Terms of Reference (ToR) – UN-OHRLLS

ToR for the evaluation of the project #: PDF-SDG-2017-05 **"Strengthening Productive Capacity in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) through providing an enabling environment for investment in sustainable energy"**.

1. BACKGROUND

These are the terms of reference for the evaluation of the project the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund (UNPDF) "Strengthening Productive Capacity in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) through providing an enabling environment for investment in sustainable energy" to be conducted between 2018-2021. The Executive Agency for this project is United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), in close collaboration with UN Office in Malawi, , Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), the Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organization (GEIDCO) and in close partnership with the Government of Malawi.

According to the latest available data, the 46 least developed countries (LDCs) will not be able to meet the SDG 7 targets by 2030. Furthermore, only 52% of the overall LDC population had access to electricity in 2018.[1] Productive capacity (which includes energy as one of its sub-components), has been stressed in the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) as a key factor enabling structural transformation in LDCs, which is critical to their overall sustainable development and thus meeting the criteria for graduation from the LDC category. Sustainable energy is expected to be one of the central thematic topics of the new 10-year programme of action for the LDCs to be adopted at the Fifth UN Conference on the LDC (LDC5 Conference), in Doha, Qatar in January 2022.

This project aimed to strengthen the national capacity of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to enhance their access to sustainable energy, which would enhance their productive capacity, sustainable industrialization and socio-economic development. The project generated concrete outcomes in the interests of LDCs through analytical work and public-private partnership building to increase modern energy services. This was accomplished through:

(EA1) Increased availability of information on investment opportunities in LDCs among public and private partners, and

(EA2) Enhanced capacity and strengthened partnerships to improve access to sustainable energy in LDCs.

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[1] https://www.un.org/ohrlls/news/advancing-sdg-7-least-developed-countries

To accomplishment EA1, Malawi was selected as a pilot country for a vigorous country analysis that led to the development of a sustainable energy investment prospectus. Launched in November 2019, the "*Malawi Sustainable Energy Investment Study*" (the Study), which offered a roadmap for the energy sector to meet Malawi's national policy goals in electricity and clean cooking, reaching universal energy access and SDG 7 by 2030. It guides the Malawian Government, development partners, investors and the private sector to unlock investments in the energy sector. It further identifies least-cost pathways for developing this infrastructure and shows how US$3 billion of investment, from a range of sources, can make this possible. Two-day events were held in Malawi: (i) kick-off meeting was held on 7 February 2019 in Lilongwe, Malawi, together with the Ministry of Energy and other partners, and (ii) validation workshop and launch of the study was held in Lilongwe on 9 October 2019.

Second component of activities under EA1 focused on creating an enabling environment for sustainable and modern energy development in Malawi. To achieve this, the project followed-up with support to Department of Energy Affairs within the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining, which plays a key role in the implementation of the recommendations made in the sustainable energy investment study. Specific attention is directed to climate resilience and alternative pathways in the case of reduced hydroelectric generation, as this was a major issue that was repeatedly raised in the validation workshop.

To accomplish EA2, the project started off with a Global Conference on Scaling-up Energy Access and Finance in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and focused on concrete measures to enhance financing for sustainable and modern energy, as called for in SDG7. It gathered LDCs practitioners to share their experiences in preparing investment prospectuses and discuss best practices and financing models that have worked. It was organised jointly by UN-OHRLLS and the Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organization (GEIDCO) held on 30 and 31 May 2019 in Beijing, China. The Global Conference shined a spotlight on the energy access challenges and created a strong momentum to take further steps to assist LDCs in achieving SDG7, which led to the launch of an LDC-specific initiative at the Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit.

Within the existing budget, additional activity was proposed to support for the work of the Coalition for Sustainable Energy Access launched at the Climate Action Summit and support for the thematic preparatory process leading up to LDC V Conference. To this end, a thematic meeting was also planned to be held in the margins of the SEA4ALL forum in Kigali, Rwanda in May 2020 however the meeting was cancelled due to the global COV ID-19 pandemic.

In light of this set-back, project activities were amended, in order for UN-OHRLLS to deliver the output within the agreed timelines in support of the urgent need to scale up action for energy access in LDCs and provide substantive inputs to the LDC5 preparatory process. The revised activity aimed at developing analysis and policy recommendations backed by advocacy tools to promote alignment of LDC5 policy objectives on energy with major international funders and initiatives on sustainable energy with the goal to strengthen partnerships to improve access to sustainable energy in LDCs.

