Umbrella Programme for Socio-Economic Development

Mid-Term Evaluation TOR

1. Background and context

The Umbrella Programme for Socio-Economic Development Project, launched in May 2019, is designed to support mainstreaming social and economic development in the national policies in Saudi Arabia. The ultimate programme objective is to strengthen evidence-based policy planning and decision-making to support the realization of Saudi Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The review of the first year of the project implementation identified a need for additional programme efforts to enable the project achieves its objectives. As a result, UNDP and MOEP have agreed to revise the Umbrella Programme for Socio-Economic Development Project to increase policy engagement, reinforce capacity development and strengthen monitoring and evaluation. The revised project will enable more coherent and structured support to policy-making, policy planning and assessment. The amendment takes into account the needs for technical support of the various deputyships in MOEP as well as the support needed to strengthen national and sub-national partners' engagement in socio-economic policy-making. The amended programme framework will cover the following main areas:

•   Strengthening MOEP capacity for policy-making, policy analysis and evaluation
•   SDGs monitoring and reporting
•   Support to regional development planning
•   Producing the National Human Development Report
•   Assessing the impacts of the COVID-19 on the Saudi economy

Basic project information can also be included in table format as follows:

PROJECT/OUTCOME INFORMATION		
Project/outcome title	Umbrella Programme for Socio-Economic Development	
Atlas ID	SAU10- 00113712	
Corporate outcome and output	**Outcome 1: Improved knowledge-based equitable and sustainable development underpinned by innovation and improved infrastructure.**	
Country	Saudi Arabia	
Region	RBAS	
Date project document signed	9 May, 2019	
Project dates	**Start**	**Planned end**
	1 May, 2019	31 December 2024
Project budget	**$ 12,000,000**	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	3,773,458	
Funding source	**Government**	
Implementing party[1]	**Ministry of Economy and Planning**	

2. Evaluation purpose, scope and objectives

This is a mandatory mid-term evaluation planned half-way through the life cycle of the project and triggered by a substantial budget revision with an increased budget and new components in terms of outputs of the project. As such, it was deemed crucial to undertake this evaluation to ensure the project is on track to meet its targets and deliver the services expected with the impacts its due to demonstrate.

The project has been ongoing since May 2019 and has, thus far, never been evaluated. Drastic changes have been taking place in the country and the project has had to adapt to the changes over recent years, this included changes in Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Project staff, resulting in changing project directions. To ensure the project has delivered its intended objectives thus far and to provide recommendations for the way forward, it is imperative to conduct a mid-term evaluation and ensure the project delivery is on track. This evaluation will benefit the Ministry of Economy and Planning in their planning for future years to meet Saudi Vision 2030 and highlight the impacts this project has had on the economy sector over the past few years.

This evaluation will measure the performance in the past two years of the project in terms of delivering on:
1. Strengthening MOEP capacity for policy-making, policy analysis and evaluation
2. SDGs monitoring and reporting
3. Support to regional development planning
4. Producing the National Human Development Report
5. Assessing the impacts of the COVID-19 on the Saudi economy

The evaluation will also address the primary issues of concern to the national partners, namely MEOP and provide recommendations as to the best course of action that needs to be taken to ensure the achievements of intended results.

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[1] This is the entity that has overall responsibility for implementation of the project (award), effective use of resources and delivery of outputs in the signed project document and workplan.

This evaluation will also provide recommendations as to how the project will, in the future, mainstream gender in development efforts, and, wherever possible, also consider disability issues and the rights-based approach

3. Evaluation criteria and key guiding questions

Evaluation questions define the information that the evaluation will generate. To assess the impact of this project in the grand scheme of Outcomes, the following are guiding and crucial, but in no way exclusive, questions the evaluation must answer to provide the information needed in order to make decisions, take actions or increase knowledge.

Questions are grouped according to the four or five OECD-DAC evaluation criteria: (a) relevance; (b) coherence; (c) effectiveness; (d) efficiency; and (e) sustainability.

Relevance/ Coherence

- To what extent is the project in line with national development priorities, country programme outputs and outcomes, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the SDGs?
- To what extent does the project contribute to the theory of change for the relevant country programme outcome?
- To what extent were lessons learned from previous and other relevant projects considered in the design?
- To what extent were perspectives of men and women who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the attainment of stated results, considered during project design processes?
- To what extent does the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach?
- To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country?

