

# United Nations Development Account

## Guidance Note on Terminal Evaluation of Joint Projects

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## SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS AND REQUIREMENTS

Phase	Requirements for all DA projects	Additional requirements for DA joint projects with USD 1+ million
Project design (project document development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>project document</b> should include, among others, the following elements, developed in consultation with the unit(s) responsible for results-based management, monitoring, and/or evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A theory of change*</li> <li>A results framework, presenting the project objective, outcomes (associated indicators of achievement and means of verification) and outputs, and the linkages between them</li> <li>A detailed monitoring plan, describing the process, mechanisms and tools for collecting the monitoring data against the indicators of achievement in the results framework</li> <li>The list of documents/information that will be developed and retained for use in the final report and the terminal evaluation, if selected.</li> </ul> <p><i>(See the DA project document guidelines)</i></p> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>team drafting the project document</b> should include an evaluation officer(s), programme management officer(s) and/or other staff responsible for results-based management and monitoring from the lead entity(ies) to advise on the project's theory of change and monitoring and evaluation plans.* <i>(Section 2.1)</i></li> <li>The <b>detailed monitoring plan</b> should describe the process, mechanisms, tools, and roles and responsibilities for collecting, consolidating and maintaining the monitoring data against the indicators of achievement <i>at the project level</i>, as agreed upon by all the jointly implementing entities. <i>(Section 2.1)</i></li> <li>The project document should include a <b>detailed tentative evaluation plan</b>, developed by the lead entity's(ies') evaluation unit(s), in consultation with the evaluation units of all the other jointly implementing entities, and including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>timeline</li> <li>target users and intended use</li> <li>arrangements for the management of and support to the evaluation, <i>agreed upon by the evaluation units of all the entities</i></li> <li>preliminary methodology, <i>which builds on the project's results framework and monitoring plan</i></li> <li>tentative budget (up to 4% of the project budget)</li> <li>follow-up plan. <i>(Section 2.2)</i></li> </ol> </li> </ul>
Project implementation (1 <sup>st</sup> to 4 <sup>th</sup> year)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project manager/team should collect <b>monitoring data</b> in accordance with the monitoring plan in the project document and, if and as needed, make adjustments. <i>(See the DA project document guidelines)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An <b>annual monitoring call</b> is organized with the participation of the project steering committee, the DA focal points and evaluation focal points of all jointly implementing entities and the DA-PMT, including the DA Evaluation Officer.** <i>(Section 2.1)</i></li> </ul>
3 <sup>rd</sup> year of project implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>selection of projects</b> with less than USD 1 million to be evaluated takes place at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year.*** Projects with a budget of USD 1+ million at the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> year are automatically selected for evaluation. <i>(Section 2.2)</i></li> <li>The projects selected for evaluation should develop a <b>tentative evaluation plan</b>, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>timeline</li> <li>target users and intended use</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All jointly implementing entities (not just the lead) should include the terminal evaluation of the joint project in their respective <b>evaluation workplans</b>. <i>(Section 2.3)</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) arrangements for the management of and support to the evaluation</li> <li>d) preliminary methodology</li> <li>e) tentative budget (up to 4% of the project budget)</li> <li>f) follow-up plan <i>(Section 2.2)</i></li> <li>• The evaluations of the selected projects should be included in the implementing entities' respective <b>evaluation workplans</b>. <i>(Sections 2.3)</i></li> </ul>	
<p>Final (4<sup>th</sup>) year of project implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>evaluation TOR</b> should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) evaluation purpose</li> <li>b) context and description of the project</li> <li>c) evaluation objectives and scope</li> <li>d) evaluation criteria and tentative questions</li> <li>e) evaluation methodology, including the availability of monitoring data to support the evaluation</li> <li>f) list of key stakeholders to be engaged in the evaluation</li> <li>g) organization of the evaluation, including evaluation management, roles and responsibilities, workplan (key stages/steps and timeline), and deliverables</li> <li>h) dissemination strategy</li> <li>i) evaluation budget (up to 4% of the project budget), including indicative fees for the evaluator or evaluation team</li> <li>j) required qualifications for the evaluator or evaluation team. <i>(Section 3.1)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Allocation of the evaluation budget</b> (up to 4% of the final project budget) can be requested in March or later.** DA-PMT approval is required for any evaluation budget exceeding 4% of the final project budget. <i>(Section 3.2)</i></li> <li>• The evaluator, or the team leader of an evaluation team, may be <b>recruited</b> early enough to participate in a final project workshop or meeting. <i>(Section 3.3)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The tentative evaluation plan in the project document should be reviewed and used as the basis for developing the <b>evaluation TOR</b>. The development of the evaluation TOR should commence <u>at least 6 months prior to the project completion</u>. <i>(Section 3.1)</i></li> <li>• The <b>final annual monitoring meeting</b>, to be organized in May or June of the final year, should be used to review the tentative evaluation plan, discuss the process of developing TOR and confirm the list of documentation/information to be submitted.** <i>(Section 3.1)</i></li> <li>• Considerations in developing the evaluation TOR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The <b>evaluation scope</b> should include the work of all the jointly implementing entities, rather than the work of the lead entity(ies) only.</li> <li>○ The <b>evaluation focus</b> should be on what is deemed most critical and useful, as well as what is feasible. <i>(Section 3.1)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• The entity(ies) responsible for managing the evaluation is(are) required to submit the <b>updated detailed evaluation plan or evaluation TOR for DA-PMT approval</b>, along with the request for allocation of the evaluation budget. <i>(Section 3.2)</i></li> </ul>
<p>Conduct of evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All DA project evaluation processes should be managed or overseen by the evaluation units of the implementing entities. <i>(Section 2.2 (c))</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The evaluation units of all jointly implementing entities are encouraged to participate in the <b>management of the evaluation process</b>. <i>(Section 2.2 (c))</i></li> <li>• The evaluation unit of each jointly implementing entity should ensure the <b>involvement of the project focal points and other relevant stakeholders</b> within the entity throughout the evaluation process (incl. the development of the evaluation</li> </ul>