The project's period spanned from February 2018 to May 2021.

2. EVALUATION'S OBJECTIVES AND CRITERIA

The purpose of the evaluation is to review, document and assess the programmatic and strategic processes and determine the extent to which the objectives of the project has been achieved.

The evaluator will outline the lessons learnt and provide recommendations which will be useful in contributing to the knowledge and future projects related to energy investments in the LDCs.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are:

i. To assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project results and the strategy used in implementation, and
ii. To formulate concrete recommendations and share lessons learnt to inform future work in this area.

Relevance

- How relevant and timely was the project to the pilot country in identifying challenges at the country-level and for breaking down the activities needed for transition to sustainable and modern energy, as well as outlining the required financing scheme?

- To what extent was the project, its objectives and methodology relevant to the LDCs in enhancing their capacity and strengthening partnerships? Did the project offer a cutting edge in this field of work?

Efficiency

- To what extent did OHRLLS and its implementing partners deliver the planned activities on time?

- Are there comparable lower-cost alternative strategies or modalities for timely delivery of work that would allow achieving the expected outcomes?

Effectiveness

- To what extent have the expected objectives of the project been achieved?

- How effective was the project strategy to implement the project activities? Was the strategy adopted and the activities consistent with the project objectives?

- Was the combination tools and methodologies developed, workshops organized, global conference convened, investment prospectus produced and advocacy tools and materials, developed as part of this project, beneficial in supporting capacity building in LDCs to improve their access to sustainable development?

- Were the approaches used to identify and engage stakeholders, as well as disseminate information and consult between them effective? What were the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches with respect to the project's objectives and the stakeholders' motivations and capacities? What was the achieved degree and effectiveness of collaboration and interactions between the various project partners and stakeholders during the implementation of the project?

- Were the project schedules met and activities implemented within reasonable time parameters?

- Were the "Indicators of Achievement" established for the Project effective in measuring progress?

Impact

- What are the impacts of this projects' work on Malawi, and on LDCs in general, in their efforts to enhance access to sustainable energy?

Sustainability

- Did the project provide platforms for building multi-stakeholder partnerships?

- What are the possible ways in which LDCs can be assisted by UN-OHRLLS to overcome the barriers to building their national capacity and creating an enabling environment for energy investment to address the gaps identified through this project?

- Regarding Country Ownership and Driven-ness: Did the prospectus provide a basis for scaling-up and buy-in from pilot country government and partners to take forward the study recommendations?

- Did the project provide incentives (social, economic, market-based, competencies, etc.) to contribute to catalyzing changes in stakeholder behavior? Contribute to institutional changes, policy changes, or sustained follow-on financing from Governments or other donors? Did it create opportunities for individuals or institutions ("champions") to catalyze change?

3. WORK ASSIGNMENT

3.1 Scope of Work

The consultant will prepare an evaluation report covering the project duration February 2018 to April 2021 assessing the project outcome, identifying the factors which influenced the outcome.

3.2 Methodology

The evaluation will be undertaken through a combination of the following:

(a) A desk review of the all relevant documents including, but not limited to: project documents, progress reports, workshop reports, evaluation, questionnaires, press releases and news coverage and the investment prospectus.

(b) The evaluator is required to conduct interviews via telephone and video-conference facilities with wide range of stakeholders in the pilot country (Malawi), as well as all relevant implementing partners including UN Office in Malawi, Rocky Mountain Institute, GEIDCO.

3.3 Tasks and time requirements

Task	**Time requirements (Working Days)**
Desk study of background documents	5 days
Design of survey and interview protocols and overall evaluation framework and proposed report outline contained in the Annex.	5 days
Initial survey and interviews with the pilot countries, partners and other stakeholders; follow up calls to relevant stakeholders	8 days
Conduct analysis and draft evaluation report	7 days
Finalisation of report and presentation to UNDESA	5 days
TOTAL	**30 days**

4. EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND DELIVERY DATES

Outputs:
The main output of the consultancy is the Evaluation Report. The main consultancy deliverables will entail:

a. Development of annotated outline of the evaluation report in consultation with UN-OHRLLS, including survey design and intended target audience for the survey.

b. Draft of the evaluation report

c. Finalization of report and submitting to UN-OHRLLS

Delivery dates:
The milestones and deadlines that the consultant is expected to meet are highlighted in the table below:

Deliverables	**Target due date**
1. Annotated outline and evaluation plan	14 March 2021
2. Draft report	14 April 2021
3. Final report	14 May 2021

5. EVALUATION ETHICS
Evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. Evaluators should demonstrate independence, impartiality, credibility, honesty, integrity and accountability to avoid any bias in their evaluation.