Effectiveness
- To what extent did the project contribute to the country programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and national development priorities?
- To what extent were the project outputs achieved, considering men, women, and vulnerable groups?
- What factors have contributed to achieving, or not, intended country programme outputs and outcomes?
- To what extent has the UNDP partnership strategy been appropriate and effective?
- What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?
- In which areas does the project have the greatest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the project build on or expand these achievements?
- In which areas does the project have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome?
- What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project objectives?
- Are the project objectives and outputs clear, practical and feasible within its frame? Do they clearly address women, men and vulnerable groups?
- To what extent have different stakeholders been involved in project implementation?

- To what extent are project management and implementation participatory, and is this participation of men, women and vulnerable groups contributing towards achievement of the project objectives?
- To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents (men, women, other groups) and changing partner priorities?
- To what extent has the project contributed to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the realization of human rights?

Efficiency

- To what extent was the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?
- To what extent were resources used to address inequalities in general, and gender issues in particular?
- To what extent have the UNDP project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?
- To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, male and female staff, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
- To what extent have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost-effective?
- To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?
- To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP ensure effective and efficient project management?

Sustainability

- Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs affecting women, men and vulnerable groups?
- To what extent will targeted men, women and vulnerable people benefit from the project interventions in the long-term?
- To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?
- Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?
- Do the legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes within which the project operates pose risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project benefits?
- To what extent did UNDP actions pose an environmental threat to the sustainability of project outputs, possibly affecting project beneficiaries (men and women) in a negative way? What is the chance that the level of stakeholder ownership will be sufficient to allow for the project benefits to be sustained?
- To what extent do mechanisms, procedures and policies exist to allow primary stakeholders to carry forward the results attained on gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights and human development?
- To what extent do stakeholders (men, women, vulnerable groups) support the project's long-term objectives?
- To what extent are lessons learned documented by the project team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the project?
- To what extent do UNDP interventions have well-designed and well-planned exit strategies which include a gender dimension?
- What could be done to strengthen exit strategies and sustainability in order to support female and male project beneficiaries as well as marginalized groups?

Evaluation questions on cross-cutting issues

Human rights

- To what extent have poor, indigenous and physically challenged, women, men and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the work of UNDP in the country?

Gender equality
All evaluation criteria and evaluation questions applied need to be checked to see if there are any further gender dimensions attached to them, in addition to the stated gender equality questions.

- To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?
- Is the gender marker assigned to this project representative of reality?
- To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Did any unintended effects emerge for women, men or vulnerable groups?

Disability

- Were persons with disabilities consulted and meaningfully involved in programme planning and implementation?
- What proportion of the beneficiaries of a programme were persons with disabilities?
- What barriers did persons with disabilities face?
- Was a twin-track approach adopted? [2]

4. Methodology

This TOR **suggests** an overall approach and method for conducting the evaluation, as well as data sources and tools that will likely yield the most reliable and valid answers to the evaluation questions within the limits of resources. However, final decisions about the specific design and methods for the evaluation should emerge from consultations with the programme unit, the evaluator and key stakeholders about what is appropriate and feasible to meet the evaluation purpose and objectives and answer the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. This will have to be reflected in the inception report prior to starting the evaluation mission.

Evaluation should employ a combination of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and instruments. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the evaluation managers, implementing partners and male and female direct beneficiaries. Suggested methodological tools and approaches may include:

- **Document review.** This would include a review of all relevant documentation, inter alia
  - Project document (contribution agreement).

