

EVALUATION OF THE LGED

FINAL REPORT

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# Acronyms

AfC Agenda for Change

AfP Agenda for Prosperity

CO Country Office

CBO Community Based Organizations

CPD Country Program Document

DECSEC Decentralization Secretariat

DIM Direct Implementation Modality

DPs Development Partners

DPO Development Planning Officer

EVD Ebola Virus Disease

FGD Focus Group Discussion

GoSL Government of Sierra Leone

GBV Gender Based Violence

GELD Gender Equality and Local Development

IP Implementing Partners

ILO International Labor Organization

KII Key Informant Interview

KCC Kenema City Council

KDC Kailahun District Council

KDC Koinadugu District Council

KDERP Kenema District Economic Recovery Program

LC Local Council (city or district)

LED Local Economic Development

LGED-JP Local Government Economic Development

LGFD Local Government Finance Department

LoCASL Local Council Association of Sierra Leone

LGA Local Government Act of 2004

LG Local Government

LOA Letter of Agreement

MCC Makeni City Council

MCG Micro Capital Grant

MDA Ministries, Departments and Agencies

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MDTF Multi-Partner Trust Fund

MLGRD Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development

MoFED Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

NIM National Implementation Modality

PBGS Performance Based Grant System

SP Strategic Plan

SME Small Medium Enterprises

TOC Theory of Change

TOR Terms of Reference

UNCDF United Nations Capital Development Fund

UNDP United Nations Development Program

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The LGED Evaluation consultant wishes to acknowledge with sincere thanks the insights, inputs and contributions provided by key stakeholders met during the course of the assignment. In particular, I would like to thank UNDP’s development partners for their time and ideas shared during the period under review. To the implementing partners at the national and district levels, I say thank you for your great ideas and invaluable contributions that helped shaped the outcome of this report.

The consultant also expresses his sincere gratitude to UNDP’s national partners for their time and inputs. UNDP Sierra Leone Country Office program team and staff at all levels provided invaluable support, and freely shared their reports, time and thoughts on the various program outputs. I am very grateful to you all.

As an independent evaluation of the LGED program, the consultant takes responsibility for the views and opinions expressed in the report, but I hope that they reflect those of international development partners, UNDP program management team, national partners, CSOs and beneficiaries encountered during the evaluation period. More significantly, it is my considered opinion that the findings and recommendations of the report will contribute to improving the work of UNDP and deepening LGED in Sierra Leone.

**Disclaimer**

This LGED Evaluation report was prepared by Hindowa B. Momoh, the consultant. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) generally and the Inclusive Growth Unit particularly.

# Executive Summary

The LGED Evaluation report summarizes the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the LGED Evaluation in Sierra Leone, which comprises four outputs. The consultant established that the LGED is aligned with the national development plans and priorities, and poverty reduction strategies of Sierra Leone. The evaluation fully utilized 32 person-days to review documents, carry out interviews with more than forty national and district stakeholders, development partner representatives, and beneficiaries; review program documents, conducted Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), visited six (6) districts in the provinces, and undertook data collation, analysis and draft report writing. This report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations to UNDP and the GoSL for review and consideration. The format of this report is in line with relevant UNDP guidance.

**Major Findings**

**Relevance:** The Local Governance and Economic Development Programme (LGED) is responsive and relevant to the Government of Sierra Leone’s PRSP II and III (Agenda for Change and Agenda for Prosperity) under the 2nd and 4th priority areas: addressing pro-poor growth, and promoting the decentralization policy and devolution of functions to local governments. It also fits within the UN response to PRSP III and the outcomes of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).[[1]](#footnote-2)The LGED efforts also provide a strong strategic fit and linkage between the poverty reduction and governance pillars of UNDP’s strategic plan at the global level. There is a deliberate attempt which had been made to link improvements in decentralized governance, local economic development, poverty reduction and social inclusion to UNDP development outcomes. It is clear that the LGED program has clearly attempted to support national efforts spearheaded by the government to address the underlying structural causes of poverty that are afflicting Sierra Leone in the pre and post-Ebola period.