6. DURATION OF CONTRACT AND FEES

The consultancy assignment is for a total of 30 working days within the period 1 March to 14 May 2021.

The Consultant's fee will be commensurate with experience and will be released in one payment to the consultant upon the completion of all the deliverables of the TOR, and upon certification from the Supervisor that the tasks have been satisfactorily carried out.

7. DUTY STATION OR LOCATION OF ASSIGNMENT
The Consultant is home based. The consultant will use telecommunication methods including email, videoconference, audioconference or other remote business practices, such as online meetings.

8. TRAVEL
Travel not required.

9. EVALUATION BUDGET, FEES AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE
National consultant's budget is sourced from project "Strengthening Productive Capacity in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) through providing an enabling environment for investment in sustainable energy" project number # PDF-SDG-2017-05.

The Consultant's fee will be commensurate with experience. Payment will be initiated upon successful completion or implementation of expected tasks as mentioned in the above Activities, Expected Outputs and Milestones, upon certification from the Supervisor that the tasks have been satisfactorily carried out.

10. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance standards for the successful conduct of the assignment, including: compliance with the terms of reference, quality dimensions of the outputs, and timeliness. These will set the basis for acceptance of deliverables, satisfactory completion and full payment of fees.

11. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE CONSULTANT

- Advanced university degree (Master's degree or higher) in evaluation methodologies, energy, economic, sustainable development, policy support or another relevant field.

- A minimum of 10 years proven practical experience in Sustainable Development, capacity building, technical cooperation and policy support. <u>The experience needs to include a minimum of 3 years in program evaluation and methodologies.</u>

- Analytical and writing skills in program evaluation, lessons learnt papers, policy documents, technical guidance notes, and other documents related to evaluating sustainable development programs.

- Proven experience in working with Government offices, the private sector, NGOs, international development organizations, and institutions.

- Good understanding of the United Nations 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the structural challenges facing the least developed countries in the context of access to sustainable energy and the achievement of SDG7.

- Fluency in oral and written English is required.

12. SUPERVISION/ PROJECT MANAGER

The consultant will work with the supervision of
Shifaana Thowfeequ,
Programme Officer,
UN-OHRLLS

under the overall guidance of Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Director of UN-OHRLLS.

<u>Annex:</u> Outline of the evaluation report

The evaluation report needs to include the following sections:

1. Title and opening pages

- This section should provide the following basic information:
- Name of the evaluation intervention;
- Time frame of the evaluation and date of the report;
- Countries of the evaluation intervention;
- Name of the evaluator;
- Name of the organization commissioning the evaluation;
- Acknowledgements.

2. Table of contents

This section should always include boxes, figures, tables and annexes with page references.

3. List of acronyms and abbreviations

4. Executive summary

A stand-alone section of maximum two to three pages that should:

- Briefly describe the intervention (the project) that was evaluated;
- Explain the purpose and objectives and scope of the evaluation, including the audience for the evaluation and the intended users;
- Describe key aspect of the evaluation approach and methods;
- Summarize principle findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

5. Introduction

This section should:

- Explain why the evaluation was conducted (the purpose), why the project is being evaluated now, and why it addressed the questions it did;
- Identify the primary audience or users of the evaluation, what they want to learn from the evaluation and why and how they are expected to use the evaluation results;
- Identify the project that was evaluated—see upcoming section on intervention;
- Acquaint the reader with the structure and contents of the report and how the information contained in the report will meet the purposes of the evaluation and satisfy the information needs of the report's intended users.

6. Description of the intervention

This section should provide the basis to understand the logic of the evaluation methodology (including theory of change), assess its merits and understand the applicability of the evaluation results. The description needs to provide sufficient detail for the report user to derive meaning from the evaluation.