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[2] The twin-track approach combines mainstream programmes and projects that are inclusive of persons with disabilities as well as programmes and projects that are *targeted* towards persons with disabilities. It is an essential element of any strategy that seeks to mainstream disability inclusion successfully. Also, see chapter 9 of the Technical Notes. Entity Accountability Framework. United Nations Disability and Inclusion Strategy: https://www.un.org/en/disabilitystrategy/resources

- o Theory of change and results framework.
- o Programme and project quality assurance reports.
- o Annual workplans.
- o Activity designs.
- o Consolidated quarterly and annual reports.
- o Results-oriented monitoring report.
- o Highlights of project board meetings.
- o Technical/financial monitoring reports.
- **Interviews and meetings** with key stakeholders (men and women) such as key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, United Nations country team (UNCT) members and implementing partners:
  - o **Semi-structured interviews,** based on questions designed for different stakeholders based on evaluation questions around relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.
  - o Key informant and **focus group discussions** with men and women, beneficiaries and stakeholders.
  - o All interviews with men and women should be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity. The final evaluation report should not assign specific comments to individuals.
- **Surveys and questionnaires** including male and female participants in development programmes, UNCT members and/or surveys and questionnaires to other stakeholders at strategic and programmatic levels.
- **Field visits** and on-site validation of key tangible outputs and interventions.
- **Other methods** such as outcome mapping, observational visits, group discussions, etc.
- **Data review and analysis** of monitoring and other data sources and methods. To ensure maximum validity, reliability of data (quality) and promote use, the evaluation team will ensure triangulation of the various data sources.
- **Gender and human rights lens**. All evaluation products need to address gender, disability, and human right issues.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation should be clearly outlined in the inception report and fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, key stakeholders and the evaluators.

5. Evaluation products (deliverables)

The TOR should clearly outline the outputs UNDP expects from the evaluation team, with a detailed timeline and schedule for completion of the evaluation products. Where relevant, the TOR should also detail the length of specific products (number of pages). These products include:

- **Evaluation inception report (10-15 pages).** The inception report should be carried out following and based on preliminary discussions with UNDP after the desk review and should be produced before the evaluation starts (before any formal evaluation interviews, survey distribution or field visits) and prior to the country visit in the case of international evaluators.
- **Evaluation debriefings.** Immediately following an evaluation, UNDP may ask for a preliminary debriefing and findings.
- **Draft evaluation report (within an agreed length).** A length of 40 to 60 pages including executive summary is suggested.
- **Evaluation report audit trail.** The programme unit and key stakeholders in the evaluation should review the draft evaluation report and provide an amalgamated set of comments to the evaluator within an agreed period of time, as outlined in these guidelines. Comments and

changes by the evaluator in response to the draft report should be retained by the evaluator to show how they have addressed comments.
- **Final evaluation report.**
- **Presentations to stakeholders and/ or evaluation reference group** (if required).
- **Evaluation brief and other knowledge products** or participation in knowledge-sharing events, if relevant to maximise use.

6. Evaluation team composition and required competencies

This section details the specific skills, competencies and characteristics required of the evaluator / individual evaluators in the evaluation team, and the expected structure and composition of the evaluation team, including roles and responsibilities of team members. This may include:

- **Required qualifications:** Advanced degree in relevant field, a minimum of ten years' experience in conducting/ managing evaluations, relevant knowledge, and specific country/regional experience.
- **Technical competencies:** team leadership skills and experience, technical knowledge in UNDP thematic areas, with specifics depending on the focus of the evaluation, data analysis and report writing etc.
- **Technical knowledge and experience:** Gender expertise/competencies in the evaluation a strong plus. some knowledge and/or experience of disability inclusion. Technical knowledge and experience in other cross-cutting areas such equality, disability issues, rights-based approach, and capacity development.
- **Language skills required:** Fluent English speaking, writing, and reading skills, Arabic is an asset

The provision of evidence will be expected to support claims of knowledge, skills and experience to the above in terms of:
- resumes,
- work samples,
- references

The Evaluator is to clearly state independence from any organizations that have been involved in designing, executing, or advising any aspect of the intervention that is the subject of the evaluation.[3]

7. Evaluation ethics

Explicit statement that evaluations in UNDP will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'.[4]

"This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partners."

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[3] For this reason, UNDP staff members based in other country offices, regional centres and headquarters units should not be part of the evaluation team.
[4] UNEG, 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation', 2020. Access at: http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866

8. Implementation arrangements

In order to clarify expectations, eliminate ambiguities, and facilitate an efficient and effective evaluation process, the following is the organization and management structure for the evaluation as well as the definition of the roles, key responsibilities and lines of authority of all parties involved in the evaluation process.

1. The evaluation commissioner: Accountable for the quality and approval of final terms of reference (TORs), final evaluation reports and management responses before final submission to the ERC. This is traditionally the head of office, in the case the Resident Representative of UNDP KSA Country Office.