**Effectiveness:** It was established from field work and document review that the LGED has made considerable contribution to the achievement of the program outputs. To a large extent, the LGED initiative has been effective in helping improve local governance and promote economic development at local level and the councils have played a critical role. To be sure, targeted councils were supported in LED micro project through the Performance Based Grant System (PBGS), SMEs and the revenue based cadastral system, which in large measure, have established gara tie dying and soap making associations and registered with the councils; economic empowerment of marginalized groups especially women to become professional gara tie dying and soap makers; the LGED supported the Councils to develop a fiscal cadastral system which have improved/increased the revenue base and local revenue mobilization culminating in the construction of a Mini-Stadium with a capacity of about 2,500 people with stores and restaurants by owned sources in Kenema, for instance. The stadium will also provide job opportunities to women and youths in the city of Kenema. Additionally, the program provided women and youths with skills in financial management, banking, book-keeping, carpentry, masonry etc in the targeted districts which have helped them establish their own businesses, improved their living standard thereby reducing poverty and ensuring social inclusion; records management has greatly improved as access and retrieval of records have been made easier; and availability of records have led to positive performance tracking from Cabinet Secretariat to name a few. The MLGRD has also attempted to share experience with all members of the local government entity. For instance, the MLGRD organized experience sharing retreat will all of the 19 councils in Kenema immediately the team returned from Rwanda. A communiqué was prepared and adopted by all councils to critically review the recommendations with the view to adopt some of the best practices. The Ministry intends to share the same experience with all of the Paramount Chiefs in the country.

However, the lack of transparency in revenues collected from the Councils and lack of reporting pose a challenge to the effectiveness of revenue collection in the Councils. Besides, the MLGRD has not been able to harmonize the existing policies such as the Chiefdom Governance Policy, the Decentralization Policy, the De-Amalgamation Policy, LED Policy and Strategy etc into a coherent policy that deals with local governance and rural development generally to ensure that efforts are not duplicated. Nor has there been political commitment and will power on the part of government to completely devolve functions from the central to local councils (56 out of 79 functions have thus far been devolved). This is having a debilitating effect on the proper functioning of councils, stifling service delivery and suffocating local governance generally.

**Efficiency:** The Evaluation discovered that UNDP has delivered most of its financial and technical support for the LGED program. In terms of financing to achieve planned outputs, the consultant’s review of the data on mobilization and utilization of programme resources revealed that UNDP has exhibited a high degree of efficiency in this regard. There has been economical use of financial and human resources; effective institutional capacity development such as, capacity development trainings that were undertaken by the program and the utilisation of knowledge and skills obtained from the training programmes have been recorded as effective. Efforts devoted to institutional capacity development (study tours to Ghana, Rwanda, South Africa and lately Japan) are evidence of institutional strengthening. At this point, the resources were efficiently utilised since there is evidence that most of the intended results were achieved. However, some programme results were hampered by weak monitoring and evaluation due to insufficient investments of time and resources by UNDP. UNDP also lack enough staff to manage the program culminating in weak monitoring and playing oversight roles, particularly when programmatic activities have been extended to more councils in the regions. To ensure proper narrative and financial reporting, there is need to organize training sessions for all IPs on UNDP reporting systems. IPs should also have the mindset and right attitude towards accurate reporting on donor funds. The evaluation noted that the LGED initiative has been adversely affected by cumbersome procurement processes and rigid project management.

**Sustainability**: There is the likelihood that some of the LGED program initiatives will be sustainable. For instance, the program’s support to building national and local capacities to be efficient and effective in carrying out their mandates and responsibilities point to sustainability because the training and skills development received will remain with the people after the expiration of the project. When one invests in building skills and capacities of the human being, it means providing life-long sustenance of that person. The embedding of the Program Specialist at the MLGRD and the Program Officer at the local level in Kenema and the various training programs undertaken to strengthen councils and build skills and knowledge of beneficiary groups, particularly women, at the lower strata of the state will contribute to national ownership and sustainability. Additionally, the support provided by the LGED to capacitate the MLGRD and MOFED to go on study tours to Ghana, Rwanda and South Africa, and recently to Japan to deepen their knowledge and learn lessons on integrating LED into the local governance architecture cannot be overstated.However, the consultant noted that the capacity of the MLGRD needs to be further strengthened especially in the areas of policy formulation, program design, management and implementation and monitoring and evaluation of programs if program sustainability and national ownership can be assured. This can be achieved by transferring and integrating the human resources available at DECSEC into the MLGRD. Furthermore, knowledge sharing after study tours by government officials should be made compulsory with the view to improve and strengthen the capacities of other officials in the MDAs. Weak risk analysis (political, administrative, social, corruption, and so on), poor advocacy to promote broad based ownership, insufficient micro-macro linkages and unrealistic timelines have prevented adoption of projects for scaling up nationwide affect sustainability. The program also lacked an exit strategy.