The description should:

- Describe what is being evaluated, who seeks to benefit, and the problem or issue it seeks to address;
- Explain the logical framework, implementation strategies, and the key assumptions underlying the strategy;
- Identify the phase in the implementation of the project and any significant changes (e.g. plans, strategies, logical frameworks) that have occurred over time, and explain the implications of those changes for the evaluation;
- Identify and describe the key partners involved in the implementation and their roles;
- Describe the scale of the project, such as the number of components (e.g. phases of a project) and the size of the target population for each component;
- Indicate the total resources, including human resources and budgets;
- Describe the general background and context of the social, political, economic and institutional factors, and the geographical landscape within which the intervention operates and explain the effects (challenges and opportunities) those factors present for its implementation and outcomes;
- Point out design weaknesses (e.g. intervention logic) or other implementation constraints (e.g. resource limitations).

7. Evaluation scope and objectives

This section should provide a clear explanation of the evaluation's scope, primary objectives and main questions.

- **Evaluation scope**: The report should define the parameters of the evaluation, for example, the time period, the segments of the target population included, the geographic area included, and which components, outputs or outcomes were and were not assessed, including the reasons why they were not assessed;
- **Evaluation objectives**: The report should spell out the types of decisions evaluation users will make, the issues they will need to consider in making those decisions, and what the evaluation will need to achieve to contribute to those decisions;
- **Evaluation criteria**: The report should define the evaluation criteria or performance standards used. The report should explain the rationale for selecting the particular criteria used in the evaluation;
- **Evaluation questions**: Evaluation questions define the information that the evaluation will generate.
- The report should detail the main evaluation questions addressed by the evaluation and explain how the answers to these questions address the information needs of users.

8. Evaluation approach and methods

The evaluation report should describe in detail the selected methodological approaches, methods and analysis; the rationale for their selection; and how, within the constraints of time and money, the approaches and methods employed yielded data that helped answer the evaluation questions and achieved the evaluation purposes. The description should help the report users judge the merits of the methods used in the evaluation and the credibility of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The description on methodology should include discussion of each of the following: (i) Data sources; (ii) Sample and sampling frame; (iii) Data collection procedures and instruments; (iv) Performance standards; (v) Stakeholder engagement; (vi) Ethical considerations; (vii) The measures taken to protect the rights and confidentiality of informants (see UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations’ for more information); (viii) Background information on evaluators; (ix) Major limitations of the methodology

9. Data analysis
The report should describe the procedures used to analyse the data collected to answer the evaluation questions. It should detail the various steps and stages of analysis that were carried out, including the steps to confirm the accuracy of data and the results.

10. Findings and conclusions
The report should present the evaluation findings based on the analysis and, in a separate section, explain the conclusions drawn from the findings.

Section 1: Results/Findings: Should be objective and based on sufficient evidence. They should be clearly articulated and presented as **statements of facts that are based on the analysis of data**. They should be **structured around the evaluation criteria and questions** so that report users can readily make the connection between what was asked and what was found. Variances between planned and actual results should be explained, as well as factors affecting the achievement or non-achievement of intended results. Assumptions or risks in the project or programme design that subsequently affected implementation should be discussed.

Section 2: Conclusions: Should be comprehensive and balanced, and highlight the strengths,
weaknesses and outcomes of the project. They should be well substantiated by the evidence and logically connected to evaluation findings. They should respond to key evaluation questions and provide insights into the identification of solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to the decision making of intended users. Conclusions should add value to the results by reflecting the evaluators’ professional opinion.

11. Recommendations
The report should provide practical, feasible recommendations **directed to the intended users** of the report about what actions to take or decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation. They should address sustainability of the initiative and comment on the adequacy of the project exit strategy, if applicable. This section should also specify who should implement the recommendations.

12. Lessons learned

As appropriate, the report should include discussion of lessons learned from the evaluation, that is, **new knowledge** gained from the project (including context outcomes, insights on evaluation methods) that are applicable to a similar context. Lessons should be concise and based on specific evidence presented in the report.

13. Report annexes
Suggested annexes should include the following to provide the report user with supplemental background and methodological details that enhance the credibility of the report:

- TOR for the evaluation;
- Additional methodology-related documentation, such as the evaluation matrix and data collection instruments (questionnaires, interview guides, observation protocols, etc.) as appropriate;
- List of individuals or groups interviewed or consulted, and sites visited;
- List of supporting documents reviewed;
- Project or programme results map or results framework;
- Summary tables of findings, such as tables displaying progress towards outputs, targets, and goals relative to established indicators;