		<p>TOR and inception report, the validation of the findings, and the formulation of recommendations). <b>(Section 2.2 (h))</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A virtual <b>evaluation initiation or kick-off meeting</b> with the project steering committee and the evaluator(s) is recommended. <b>(Section 3.4)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Completion of Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evaluation reports</b> are due <u>within 6 months after project completion date</u>. <b>(Section 2.2 (a))</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evaluation reports</b> are due to DA-PMT <u>within 9 months after project completion date</u>. <b>(Section 2.2 (a))</b></li> </ul>
<b>Follow-up to evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing entities are responsible for developing a <b>management response, monitoring and following up on the implementation of the planned actions</b>, in accordance with their respective evaluation policy and procedures. Implementing entities are expected to submit to DA-PMT a completed management response <u>within 3 months of the finalization of the evaluation report</u> for publication on the DA website. <b>(Section 2.2 (f))</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each of the jointly implementing entities is responsible for developing a <b>management response, responding to all the recommendations that are directed to it, monitoring and following up on the implementation of the planned actions</b>, in accordance with its evaluation policy and procedures. Each entity is expected to submit to DA-PMT a completed management response <u>within 3 months of the finalization of the evaluation report</u> for publication on the DA website. <b>(Section 2.2 (f))</b></li> <li>• If considered necessary or useful, the evaluation manager or evaluation management group should help organize a meeting of the project steering committee and other relevant stakeholders to discuss <b>actions to be taken to implement the recommendations</b>. <b>(Section 2.2 (f))</b></li> </ul>

\* Applicable starting with the 16<sup>th</sup> tranche.

\*\* Applicable starting with the 13<sup>th</sup> tranche.

\*\*\* Applicable starting with the 14<sup>th</sup> tranche.

## 1. PURPOSE

This note presents guidance on the planning, conduct and follow-up to terminal evaluations of joint projects<sup>1</sup> under the Development Account (DA), and is designed to supplement the [DA Project Evaluation Guidelines](#) (October 2019). It draws heavily on the lessons learned and good practices from the recent evaluations of DA joint projects, while also incorporating existing guidance on conducting joint evaluations within the UN system (see Section 4 “Resources”). The guidance note is intended to serve as a living document, providing practical guidance on various, but non-exhaustive, aspects of DA joint project evaluation, which will be updated and strengthened as more evaluations of DA joint projects are completed, and other relevant knowledge is made available by DA implementing entities and their partners.

**The guidance note establishes several requirements related to evaluations of joint projects with a budget of USD 1 million or more.** To the extent possible and appropriate, the guidance provided in this document should also inform the planning, conduct and follow-up to terminal evaluations of joint projects with a smaller budget.

## 2. PLANNING OF A TERMINAL EVALUATION – PROJECT DESIGN PHASE

### 2.1 Support to development of a theory of change and monitoring plan

As per the DA guidelines for the preparation of 16<sup>th</sup> tranche project documents issued in May 2023, **the team drafting the project document for a joint project with a budget of USD 1 million or more should include an evaluation officer(s), programme management officer(s) and/or other staff responsible for results-based management and monitoring from the lead entity(ies) to advise on the development of the project’s theory of change and monitoring and evaluation plans.**<sup>2</sup>

The project document for a joint project is required to include a detailed monitoring plan, which describes the process, mechanisms, tools, and roles and responsibilities for collecting, consolidating and maintaining the monitoring data against the indicators of achievement at the project level, as agreed upon by all the jointly implementing entities. The monitoring plan should also identify the documents and information to be collected by the lead as well as the other entities throughout project implementation, for use in the final report and, if selected, the terminal evaluation.

For a joint project with a budget of USD 1 million or more, an annual monitoring call will be organized with the participation of the project steering committee (i.e., representatives of all jointly implementing entities), the DA focal points and evaluation focal points of all jointly implementing entities and the DA Programme Management Team (DA-PMT), including the DA Evaluation Officer. During this call, the project steering committee will brief the attendees on implementation progress, any significant change or challenges. If necessary, required actions to resolve them will be discussed.

<sup>1</sup> Under the DA, a joint project is defined as a project that is designed, implemented and monitored by two or more DA implementing entities. Normally, one or two entities take the overall lead, and funds are allocated directly to each of the jointly implementing entities.