**Impact:** The evaluation found that the program has, to a large extent, achieved its outputs in increasing and building the capacity of groups of women (about 200 women) involved in and benefitted from gara tie dying and soap making in Makeni and more than 200 engaged in SMEs and have established their own businesses in Kambia and Kailahun. Business Development Centers (BDCs) have been established in Kambia and Kailahun districts to cater for capacity building of SMEs through the training in business and financial management, book/records keeping, adult literacy programs to enable SMEs to read, write and keep proper records of their transactions. The centers also provide mentoring services to the SMEs. The councils have helped the people to be organized in gara tie dying and soap making groups/associations thereby creating a forum where the marginalized met and discuss livelihood, development and other issues. The profits accrued from these businesses have been used to cater for individual family livelihood such as food, paying fees for school going children and caring for sick family members. In the Kenema City Council, the water purification and pre-school projects, which targeted women, are the flagship LED projects that the city showcases. These projects deliberately favor women with the view to empower women, particularly market women, increase their earnings and provide security for their children during the day. The evaluation found that some of the projects are having a catalytic and multiplier effect on the people and communities. For instance, the revenue mobilization output in the KCC has contributed to the construction of a Mini-Stadium (providing jobs to the youths and women) that is completely funded by the council. The construction of the Youth Service Center in Pujehun is also positively impacting on youths who received skills training in carpentry, masonry, tailoring and many others. They now derive and eke out their livelihood from these skills acquired. Records management has a high potential of impacting on the capacity of the MLGRD to serve as the hub for information gathering and research on local and chiefdom governance systems. Access and retrieval of information have been made easier; staffs’ capacity have been built, which has given them confidence to relate with the public; performance tracking from the Cabinet Secretariat has been positive and have referred to the records section of the MLGRD as a model; confidence level of file users have increased; decongestion of paper files in offices; accessing chieftaincy and amalgamation records have been computerized and are easily accessible.

**Gender and Social inclusion:** Although the LGED has no clearly designed Project Document for the period under review, elements of the previous Prodoc and the AWPs considered gender perspective as critical to LGED initiative in the program design. Aside, the LGED design is a pro-poor initiative targeting vulnerable groups including women and the socially excluded in society. In its implementation, the PBGS and Revenue Collection outputs deliberately targeted more women than men and aimed at empowering them to fight poverty pervading the Sierra Leone society. In the targeted councils, women have become the focus and locus of the LGED intervention and they take the center stage for promoting the LED. The impact, in the short term, has been tremendous as more women who have benefitted from the intervention have access to funds that take care of their basic livelihood. The LGED staff contributed substantially to ensuring the viability of GELD supported initiatives, including the Pre-school and water purification projects in the KCC. In the Kailahun District Council, about 80% of the 230 participants trained in financial management, banking skills, record keeping and marketing for SMEs were women and the impact had been increase in their earnings from businesses they undertake. In kabala, youths received training in the use of the waste management equipment provided by the LGED intervention. Access to PBGS funds that is operational at the LGFD in the MOFED is predicated on focusing on women and gender equity. All of the staff members working in the Records Management Unit at the MLGRD are women, which leads to socio-economic empowerment. There is no denying the fact that women visibility of the program has been deliberate and assured. However, the consultant notes that a strategic and systematic effort at mainstreaming gender concerns into local governance and local economic development has not been fully accomplished. In other words, the systematic gender analysis of local governance interventions has not regularly been conducted. It is no gainsaying the fact that there has been recognition that women’s empowerment has meant more than their participation in decision making and wealth creation, appropriate indicators for assessing improvements in gender relations and greater equality in the benefits flowing to women and men have not been worked out for most local governance initiatives. Similarly, capacity-building initiatives have targeted women but adequate data have not been gathered to assess whether or not women have benefited from greater awareness and training initiatives.