2. The evaluation manager: Lead the evaluation process and participate in all of its stages - evaluability assessment, preparation, implementation, management and use. In this case it is the M&E Officer

3. The programme manager: Support the establishment of the evaluation reference group with key project partners where needed and participate in calls/meetings on request. Provide inputs/ advice to the evaluation manager on the detail and scope of the TOR for the evaluation and how the findings will be used. Provide the evaluation manager with all required data (e.g. relevant monitoring data) and documentation (reports, minutes, reviews, studies, etc.), contacts/ stakeholder list etc.

4. The evaluation partner: Participate in the review of key evaluation deliverables, including the TOR, inception report, and successive versions of the draft evaluation report. Ensure that data and documentation in general, but in particular relating to gender equality and women's empowerment and other cross-cutting issues, are made available to the evaluation manager

5. The independent evaluator: Fulfil the contractual arrangements under the TOR. Develop the evaluation inception report, including an evaluation matrix and a gender responsive methodology, in line with the TOR, UNEG norms and standards and ethical guidelines. Conduct data collection and field visits according to the TOR and inception report. Produce draft reports adhering to UNDP evaluation templates, and brief the evaluation manager, programme/ project managers and stakeholders on the progress and key findings and recommendations. Consider gender equality and women's empowerment and other cross-cutting issues, check if all and respective evaluation questions are answered, and relevant data, disaggregated by sex, is presented, analysed and interpreted. Finalize the evaluation report, incorporating comments and questions from the feedback/audit trail. Record own feedback in the audit trail

9. Evaluation products (deliverables)

The consultant will be expected to deliver the following:

1. Evaluation inception report (10-15 pages). The inception report should be carried out following and based on preliminary discussions with UNDP after the desk review and should be produced before the evaluation starts (before any formal evaluation interviews, survey distribution or field visits) and prior to the country visit in the case of international evaluators.

2. Evaluation findings debriefings. Immediately following an evaluation, UNDP may ask for a preliminary debriefing and findings.

3. Draft evaluation report (60 pages including executive summary). The programme unit and key stakeholders in the evaluation should review the draft evaluation report and provide a set of comments to the evaluator within an agreed period of time, addressing the content required (as agreed in the TOR and inception report) and quality criteria as outlined in the evaluation guidelines.

4. Evaluation report audit trail. Comments and changes by the evaluator in response to the draft report should be retained by the evaluator to show how he/she has addressed comments.

5. Final evaluation report:
   a. Executive summary;
   b. Introduction, including description of the work conducted;
   c. Findings and conclusions;
   d. Recommendations, including, as applicable, a revised work plan to address the pending tasks and eventual corrective action as well as an improved system for measuring the impact of the project in terms of achieved energy savings;
   e. Annexes providing a brief summary of the documents reviewed and persons interviewed with the description of the key content / conclusions drawn and any other relevant materials.
6. Validation workshop for presentations to stakeholders
7. Evaluation brief and other knowledge products or participation in knowledge-sharing events, if relevant.
8. The consultant should present three hard copies of the report as well as an electronic copy. The draft final report should be submitted no later than three weeks after the end of the on-site mission and the final report within two weeks from receiving the comments of the project management and UNDP on the draft reports

Standard templates that need to be followed are provided in the Annexes section. It is expected that the evaluator will follow the UNDP evaluation guidelines and UNEG quality check list and ensure all the quality criteria are met in the evaluation report.

In line with UNDP's financial regulations, when determined by the Country Office and/or the consultant that a deliverable or service cannot be satisfactory completed due to impact of COVID-19 and limitations to the evaluation, that deliverable or service will not be paid. Due to the current COVID-19 situation and its implications, a partial payment may be considered if the consultant invested time towards the deliverable but was unable to complete to circumstances beyond his/her/their control.