<sup>2</sup> This requirement is derived from a recommendation of the [final evaluation of the 10<sup>th</sup> tranche Programme on Statistics and Data \(2022\)](#), which affirmed the importance of a theory of change defining the mechanisms by which the project’s activities would result in its intended outcomes, and a clear monitoring framework established at the start of the project.

## 2.2 Development of a detailed tentative evaluation plan

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Terminal evaluation is mandatory for joint projects with a budget of USD 1 million or more,<sup>3</sup> and **the project documents for these are required to include a detailed tentative evaluation plan, developed by the lead entity's(ies') evaluation unit(s), in consultation with the evaluation units of all the other jointly implementing entities. The evaluation units of all jointly implementing entities must commit to the tentative evaluation plan prior to the finalization of the project document.** For all other projects, including joint projects with a budget of less than USD 1 million, a detailed evaluation plan should be developed if the projects are selected for evaluation at the midpoint of the tranche (i.e., at the beginning of the third year of project implementation). **If a joint project with an initial budget of less than USD 1 million receives additional funding and its total budget reaches or exceeds USD 1 million by the beginning of the third year of implementation, the project will automatically be selected for evaluation, and a detailed tentative evaluation plan should be developed by the lead entity's(ies') evaluation unit(s), in consultation with the evaluation units of all the other jointly implementing entities, as soon as possible, in order to ensure preparedness for the evaluation.**<sup>4</sup>

The tentative evaluation plan for a DA project is required to include the following elements, which should be reviewed by the evaluation manager or evaluation management team, as designated in the plan, in the final year of project implementation and updated or elaborated, as needed and in consultation with the relevant stakeholders, in the evaluation terms of reference (TOR):

- a. timeline
- b. target users and intended use
- c. arrangements for the management of and support to the evaluation
- d. preliminary methodology
- e. tentative budget
- f. follow-up plan

The guidance specific to each of these required elements is presented below.

### a. Timeline:

**The deadline for the submission of the evaluation report to DA-PMT is 9 months after the project completion date for joint projects with a budget of USD 1 million or more, and 6 months after the project completion date for all other projects.**

### b. Target users and intended use

With a view to ensuring that the evaluation generates evidence that is useful in determining the project's performance and informing future programming, **the tentative evaluation plan should specify the target users of the evaluation and how they are expected to use the evaluation results, including any knowledge gaps the evaluation is intended to address.**

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<sup>3</sup> The [DA Project Evaluation Guidelines](#) (para 16) require that all projects with a budget of USD 1 million or more be selected for evaluation.

<sup>4</sup> The requirement for an annual monitoring call with the participation of the project steering committee, the DA focal points and evaluation focal points of all jointly participating entities and DA-PMT will also apply to this project immediately after the project budget reaches USD 1 million.

**The primary target users of a DA project evaluation are the management and staff of the project’s implementing entity(ies). The evaluation report for a joint project should present recommendations that are derived from the findings and directed to the management and staff of the jointly implementing entities.** Some recommendations may be specifically addressed to the lead entity(ies) or a subset of the jointly implementing entities, while others could be addressed to all entities involved.

Lessons learned and good practices identified through a DA project evaluation that have applicability beyond the implementing entity(ies) should be presented in a section on “Lessons learned and good practices” in the evaluation report.<sup>5</sup> The evaluation results, including the lessons learned and good practices, should be widely disseminated among parties within and outside the implementing entities who may benefit from the knowledge generated (secondary target users). DA-PMT plans to conduct a synthesis of the lessons learned and good practices identified in the project evaluations from each tranche, starting with the 12<sup>th</sup> tranche, with a view to helping facilitate the dissemination of the knowledge among the implementing entities and inform future programming at the programme level. The evaluation manager is also encouraged to share with DA-PMT any findings and/or recommendations that have significant applicability beyond the specific entity(ies) involved in the project.

Should the evaluation of a joint project be designed to generate recommendations to the DA Programme Manager, or DA-PMT on his/her behalf, that are applicable to all DA projects or all DA joint projects in a specific thematic or functional area, this should be discussed with DA-PMT at the stage of developing the evaluation TOR. Such an evaluation may be warranted when a joint project involves a large number of DA implementing entities, covers all relevant regions and focuses on a broad thematic area. Such an evaluation should involve a wider range of stakeholders and documentation, including those at the programme (DA) level, in various stages (e.g., in the review processes for the TOR, inception report and evaluation report, in the development of recommendations, in desk review, interviews and other data collection activities) and an oversight/governance structure involving senior representatives of the entities involved, and DA-PMT on behalf of the DA Programme Manager.

### **c. Arrangements of the management of and support to the evaluation**

**The tentative evaluation plan should specify the planned evaluation management structure, with the general roles and responsibilities, agreed upon by the evaluation units of all the jointly implementing entities.** More detailed roles and responsibilities of the evaluation unit of each entity should be confirmed as part of the evaluation TOR (see Section 3.1).