**Lessons Learned:**

* A critical lesson reveals that LED needs to be conceived holistically as part of national economic development and not as a series of ad hoc projects happening when some donor funding is acquired. It must be the policies, programming and resource mobilisation by the state, through local governments and other sub-national units, which form the fundamental base and building block for LED. This certainly creates the platform from which LED programming takes off. Once mainstreamed at national level in terms of legislation, policy and budget, funding of LED becomes a regular activity in rural, urban and national development and this regularisation is a big challenge facing the GoSL, and an area where it needs significant support;
* Institutional development, infrastructure and investment from sector ministries only becomes effective for LED when resources generated from the centre flow to local levels (through sector and fiscal decentralisation) and are complemented by local efforts to mobilise and generate revenues. The role of national sector ministries and parastatals should primarily be the shaping of both the policy and investment instruments whilst local organisations shape the implementation. This balance of engagement is a critical prerequisite for a sustainable LED.
* UNDP credibility depends on a critical mass of resources. The acceptance of UNDP as a national partner and supporter of decentralized governance and local economic development initiatives depends primarily on the local credibility of the country office, which in turn is dependent on the quality of its expertise and a critical mass of resources. Donor inputs, especially from a neutral source such as UNDP, are welcomed, but they will not have impact unless both programme countries and UNDP can rely on a critical mass of resources and significant expertise from other sources. When UNDP enters a new field, it brings with it considerable prestige but often scarce resources. This mismatch can mean that expectations about the UNDP potential for making a significant contribution may be exaggerated and its credibility may suffer. Consequently, the management of expectations is an important element in maintaining the credibility of the organization;
* UNDP effectiveness in supporting the LGED depends on a broader network base. UNDP’s ability to understand problems, provide advice, play an advocacy role or provide technical assistance is greatly enhanced by a broadened, more flexible network of contacts, experts, advisers, facilitators and other resources at both the national and international levels. The more that UNDP can directly tap into and access such resources particularly from the private sector, DPs, WB, Chambers of Commerce, SLIEPA et al, the greater the quality and cost-effectiveness of its support;
* The efficacy of LGED support depends on close donor coordination. The program’s success and cost-effective utilization of scarce resources can be significantly enhanced by better donor coordination at the policy, planning and implementation/operational levels. Different donors operate according to different priorities and policy agendas - often in the context of a single national programme - and not always in synchronization with national policies and priorities. UNDP (and other donor) effectiveness can be enhanced by a greater understanding of each other’s strengths, policy objectives, constraints and priorities and, to the extent possible, the harmonization of such priorities and policies for specific initiatives;
* The LGFD at the MOFED has recommended to the Financial Secretary an annual vertical allocation of at least 10% of domestic development budget to councils for development projects from FY 2018 and beyond. This will be used to allocate resources to councils on an annual basis for development projects. The funds will be divided into three components - Local Economic Development projects, non- Local Economic Development projects and matching grants for performance based grant. As such, a percentage of funds have been set aside to target LED;
* Currently, 59 functions have been devolved to the councils out of 79. Even some of the functions that have been devolved, resources, staff and assets have largely remained under the control of the central government. And most, if not all of the staff, are answerable to central authorities. This has had a catalytic effect on the proper functioning of local governance and greatly undermines the efficacy of the MLGRD as driver of LGED;
* LGED is both an incremental process and a rural development biased and, therefore, needs to be based on and anchored in existing structures at the MLGRD, particularly in the Rural Development Directorate (RDD) if sustainability and real impact are to be felt. In this regard, it remains key to capacitate and strengthen the RDD with the required human, financial and material resources to ensure that there is proper integration of and greater merger of LED and LG;
* DECSEC has not been completely mainstreamed into the MLGRD. As such, it is still seen as a unit separate from the MLGRD even when its staff are paid from the consolidation fund, The earlier a complete mainstreaming of DECSEC into the MLGRD take place, the better resourced (human capital and capacity) which the Ministry needs most at this stage of institutional re-organization.