10. **Time frame for the evaluation process**

Working day allocation and schedule

ACTIVITY	ESTIMATED # OF DAYS	DATE OF COMPLETION	PLACE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Phase One: Desk review and inception report				
Meeting briefing with UNDP (programme managers and project staff as needed)	-	At the time of contract signing	UNDP or remote	Evaluation manager and commissioner
Sharing of the relevant documentation with the evaluation team	-	At the time of contract signing	Via email	Evaluation manager and commissioner
Desk review, Evaluation design, methodology and updated workplan including the list of stakeholders to be interviewed	7 days	Within two weeks of contract signing	Home- based	Evaluation Team
Submission of the inception report (15 pages maximum)	-	Within two weeks of contract signing		Evaluation team
Comments and approval of inception report	-	Within one week of submission of the inception report	UNDP	Evaluation manager
Phase Two: Data-collection mission				
Consultations and field visits, in-depth interviews, and focus groups	10 days	Within four weeks of contract signing	In country With field visits	UNDP to organize with local project partners, project staff, local authorities, NGOs, etc.
Debriefing to UNDP and key stakeholders	1 day		In country	Evaluation team
Phase Three: Evaluation report writing				
Preparation of draft evaluation report (50 pages maximum excluding annexes), executive summary (4-5 pages)	7 days	Within three weeks of the completion of the field mission	Home- based	Evaluation team
Draft report submission	-			Evaluation draft team
Consolidated UNDP and stakeholder comments to the draft report	-	Within two weeks of submission of the draft evaluation report	UNDP	Evaluation manager and evaluation reference group
Debriefing with UNDP	1 day	Within one week of receipt of comments	Remotely UNDP	UNDP, evaluation reference group, stakeholder, and evaluation team
Finalization of the evaluation report incorporating additions and comments provided by project staff and UNDP country office	4 days	Within one week of final debriefing	Home- based	Evaluation team
Submission of the final evaluation report to UNDP country office (50 pages maximum excluding executive summary and annexes)	-	Within one week of final debriefing	Home- based	Evaluation team
Estimated total days for the evaluation	**30**			

11. Application submission process and criteria for selection

As required by the programme unit.

12. TOR annexes

Annexes can be used to provide additional detail about evaluation background and requirements to facilitate the work of evaluators. Some examples include:

- **Intervention results framework and theory of change.** Provides more detailed information on the intervention being evaluated.
- **Key stakeholders and partners.** A list of key stakeholders and other individuals who should be consulted, together with an indication of their affiliation and relevance for the evaluation and their contact information. This annex can also suggest sites to be visited.
- **Documents to be consulted.** A list of important documents and web pages that the evaluators should read at the outset of the evaluation and before finalizing the evaluation design and inception report. This should be limited to the critical information that the evaluation team needs. Data sources and documents may include:

  - Relevant national strategy documents.
  - Strategic and other planning documents (e.g., programme and project documents).
  - Monitoring plans and indicators.
  - Partnership arrangements (e.g., agreements of cooperation with governments or partners).
  - Previous evaluations and assessments.
  - UNDP evaluation policy, UNEG norms and standards and other policy documents.

- **Evaluation matrix** (suggested as a deliverable to be included in the inception report). The evaluation matrix is a tool that evaluators create as a map and reference in planning and conducting an evaluation. It also serves as a useful tool for summarizing and visually presenting the evaluation design and methodology for discussions with stakeholders. It details evaluation questions that the evaluation will answer, data sources, data collection and analysis tools or methods appropriate for each data source, and the standard or measure by which each question will be evaluated. Table 5 provides a sample evaluation matrix template.

Table 1. Sample evaluation matrix

Relevant evaluation criteria	Key questions	Specific sub-questions	Data sources	Data collection methods/ tools	Indicators/ success standards	Methods for data analysis

- **Schedule of tasks, milestones, and deliverables.** Based on the time frame specified in the TOR, the evaluators present the detailed schedule.
- **Required format for the evaluation report.** The final report must include, but not necessarily be limited to, the elements outlined in the template for evaluation reports (see annex 4 below).
- **Dispute and wrongdoing resolution process and contact details** (annex 3)
- **Pledge of ethical conduct in evaluation.** UNDP programme units should request each member of the evaluation team to read carefully, understand and sign the 'Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evaluation of the United Nations system'.[5]

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[5]http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866#:~:text=The%20UNEG%20Ethical%20Guidelines%20for%20Evaluation%20were%20first%20published%20in%202008.&text=This%20document%20aims%20to%20support,day%20to%20day%20evaluation%20practice.