give an example of where the use of resources could have been improved?

## 6. Impact

- Looking at the bigger picture, what contributions can the project realistically make to overarching development results like competitiveness, diversification, better market access, consumer protection, and economic development – among others?
- Would you share an example of a longer-term change that you associate with the project?
- How has your institution, sector, or the broader system benefited?
- Are there any unintended effects—positive or negative—you would like to highlight?
- How would you compare your present situation with a hypothetical one without the project?

## 7. Sustainability

- What measures have been taken to ensure that the results of the project will continue beyond its end?
- How was the phase-out of the project communicated and organised?
- Which resources and capacities does your institution have to maintain the improvements made?
- Would you give an example of how knowledge or practices from the project are being continued or institutionalised?
- What would still be needed to ensure sustainability in the medium to long term?
- What are the major risks to sustainability from your point of view?
  - What potential lessons can be drawn from the approach for future projects?

## 8. Specific Evaluation Question

Was the “soft-opening“ approach developed by the project a successful measure to efficiently and effectively prepare an upcoming project in a new sector? Under what circumstances is such an approach suitable for other future projects?

- How would you describe the transition to the new project and the gradual start of its activities?
- What exactly have you done differently to a traditional project opening?
- What worked well in this approach, and what could have been improved?
- Would you recommend this approach for future similar interventions? Why or why not?

## 9. Lessons learnt, conclusions, recommendations

- What are your personal lessons learnt and conclusions from the experiences with the project and its implementation?
- What lessons would you draw for improving the closure of future projects?
- What would you have done differently if you were back in 2022?
- What are recommendations for the new project or similar projects?

**Editor**

**International Cooperation**

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**Image**

**Lead Evaluator  
Responsible  
Date**

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