An effective management structure with well-defined roles and responsibilities that are agreed upon by all stakeholders is critical to the success of an evaluation of a joint project. This is particularly important due to the challenges often associated with projects of this kind. Evaluation of a joint project typically requires extensive coordination, often calling for additional resources and posing a challenge to timely completion, which may in turn affect the timeliness and relevance of the findings, and the overall utility of the evaluation. In the context of the DA, joint projects often cover more than one geographical region, which may make it necessary for the external evaluator(s) to possess the experience and understanding of diverse regional contexts and other factors

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<sup>5</sup> The evaluation report should be prepared using the most updated DA project evaluation report template, with a view to facilitating the synthesis and dissemination of the lessons learned and good practices at the programme level. Should it not be possible to use the DA template for any exceptional circumstances (e.g., the requirement to use the entity’s own standard template endorsed by its governing body and/or executive head), all the required elements of the DA evaluation report template must be included in each DA project evaluation report, either by incorporating them into the alternative template, or by submitting the extra requirements for the DA evaluation report in an attachment.

in multiple entities' operational environments, as well as multiple language skills. This would also mean that the evaluation's data collection and stakeholder engagement strategies need to reflect these factors to ensure its relevance and credibility. This, combined with the need to engage with the stakeholders spread beyond the purview of a single entity or geographical region, could significantly increase the overall management burden.

All DA project evaluation processes are required to be managed or overseen by the evaluation units of the implementing entities, in line with the requirement in the Administrative Instructions on Evaluation in the United Nations Secretariat (ST/AI/2021/3) (para 2.6 (a)) and the DA Project Evaluation Guidelines (para 64) to remove the management of the evaluation process from the project manager or project team. For an evaluation of a joint project, **it is strongly encouraged that the evaluation units of all the jointly implementing entities participate in the management of the evaluation process** to ensure that the design and conduct of the evaluation take into account the operational environments of each participating entity (including regional contexts and specific language requirements), and facilitate communications with relevant stakeholders, as needed. This would also help ensure that the scope of the evaluation adequately covers the joint efforts by all jointly implementing entities.

Broadly, there are three options for the management structure for an evaluation of a DA joint project:

- 1) **joint management through an evaluation management group composed of all jointly implementing entities:** the evaluation is *jointly managed by the evaluation units of all jointly implementing entities*, in the form of an evaluation management group, who collectively make management decisions, *with the evaluation unit of the lead entity playing a coordinating role*.
- 2) **joint management through an evaluation management group composed of some of the jointly implementing entities:** the evaluation is *jointly managed by the evaluation units of the lead entity and one or more jointly implementing entities* (e.g., co-lead entities), in the form of an evaluation management group, who collectively make management decisions, *with the evaluation unit of the lead entity playing a coordinating role, and with support from the evaluation units of all the other jointly implementing entities at all stages of the evaluation, in the form of an evaluation advisory group*.
- 3) **single entity-led management with an evaluation advisory group:** the evaluation is *managed by the evaluation unit of the lead entity* (the evaluation manager) *with support from the evaluation units of all the other jointly implementing entities* at all key stages of the evaluation, in the form of an evaluation advisory group.

The most effective management structure for any evaluation of a joint project would depend largely on the design, scope and complexity of the project being evaluated, and the number of entities involved, since reaching a collective decision among a large number of entities at each stage of the evaluation could be difficult and time-consuming. In initiating the discussion on the evaluation management structure as part of the development of a tentative evaluation plan, the evaluation unit of the lead entity should consider the roles and responsibilities it wishes the evaluation units of the other entities to play, in order to fulfil the various functions associated with the management of the evaluation. The evaluation units of the lead entity and all the other jointly implementing entities should decide on the optimal management structure for each joint project, based on the options above. General key functions for a management structure include the following:<sup>6</sup>

- a. quality assurance
- b. communication with stakeholders

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<sup>6</sup> UNEG (December 2013), [Resource Pack on Joint Evaluations](#), p.29.



- c. representation of stakeholders
- d. technical input
- e. logistics and support
- f. management of funds
- g. management of the evaluation process
- h. management response

**Reaching agreement on the specific roles and responsibilities of each entity involved at the beginning of the evaluation process is crucial to successful management of an evaluation of a joint project.** All DA project evaluations are also encouraged to use a reference group, composed of the project’s key internal and external stakeholders and tasked to provide relevant insight and advisory support to the evaluation, with a view to helping enhance the relevance, quality and credibility of the evaluation process, and ensuring stakeholder buy-in.<sup>7</sup> If single entity-led management with an evaluation advisory group (option 3) is chosen, the advisory group may be expanded to include the project’s other stakeholders, including technical experts in the thematic areas relevant to the project, and serve as a broader advisory or reference group. The reference group may be utilized to help address the often-experienced difficulties with engaging evaluators who possess technical expertise in both evaluation design and methods, and the subject matters of the project being evaluated. The inclusion of internal or external stakeholders with expertise in the subject matters of the project, human rights and gender equality in the reference group, where feasible, would strengthen the credibility of the evaluation. For an evaluation of a joint project with a budget of USD 1 million or more, a representative of DA-PMT may be invited to participate in the reference group, while the DA Evaluation Officer may also be invited to provide additional quality assurance support, as deemed beneficial by the evaluation manager or evaluation management group.

