

## UNDEF EVALUATION Consultancy Terms of Reference

### Background

1. UNDEF was established by the UN Secretary-General in 2005 as a United Nations General Trust Fund to support democratization efforts around the world. UNDEF supports projects that strengthen the voice of civil society, promote human rights, and encourage the participation of all groups in democratic processes.  

The large majority of UNDEF funds go to local civil society organizations -- both in the transition and consolidation phases of democratization. In this way, UNDEF plays a novel and unique role in complementing the UN's traditional work -- the work with Governments -- to strengthen democratic governance around the world. UNDEF subsists entirely on voluntary contributions from Governments; in 2013, it surpassed 150 million dollars in contributions and now counts more than 40 countries as donors, including many middle- and low-income States in Africa, Asia and Latin America.
2. UNDEF projects are two years long and fall under one or more of seven main areas; Community Activism, Rule of Law and Human Rights, Tools for Knowledge, Women's Empowerment, Youth Engagement, Media and Freedom of Information, Strengthening Civil Society Capacity for Interaction with Government. UNDEF grants range from US\$100,000 to US\$300,000. Project proposals are subject to a highly rigorous and competitive selection process, as UNDEF receives an average of about 2,000-3,000 proposals a year and only some 50-60 are selected. In nine Rounds of Funding so far, UNDEF has supported some 600 projects in more than 100 countries.
3. As a basis for knowledge-sharing, lessons learned, improved project selection and management, and transparency, UNDEF contracted the commercial evaluator Transtec to conduct project evaluations. As of now, Transtec has conducted over 150 post-project evaluations of Round 2 to 6. Its contract is due to end in July 2016. Transtec evaluations are, in general, project specific and do not provide an overarching evaluation of the overall impact and effectiveness of UNDEF as a UN fund.
4. As a part of the agreement between Sida and UNDEF an independent external evaluation should take place during 2016 focusing on the results achieved and effectiveness of the Fund.
5. In order to undertake this evaluation, UNDEF is looking for two international Consultants to carry out the evaluation of the Fund in line with the objectives and conditions as specified below.

### Objective

6. The overall objective of the Consultants' work is to provide an independent external evaluation of UNDEF focusing on results achieved and the effectiveness of the Fund. Furthermore, the evaluation should provide information on the progression and the comparative advantages of the Fund as a democracy support actor over the past 10 years. The evaluation should provide the following:

- An assessment of the quality and performance of UNDEF projects and UNDEF's role in refining their design and managing them, taking into account the applicable UN policies, rules and regulations.
- An assessment of the process for selection of projects – methodology and results and possible concerns.
- An assessment of how and to what extent the pre-established selection criteria were used and the extent to which transparency, accountability and independence were ensured.
- An assessment of UNDEF's approach to monitoring and evaluation, specifically in relation to sustainability of the Fund's knowledge and expertise.
- An account of lessons learned and best practices that could inform UNDEF future programme funding and improve the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of its activities.

## **Methodology**

7. The evaluation exercise will consist of home-based work and interaction with the UNDEF Secretariat, UNDEF Board members, UNDEF's contracted commercial evaluators Transtec, as well as UNDEF grantees and project beneficiaries. It will include desk reviews as well as field/project-site visits. The evaluation will cover activities of UNDEF and its projects during the period 2009-2014 as more recent Rounds have not yield any accomplishments yet.
8. The evaluation should include a desk survey across a sample of at least 100 UNDEF projects funded through Rounds 3 to 8. The evaluation should also include five to 10 field visits covering at least 20 projects.
9. The evaluation should include interviews with important UNDEF stakeholders, taking into account suggestions from UNDEF.
10. The evaluation should be analytical in nature and put forward specific recommendations divided into separate categories and in order of priority. It should also be results-based and examine the results achieved in relation to the framework developed in the UNDEF/Sida Programme Document.
11. Documentation available for review includes project documents, mid-term reports, milestone reports, financial reports and third party evaluations (if conducted). They can be found on the UNDEF database to which the Consultants will be given access. The Consultants will also have access to all UNDEF programming, procedural and policy documents.
12. The evaluation will not re-evaluate individual projects. However the evaluation will take stock of the existing post-project evaluations (Transtec and non-commercial), consolidate and draw conclusions from already published individual evaluations including their conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations.

13. Evaluation questions will also highlight the role of UNDEF's including the degree of oversight by UNDEF during project implementation, UNDEF flexibility on changes in project implementation, the quality of communication, and advice during project design.
14. The criteria for the selection of five to 10 field/project-site visits should ensure a representative selection in terms of geography; funding and level of success (e.g. cover both high and low performing projects).
15. The evaluation will be undertaken in accordance with the OECD criteria of evaluation and the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, which are available here:  
<http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/548>

## Outputs

16. The Consultant will submit an end of evaluation report no longer than 40 pages including any tables and graphs but excluding annexes, with an executive summary of two-three pages. The cover letter of the evaluation report must be signed by the evaluator.

The report will clearly:

- Analyze the **challenges** and the lessons learned from managing projects by the implementing agencies and by UNDEF:
- Highlight the **lessons learnt** from results achieved by UNDEF projects, the process followed, the strategy applied and provide recommendations
- Analyze the **overall impact** of UNDEF projects in addressing gender and targeting marginalized groups,
- Highlight **good practices, success stories and instructive anecdotal information**
- Analyze the **added value of UNDEF funding**

The final report should focus on answering fundamental questions such as:

- What worked well and should continue?
- What did not work well but should be strengthened?
- What did not work well and should discontinue?
- What are the qualitative and quantitative achievements that summarize, in concrete terms, what UNDEF has accomplished?
- How are budgets and work plans used to ensure cost effectiveness and value for money?
- What are the categories of specific challenges ahead?
- What are recommended next steps, by category?

