

Terms of Reference

Research Assistance to the independent Evaluation Office of UNDP

1. Background

The independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducts thematic, programmatic and country-level evaluations to assess contributions made by UNDP to development at the global, regional and country levels. Currently the Evaluation Office is launching a series of thematic evaluations and is interested to hire three research assistants to support these efforts. These assignments will last for 6 months, with possible extensions. They will entail supporting the evaluation teams in the collection and analysis of data, and evaluation report drafting. These will be desk-based consulting assignments, working from the UNDP Evaluation Office in New York City.

The independent Evaluation Office of UNDP is currently working on the following evaluations, which the research assistants will be hired to support:

1. The impact of GEF and UNDP support to protected areas management (phase 2).
2. The impact of UNDP support to mine action
3. The contribution of UNDP human development reports (HDRs)
4. The role of UNDP in supporting national achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
5. The joint GEF/UNDP Small Grants programme
6. An assessment of impacts of the Every Drop Matters programme
7. Assessment of Development Results in specific UNDP country programmes

For additional information on evaluations and other activities undertaken by the Evaluation Office, please go to: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/>

2. Functions and responsibilities

The extent of work on each of the identified evaluations will vary, and so will the number of evaluations that each research assistant is assigned. In general, the responsibility of each research assistant will be to support the evaluation managers with data collection and analysis. The consultants will work under the guidance of the respective managers for each evaluation assigned. A Research Coordinator will provide overall management and administrative aspects relating to the assignment.

3. Tasks

In supporting the preparation of these thematic evaluations, the Research Assistant will undertake the following tasks under the guidance of the respective evaluation manager:

- Collect, organize and conduct analyses of relevant documentation required to prepare inception reports, terms of reference, and the context chapters of evaluation reports.
- Identify and abstract from the wider literature on the evaluation subjects for use as background by the evaluation teams, and manage this research database.

- Set up dedicated evaluation websites and dropbox sites for sharing data, and maintain these sites during the evaluations.
- Assist in the development and implementation of surveys and other fact finding methodologies as and when established in the evaluations.
- Assist in the tracking of stakeholder comments to draft evaluation reports.

In performing the above tasks, the Research Assistants will adhere to the evaluation guidelines established by the Evaluation Office, including the *UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results*, the *Research Handbook for the ADRs*, and other guidance documents produced and made available by the Evaluation Office.

4. Qualifications

The qualified candidate must have:

- A master's degree in social or political science, or a master's degree in a related discipline.
- Strong analytical skills and the ability to quickly grasp and synthesize information.
- The ability to work interactively with a team, often responding to varying requests under pressure.
- Good mastery of information technology required for the organized presentation of information, including quantitative information and graphical presentations, and for organizing information and materials on the internal website.
- Excellent drafting skills in English.
- Minimum of one year's experience in a similar research position.

Any of the following will be a distinct advantage:

- Previous experience with and knowledge of UNDP or other UNDG agencies.
- Previous research experience in support of evaluations that are comparable to those conducted by the Evaluation Office.
- Specific technical knowledge related to the thematic evaluations to be supported (e.g. biodiversity, water resources, humanitarian demining, development economics, etc.)
- Working knowledge of other UN languages, especially French and Spanish.

5. Accountability and duration

The Research Coordinator will have overall supervision responsibility, with the evaluation managers providing day to day supervision of substantive work.

The contracts for the research assistants will be initially for 6 months from the date of contract, with extensions possible based on Evaluation Office work load, and Research Assistant performance.

6. Payment

Each consultant will be paid upon satisfactory completion of assignments for every four weeks of work. The Research Coordinator of the Evaluation Office will certify all payments.