Regardless of the evaluation management structure adopted, **the evaluation unit of each jointly implementing entity should ensure that the project focal points and other relevant stakeholders within the entity are involved in the development of the evaluation TOR and inception report (particularly in defining the scope, evaluation questions and methodology), the validation of the findings and the formulation of the recommendations, as well as facilitate the development of a management response to the recommendations that are addressed to the entity.** The evaluation units of the jointly implementing entities that do not serve as the evaluation manager or participate in the evaluation management group should also aid in communicating with the beneficiaries and other stakeholders under their entity’s purview, as requested by the evaluation manager or evaluation management group.

#### **d. Preliminary methodology**

**The tentative evaluation plan should include a preliminary methodology, which builds on the results framework and the monitoring plan also presented in the project document.** The preliminary methodology should be updated and/or elaborated in the evaluation TOR, and finalized, based on preliminary desk review and consultations with key stakeholders, in the inception report.

Evaluations should apply multiple methods and cross-check information and data from different sources to ensure confidence in the findings (triangulation).<sup>8</sup> A DA project evaluation typically applies a combination of some of the following methods: desk review; interviews; focus group discussions; online surveys; field visits to select project countries; and in-person observation of a workshop or meeting held during the final stage of project

<sup>7</sup> [DA Project Evaluation Guidelines](#), para 23-25.

<sup>8</sup> UNEG (2016), [Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#), Standard 4.5 “Methodology”, para 63.

implementation. The methodology should be selected for each evaluation taking into consideration the modalities and activities undertaken, geographic scope and thematic focus of the project, as well as the available budget. **Given the limited time and resources available for the evaluation, it is critical that the preliminary methodology is supported by the project's results framework (in particular, the indicators of achievement for the outcomes that are expected to be realized within the project's timeframe, and the means of verification associated with them) and monitoring plan.** For a joint project with USD 1 million or more, the annual monitoring calls, along with the annual progress reports, will provide an opportunity to confirm whether the project monitoring is conducted as per the monitoring plan, and, if necessary, make adjustments.

**For joint projects, maximum effort should be made to have all data collection methods cover the work of all jointly implementing entities, rather than focusing on the work of the lead or a subset of the entities, with a view to ensuring that the evaluation generates sufficient findings and lessons learned at the project level, rather than at the entity level only.** For a joint project involving a large number of target countries, the methodology may include case studies of select project activities or target countries aimed at assessing project outcomes at the country level in order to supplement more representative data generated through other methods (e.g., surveys, analysis of available statistics and data). To the extent possible, case studies, or other data collection methods focusing on the limited components/elements of a joint project, should include project activities that were jointly delivered by multiple implementing entities, or project activities that represent the work of all the jointly implementing entities.

In general, travel conducted as part of DA project evaluations should be limited to field visits to select project countries to collect beneficiary feedback, which may not be easily collected remotely, and in-person observation of a workshop or meeting. It is recommended that the evaluators' meetings with the evaluation manager or the evaluation management group and the project steering committee be conducted remotely unless in-person meetings are possible without additional travel.

#### **e. Tentative budget**

For all DA projects, **the evaluation budget should be up to 4% of the final project budget.**

#### **f. Follow-up plan**

**The tentative evaluation plan should describe the roles and responsibilities related to the development of a management response, as well as how the implementation of recommendations will be tracked.** In line with ST/AI/2021/3 (para 5.5(d)), each DA implementing entity should ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place for management to monitor and respond to evaluation recommendations and follow up on recommendation implementation. **For an evaluation of a DA joint project, each of the jointly implementing entities is responsible for developing a management response, responding to all the recommendations that are directed to it, as signed by the relevant authority, and monitoring and following up on the implementation of the planned actions included in the response, in accordance with its evaluation policy and procedures.** If considered necessary or useful (e.g., when the joint project evaluation recommends a change in the approach to capacity development work in the specific thematic area or the way the jointly implementing entities collaborate in the future), the evaluation manager or evaluation management group should help organize a meeting of the project steering committee and other relevant stakeholders to discuss actions to be taken by the jointly implementing entities, individually and/or jointly, to implement the evaluation recommendations, with a view to facilitating the development of management responses by the entities.

In line with ST/AI/2021/3 (para 3.2) and its guidelines (October 2021), management responses are required for all DA evaluation reports, and all DA evaluation reports and management responses are published on the [DA website](#), starting with the 12<sup>th</sup> tranche. For all DA project evaluations, the implementing entity is expected to submit to DA-PMT a completed management response within 3 months of the finalization of the evaluation report. For a joint project, *each of the jointly implementing entities* is also expected to submit to DA-PMT a completed management response within 3 months of the finalization of the evaluation report. All jointly implementing entities of a joint project are also encouraged to make public the evaluation report and their respective management responses.

### 2.3 Including the terminal evaluation of joint projects in all entities' evaluation workplans

Regardless of the evaluation management structure agreed upon in the tentative evaluation plan, **it is strongly recommended that all jointly implementing entities include the terminal evaluation of a joint project with a budget of USD 1 million or more in their respective evaluation workplans, and not just the lead.** This is important in order to secure the resources to (co-)manage or support the exercise and ensure their preparedness to follow up on the evaluation, including developing a management response and implementing the recommendations that are applicable to each entity. Given that some entities submit their evaluation workplans to senior management and/or governing bodies, this may also help raise visibility and interest.