17. The evaluation should cover the following elements:

- An assessment of the **relevance** of UNDEF  
The degree to which UNDEF's establishment was justified and appropriate in relation to the need and situation on the national/regional/global level in 2005 and in 2016. The degree to which projects financed by UNDEF were relevant and appropriate at the time they were approved and in 2016.

- An assessment of the **effectiveness** of UNDEF  
The extent to which the UNDEF's stated objectives are achieved or the likelihood that they will be achieved for all project types. UNDEF's effectiveness should be assessed in accordance with the activities, outputs and outcomes planned in its projects as well as those detailed in the results framework enclosed in the UNDEF Programme Document. Factors contributing to and detracting from the results are to be included in the evaluation report.
- An assessment of the **efficiency** of UNDEF  
This requires an analysis and the evaluation of the overall performance of the Fund, of its outcomes, outputs in relation to the inputs, the financial management and of its projects.
- An assessment of the **sustainability** of UNDEF  
The extent to which benefits or results from UNDEF projects will continue or are likely to continue after UNDEF's support has come to an end (i.e. the lasting results, changes in behavior, possible follow-up projects) including an examination of the design and implementation of projects, whether this impacted on project results and if they can be sustained beyond project completion.
- An assessment of the **impact** that UNDEF has achieved and is likely to achieve in the future as a whole. This requires measuring the positive and negative effects produced or caused by UNDEF project on society or parts thereof while taking into account UNDEF'S uniqueness.
- An assessment of UNDEF's **governance structure** in relation to the mandate of UNDEF, and whether the set-up of UNDEF is the most appropriate for achieving cost-effective results.

18. The evaluation report shall follow the following structure and contain the following elements:

- a) General Information on the Fund and its projects (i.e. background, programme objective and components)
- b) Evaluation process and methodology
- c) Evaluation by key criteria (see above)
  - i. relevance
  - ii. effectiveness
  - iii. efficiency
  - iv. sustainability
  - v. impact
- d) Additional considerations (if any)
- e) Evaluation conclusions and recommendations

### **Duties and responsibilities**

19. In addition to delivering the outputs described above, the Senior Consultant will be responsible for the overall organization of the work, supervision and guidance of the second Consultant and final submission and quality control of the evaluation report. The role of the second Consultant will be to support the Senior Consultant in his/her [their] tasks in particular in regards to research, data collection and analysis.

## **Timeline**

20. The evaluation will start in the second quarter of 2016. It should be completed within six months. The total number of person days for both Consultants should not exceed 150 days. The final report should be submitted to UNDEF before 01 December 2016.
21. Upon selection the Senior Consultant will submit to UNDEF a Launch Note which will provide further detail of how the team intends to implement evaluation, guided by the methodology above. This note will provide a detailed timeline for the work. The Launch Note will also specify the number of days required for reviewing the projects, as well as the projected timeline for project visits.
22. The consultants will also submit a mid-term progress report to UNDEF no longer than 10 summarizing work achieved to date, updating to the timeline and highlighting concerns (if any).

## **Required Skills and Experience**

### Education (both Consultants):

- Masters or equivalent in relevant field of political or social science, development studies, human rights and democracy promotion or comparable relevant field.

### Experience (**Senior Consultant**):

- At least 10 years of directly relevant professional experience in project management, results-based management, monitoring and evaluation, including monitoring technical cooperation and development activities and projects.
- A minimum of 10 years' experience at international level in managing or conducting project evaluations with particular emphasis on those related to democracy support, governance, peace-building or human rights is required.
- At least five successfully completed evaluations in the area mentioned above
- A track record of working in developing countries, conducting evaluations at country/field level
- In-depth knowledge of global and regional democracy support organizations.

### Experience (**Consultant**):

- At least 7 years of directly relevant professional experience in project management, results-based management, monitoring and evaluation, including monitoring technical cooperation and development activities and projects.
- A minimum of 5 years' experience at international level in conducting or contributing to project evaluations with particular emphasis on those related to democracy support, governance, peace-building or human rights is required.
- A track record of working in developing countries, conducting evaluations at country/field level
- In-depth knowledge of global and regional democracy support organizations.

### Knowledge (both Consultants):

- Strong knowledge of democracy, governance, human rights and justice sector / development would be an asset including related thematic issues such as rights and democratic dialogue; freedom of expression and access to information; civil society capacity development; rule of law and justice systems strengthening, including judicial reform & access to justice; transparency, integrity and anti-corruption, support for legislative processes & public institutions, prevention of violence & promoting reconciliation; anti-discrimination and the inclusion of marginalized and excluded groups
- Familiarity with the UN evaluation policy, norms and standards; and
- Knowledge in the use of computers and office software packages and handling of web based monitoring systems.

Language:

- Fluency in both English and French
- Excellent oral and written English and for the Senior Consultant a proven publication record in English.

### **Application process**

Interested candidates can apply by submitting a UN Personal History Profile and a short cover note explaining why they are well suited to undertake the evaluation to [democracyfund@un.org](mailto:democracyfund@un.org) by

**Monday 15 February 2016**

To generate a PHP visit <https://inspira.un.org>

The terms and conditions governing the engagement of UN consultants, including fee and remuneration levels, are contained in document

[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=ST/AI/2013/4](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=ST/AI/2013/4)