**Recommendations**

**To the GoSL**

* Institutionalize LED and anchored it in the Rural Development Directorate at the MLGRD. To actualize this, the Directorate should be fully capacitated by the HRMO office and strengthened by the mainstreamed DECSEC technical staff.
* Ensure that the MLGRD is in control of all aspects of local governance and local economic development including the mobilization and control of its finances. Facilitate top level discussion between the MOFED and the MLGRD on how to expedite the process of transferring key financial functions and personnel relating to local government finances to the MLGRD;
* Ensure that the devolution of functions, assets, staff and financial resources are facilitated to guarantee the completion of the devolution process that results in the proper design and implementation of future LGED;
* Localize the SDGs with the view to integrate the SGDs into LED. Linking LED to the SDGs increases investments in poverty reduction strategies, ensuring social inclusion of marginalized groups, promote local content and opens LGED to resource mobilization and funding windows much required to push for the implementation of the LED strategy and policy;
* Recruit additionaltechnical staff particularly in LED to strengthen the MLGRD with the requisite knowledge in local governance and local economic development. At present, there is dearth of qualified and technical staff and motivation in the MLGRD to effectively champion the LGED into the next phase;
* Put mechanisms in place where council staff that have been trained in a particular output stays with the council until the project folds up instead of encouraging frequent and uncoordinated transfer of local council staff during project implementation that negatively impact project implementation. Institutionalize transfers to ensure smooth flow of the program and assuring institutional memory;
* Institutionalize and make functional an effective, transparency and accountability mechanism over the public funding and decision making processes to ensure that councils are responsive to and responsible for funds flowing from own sources, grants from central government and from donors.
* Facilitate the approval of the proposed 10% recommended by the LGFD at the MOFED to be integrated into national budget for the funding of LGED programs in future;
* Ensure the complete inclusion, participation and involvement of Ward Committees in the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of LGED programs in future. This layer of the decentralized process has been neglected for a very long time and until they are part of the process, the LGED program will hardly succeed;
* Link decentralization with overall State reforms and capacity building agenda to advance the competence of local administrations to effectively manage local affairs, ensure the effective delivery of basic social services and improve the lives of Sierra Leoneans

**To UNDP**

* Strengthen Joint Programs and Resource Mobilization for LGED future programmatic activities. Ensure that the UNDP strategically leads the joint program and mobilize resources and that the joint program is in sync with the national development agenda;
* Plan to access different possible funding sources (e.g. voluntary contributions, the private sector, non-traditional partners, assessed contributions, government cost-sharing and different multi-donor trust funds and windows) for future LGED programs;
* Concentrate more on developing the private sector through capacity development of SMEs to graduate into entrepreneurs. The strategy is significant for poverty reduction in rural communities. This can be achieved by collaborating with the Local Content Agency, SLIEPA, Chambers of Commerce, Financial Institutions, Development Partners and MDAs. The program should also develop adequate policy framework for SME development and connect the policy to the Local Content Policy, Public Investment Policy etc.
* UNDP should take the initiative and ownership for coordination among traditional and non-traditional development partners while the national partners should be more involved in joint planning, programming and sitting on steering committees. There is need for more joint approach in planning and programming and focusing on building and institutionalizing systems and processes as opposed to ad hoc approaches
* Transition to a national implementation modality gradually, with a system of direct payment to start with leading to advances over a period of time. As part of the transition process, regular management and financial audits need to be conducted in order to assess performance. This is quintessential for capacity building of state institutions particularly financial management and accountability.
* Exit strategies are key to increase ownership and avoid situation that the programme remains an end in itself. An exit strategy should be included into the LGED next phase, which implies that the created structures are financially sustainable and capable of producing resources for programme implementation. Generally, applying or setting out an exit strategy at an initial stage of programme implementation identifies the potential barriers to sustainability. The issue then becomes primarily about providing solutions to mitigating those potential risks;
* Harmonize programmes and projects to mainstream decentralization into both government and partners’ interventions in order to have a multiplier effect and impact promoting the LGED;
* Increase the strength and improve the capacity of UNDP staff to effect the implementation of the LGED in all councils in future;
* Monitoring &Evaluation systems/mechanisms need to be strong while coordination and clear definition of tasks is required between the various stakeholders focusing around the same performance indicators and systems, and taken into account the outcomes and impacts of the programme.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Background and Context