The evaluation of a joint project with a budget of less than USD 1 million should also be added to each of the jointly implementing entities' evaluation workplan if the project is selected for evaluation at the midpoint, along with the evaluations of the selected single-entity projects. Under each tranche, each implementing entity is expected to evaluate half the number of its projects (rounding up if the entity has an odd number of projects), taking into account the strategic importance and relevance of each project to the mandates of the implementing entities and any pressing knowledge gaps. **A joint project should be included only in the lead entity's projects for the purpose of selection for evaluation.** The lead entity(ies) of a joint project should consult the other jointly implementing entity(ies) in deciding on the inclusion of the project in the selection for evaluation.

## 3. PLANNING OF A TERMINAL EVALUATION – FINAL YEAR OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

### 3.1 Development of evaluation TOR

**For evaluation of a joint project, the development of the evaluation TOR should commence well ahead of (at least 6 months prior to) the project completion, in order to have sufficient time to solicit inputs from all key stakeholders, including the representatives of all jointly implementing entities, in developing the evaluation scope, questions and tentative methodology.** For a joint project with a budget of USD 1 million or more, the final annual monitoring meeting, which should be organized between May and June of the final (4<sup>th</sup>) year of project implementation, will provide an opportunity for the project steering committee and the evaluation units of the lead and other jointly implementing entities to review the tentative evaluation plan, discuss the process of developing the evaluation TOR and confirm the list of documentation and information to be submitted by the lead and other entities.

It is recommended that TOR for an evaluation of a DA project include the following elements:

- a. evaluation purpose
- b. context and description of the project
- c. evaluation objectives and scope
- d. evaluation criteria and tentative questions
- e. evaluation methodology, including the availability of monitoring data to support the evaluation

- f. list of key stakeholders to be engaged in the evaluation
- g. organization of the evaluation, including evaluation management, roles and responsibilities, workplan (key stages/steps and timeline), and deliverables
- h. dissemination strategy
- i. evaluation budget, including indicative fees for the evaluator or evaluation team
- j. required qualifications for the evaluator or evaluation team

Human rights and gender equality should be integrated into all stages of the evaluation, upholding the principle of ‘no-one left behind’.<sup>9</sup> In addition, disability perspectives should also be integrated into the evaluation process to the extent possible.<sup>10</sup>

While the guidance on developing various elements of a tentative evaluation plan in Section 2.2 should largely aid with the development of evaluation TOR, below is guidance more specific to evaluation TOR.

### Evaluation scope, criteria and tentative questions

**An evaluation of a DA joint project should include the work of all the jointly implementing entities, rather than the work of the lead entity(ies) only, in its scope.** DA project evaluations are expected to examine criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. In addition, they should address, either as a separate evaluation criterion or as an evaluation question under one of the four main criteria, human rights and gender equality. An additional criterion of coherence should also be considered in line with the [revised OECD/DAC evaluation criteria](#). Tentative evaluation questions for a joint project should be developed with inputs from the project steering committee and other relevant staff in the jointly implementing entities, who are the primary target users of the evaluation and who will be responsible for implementing the recommendations that emanate from the evaluation. In developing the list of tentative questions, **it is critical to keep in mind the limited**

<sup>9</sup> The [UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicators Technical Note \(April 2018\)](#) includes the following three criteria against which all evaluation reports should be assessed: 1) “Gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) is integrated in the evaluation scope of analysis and evaluation criteria and questions are designed in a way that ensures GEWE related data will be collected”; 2) “A gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools, and data analysis techniques are selected”; and 3) “The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender analysis”. In addition to these GEWE criteria, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) also applies the following criterion for the quality assessment of UN Secretariat evaluation reports as part of its biennial Dashboard exercise: “Human rights considerations are integrated in the following, where applicable: evaluation scope of analysis; evaluation criteria and questions design; methods and tools, and data analysis techniques; evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations”.

<sup>10</sup> ST/AI/2021/3, in para 5.5(b), requires all heads of Secretariat entities to “ensure the integration of respect for gender equality and disability inclusion in evaluation procedures and practices”. While the quality assurance system for evaluation reports established in the Guidelines on the ST/AI (October 2021) did not include a rating criterion specific to the integration of disability perspectives in the evaluation process or evaluation report, the OIOS biennial review on the status of evaluation in the Secretariat for 2021-2022 included an assessment of the integration of disability inclusion and environmental issues in the evaluation report quality assessment exercise, specifically for the purpose of creating a baseline (the ratings on the integration of these two additional cross-cutting issues did not count towards the overall score given to each report). The [UN Evaluation Group \(UNEG\) “Guidance on Integrating Disability Inclusion in Evaluations and Reporting on the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy \(UNDIS\) Entity Accountability Framework Evaluation Indicator”](#) (January 2022) established six elements to be incorporated into a reporting entity’s evaluation guidelines in order to “approach” (i.e., short of “meet”) the requirements of the Framework in relation to Indicator 10 on Evaluation. These six elements are: a) the ToRs of evaluations pay adequate attention to disability inclusion; b) evaluation teams must have knowledge and/or experience of disability inclusion, where relevant; c) evaluation questions should cover different aspects of disability inclusion; d) stakeholder mapping and data collection methods should involve persons with disabilities and organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs); e) evaluation findings and analysis should provide data and evidence on disability inclusion; and f) the conclusions and/or recommendations must reflect their findings on disability inclusion.

**timeframe, the resources available and the burdens on the stakeholders involved. As such, the focus of the evaluation should be on what is deemed most critical and useful in meeting the accountability and learning objectives, as well as what is feasible.** While it may be tempting to develop a “comprehensive” list of evaluation questions, a focused and concise list of questions would help avoid a shallow analysis and/or delay with the completion of the evaluation, which would undermine the utility of the evaluation.

### **Organization of the evaluation**

The evaluation TOR should confirm the arrangements for the management of and support to the evaluation, and elaborate on the roles and responsibilities of the evaluation units of the jointly implementing entities based on the tentative methodology developed.

### **Dissemination strategy**

**The evaluation TOR should specify how the evaluation results will be disseminated to its primary and secondary target users.** The DA evaluation report template includes an executive summary as a stand-alone section of 3-4 pages, including: a brief overview of the project; evaluation purpose, objectives, scope and intended users/audiences; evaluation methodology; and a summary of key findings, conclusions and recommendations. Development of other promotional materials, aimed at widely disseminating the evaluation findings and promoting their use, is encouraged and, based on consultation with DA-PMT, may be included in the evaluation budget.

### **Required qualifications for the evaluator or evaluation team**

The evaluation TOR should specify the required skills, competencies and experience for the evaluator or evaluation team that are aligned with the evaluation methodology, which should reflect the project’s scope, thematic focus and other characteristics. If an evaluation is expected to need more than one evaluator, it is strongly recommended that the required qualifications for the lead evaluator (or evaluation team leader) include proven ability to lead an evaluation team. For a project covering multiple regions, the language requirements for document review and data collection/analysis should be discussed and fully taken into account in developing the required skills of the evaluator or evaluation team.

## **3.2 Allocation of an evaluation budget**

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Up to the 13<sup>th</sup> tranche, projects were pre-selected for evaluation prior to starting implementation (with the possibility of revising the list of selected projects at the midterm), and those selected for evaluation were allocated an evaluation budget as part of the project budget approved by the DA Steering Committee and included in the DA fascicle. Starting with the 14<sup>th</sup> tranche, an evaluation budget is no longer allocated as part of the project budget. **Allocation of the evaluation budget, in the amount equivalent to up to 4% of the final project budget, from the central DA funds can be requested for the projects selected for evaluation, in March of the final (4<sup>th</sup>) year of project implementation, or later,** when the required budget is confirmed by the evaluation manager or evaluation management group. Further guidance on a request for allocation of the evaluation budget will be included in the guidance note on the planning and conduct of terminal evaluation for each tranche, starting with the 14<sup>th</sup> tranche, which will be issued in the first quarter of the final (4<sup>th</sup>) year of the tranche (e.g., 2025 for the 14<sup>th</sup> tranche). In the event that the project budget has been revised since the beginning of the project, the evaluation budget should also be adjusted to ensure that it does not exceed 4% of the final project budget. Any evaluation budget exceeding 4% of the final project budget requires approval from DA-PMT.

**For all joint projects with a budget of USD 1 million or more, DA-PMT review and approval of the updated detailed evaluation plan or evaluation TOR, including a detailed tentative methodology and evaluation budget, is required** as part of the request for allocation of the evaluation budget. The DA-PMT review will focus on determining whether the evaluation scope and tentative methodology would justify the proposed budget for the evaluation, in particular the fees to be paid to the evaluator(s). The tentative methodology in the TOR should be detailed enough to define the scope of the work expected to be delivered by the evaluator(s) for the fees that are set in the document. **The entity(ies) responsible for managing the evaluation of a joint project with a budget of USD 1 million or more should submit to DA-PMT an updated detailed evaluation plan or evaluation TOR, along with the request for allocation of the evaluation budget.**

The entity responsible for management of the evaluation budget (i.e., the evaluation manager or the coordinating entity in the joint management structure) is encouraged to receive and manage the evaluation budget in an account separate from the project budget with a view to ensuring access to the funds for the exclusive use for the evaluation, and allowing for a timely closure of the project account at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the project. **The request for the allocation of the evaluation budget should specify the account of the entity's choice to receive the funds.**

### **3.3 Recruitment of evaluators and evaluation teams**

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**The recruitment of evaluators should be undertaken early enough to allow for sufficient time to identify and engage qualified candidates.** Where deemed feasible and appropriate, the evaluator, or the team leader of an evaluation team, can be brought on board early enough to participate in a final project workshop or meeting to observe the event and meet the project's beneficiaries and key stakeholders.

An evaluation of a joint project with a large scope may require a team of two or more evaluators, whose combined skills and experiences are designed to collectively meet the wide-ranging requirements of the evaluation. When hiring more than one evaluator (consultant) to conduct an evaluation, there are three ways of recruiting them:

- 1) Soliciting applications from a group of evaluators
- 2) Recruiting the lead evaluator (evaluation team leader) for the entire assignment, with an arrangement to sub-contract specific tasks
- 3) Recruiting each evaluator separately.

Each option has certain advantages and disadvantages. (Please consult your respective HR office on the specific requirements for consultancy recruitment as they often vary from office/department to another.)

Soliciting applications from a group of evaluators, who have existing relationships, combine their individual skills and experiences to meet the requirements for the assignment and are willing to work as a team, based on the working arrangements that they agree on themselves, would allow the evaluation manager to rely primarily on the team leader for managing the team dynamics and ensuring timely submission of the team's deliverables. The Inspira recruitment process, however, does not support solicitation of applications from a group of consultants. The evaluation manager may need to reach out to an individual consultant on the evaluator roster, consulting the possibility of teaming with other consultants to take up the assignment. The "[Vacancy announcements](#)" page of the UNEG website can be used to announce a call for a team of consultants to apply for the assignment (a request to place an announcement should be sent to the UNEG Secretariat at [unevaluationgroup@gmail.com](mailto:unevaluationgroup@gmail.com)).<sup>11</sup> Selection

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<sup>11</sup> Note that an advertisement on the UNEG website is considered sufficient to meet the requirement for a competitive recruitment by some departments/offices.

should be based on the assessment of applying teams' qualifications as a team, rather than individual members' qualifications. Each member of the selected team may be engaged through separate consultancy contracts, or one contract is issued for the lead evaluator with sub-contracts for the other members. In the latter case, the lead evaluator, by her/his contract, would be held solely responsible for all services and obligations performed by his/her sub-contractors.<sup>12</sup>

It is also possible to put a vacancy announcement in Inspira for the position of the lead evaluator (or evaluation team leader) with an arrangement to sub-contract specific tasks to one or more evaluators recommended by the selected candidate and approved by the evaluation manager.

Alternatively, separate vacancy announcements may be placed on Inspira and/or the UNEG website, for different roles of the evaluation team (e.g., lead evaluator and evaluator, team leader and member(s)) with a set of tasks, deliverables and required qualifications specific to each role. In this case, it is recommended that the lead evaluator (or evaluation team leader) be recruited first, and that the selected lead evaluator be consulted on the selection of other evaluators (team members) as well as on the reporting structure and communication mechanisms between him/her and other members of the team, as well as between the evaluation team and the evaluation manager.

When separate contracts are issued for members of the evaluation team, as opposed to the evaluation team members being subcontractors to the team leader, potential issues that should be discussed and agreed upon between the evaluation team and the evaluation manager at the beginning of the evaluation process may include, but are not limited to:

- Who should be held responsible for the timely submission as well as the overall quality of the deliverables that represent the collective work of the team?
- How should a disagreement among the evaluators be resolved? Should the lead evaluator (evaluation team leader) be given the authority to make a final decision? Is the evaluation manager expected to play any mediating role under any circumstances?
- When one member's delay or underperformance affects another team member's or the entire team's ability to deliver their tasks on time and with sufficient quality, how should the situation be dealt with?

### 3.4 Evaluation initiation

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It is recommended that the evaluation manager or evaluation management group organize a virtual evaluation initiation or kick-off meeting with the project steering committee and the evaluator(s). The meeting should allow the parties to introduce themselves to one another, confirm the evaluation's purpose, key steps and timelines, and address any questions they may have about the evaluation process or the project being evaluated. With a view to ensuring the buy-in among all members of the project steering committee and their commitment to the

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<sup>12</sup> The General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants or Individual Contractors, which are attached to a contract for the services of a consultant or individual contractor, issued by the United Nations, include a clause on "Subcontractors", which states the following: "In the event that the Contractor requires the services of sub-contractors to perform any obligations under the Contract, the Contractor shall obtain the prior written approval of the United Nations for any such sub-contractors. The United Nations may, in its sole discretion, reject any proposed sub-contractor or require such sub-contractor's removal without having to give any justification therefore, and such rejection shall not entitle the Contractor to claim any delays in the performance, or to assert any excuses for the non-performance of any of its obligations under the Contract. The Contractor shall be solely responsible for all services and obligations performed by its sub-contractors. The terms of any sub-contract shall be subject to, and shall be construed in a manner that is fully in accordance with, all of the terms and conditions of the Contract."

follow-up to the evaluation, the meeting should communicate the requirement that each jointly implementing entity develop a management response to the recommendations that emanate from the evaluation and are directed to them.

#### 4. RESOURCES

Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC), "[Joint Evaluations: Recent Experiences, Lessons Learned and Options for the Future](#)", working paper prepared for the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, 2-3 June 2005

OECD/DAC, "[Managing Joint Evaluations](#)", June 2010

International Labour Organization (ILO), "[Guidance Note 2.3: Joint evaluations](#)", June 2020, V.2 (V.1 – 2012)

United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), "[Resource Pack on Joint Evaluations](#)". December 2013

World Food Programme (WFP), "[Technical Note: Joint evaluations](#)", June 2020