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| In 2004 the Government of Sierra Leone re-introduced political decentralization with a view to opening political space as well as improving inclusiveness as a way of addressing some of the root causes of the 1991-2002 conflict. Local Council elections were held in May 2004, with 19 local councils established thereafter. With the enactment of the Local Government Act 2004, the Act provides the legal framework that guides the decentralization process. Because there was no decentralization policy to draw upon in the formulation and enactment of legislation, this posed several challenges including clarification of roles between key actors in the decentralization process - Local Councils and Paramount Chiefs, Ministries, Departments and Agencies, the allocation of revenue and expenditure assignments, securing broad agreement to the devolution process, securing an inclusive and participatory engagement by local communities.  The Local Governance and Economic Development Joint Programme (LGED-JP) was designed by UNDP/UNCDF and the Government of Sierra Leone to support the decentralization of governance and the building of the local government system. It responds to the Government of Sierra Leone PRSP II, Agenda for Change (now Agenda for Prosperity) under the 2nd and 4th priority areas: addressing pro-poor growth, and promoting the decentralization policy and devolution of functions to local governments. It also fits within the UN response to PRSP II1 and the outcomes of the United Nations Assistance Framework (UNDAF).  The overarching goal of the LGED-JP is poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The purpose of the LGED-JP is the promotion of local economic development, i.e. clarity on functional assignments and implementation of the national policy on decentralisation; local economic development functions institutionalised in local councils; and improved local economic development. The intermediate outcome is an expanded and more effective and efficient role of local governments in the promotion of local economic development.  The LGED-JP operates within the framework of the Local Government Act (LGA) and the Decentralization Policy. The Programme pursues four outputs:   * ***Output 1:*** MLGRD and MOFED strengthened to develop a National LED policy and strategy to enhance inclusive growth and economic diversification. * ***Output 2***: Effectiveness of the Performance-Based Grant System (PBGS) enhanced through promoting participatory planning for inclusive LED. * ***Output 3:*** Effectiveness of revenue collection and management of the property tax and business licenses improved. * ***Output 4***: Local economies improved and micro and small enterprises (MSEs) capacities in target local councils strengthened to contribute to post-EVD recovery.[[2]](#footnote-3)  1.2 Evaluation Purpose and Objective The present consultancy fits into the above outputs. As provided for by the ProDoc, the programme will be evaluated in 2017, unless there is agreement to move into a second phase. In that case, the mid-term evaluation suffices, and a programme formulation will take place. This evaluation was supposed to be preceded by a mid-term review in 2016 to help keep the programme on track and feed into formulation of phase II. However, the outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in 2014 diverted programme focus and concentrated on fighting the disease. After Sierra Leone was declared free of Ebola in 2015, the national programme focus changed, so did the LGED to support recovery of lost livelihoods. As such the programme, could only achieve tangible results as from 2017 onward with the completion of the first round of SME capacity building and investments.  The objective of the Evaluation is to assess (i) the relevance, (ii) the effectiveness, (iii) the efficiency, (iv) the sustainability and the impact of the programme. The evaluation will also identify potential project design problems, document lessons learned from programme implementation and make recommendations to be considered in designing the second phase for replication. |

## 1.3 Methodology

**A. Evaluation Questions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **KEY/EVALUATION COMPONENTS** | **EVALUATION QUESTIONS** |
| **Relevance** | * To whatextent were the programme and its outputs consistent with national development policies and priorities (PRSP II and PRSP III, National Decentralization Policy etc) and local policies and priorities; * How responsive was the programme to UNDP and corporate plans (including the UNDP Strategic Plans -2014-2017) and human development priorities of empowerment and gender equality; * To what extent has the programme responded to changing and emerging development priorities at national and local levels. |
| **Effectiveness** | * To what extent has the programme intended results (outputs or outcomes) been achieved or progress made toward achieving them; * How do you assess the results achieved against the 4 project outputs and contribution to the intermediate goals including effectiveness of development assistance initiatives; * How do you measure the changes in the 4 outputs; * How do you assess the extent to which these changes result from the programme interventions and value (positive/negative) of the changes |
| **Efficiency** | * How economically the programme resources have been used to achieve the results with greater impact; * How do you assess the quality and timeliness of inputs including the Management arrangements, staffing, the reporting and monitoring system and the extent to which these have been effectively supporting activities directed towards achieving the outputs; * How did the partnership strategies contribute to achieving the results |
| **Sustainability** | * What is the likelihood of the project results to continue and expand beyond the lifespan of the project? * Assess the institutional arrangements at national and local levels including local councils’ strategies, the involvement of the private sector and the communities as a way of ensuring ownership and the continuation of the results |
| **Impact** | * Assess the end results in terms of **(i)** goods, services, social and economic supports and opportunities delivered to the communities; * How have these contributed to poverty reduction, women’s empowerment and providing necessary support to LCs |
| **Gender and Social Inclusion** | * To what extent did the initiatives consider mainstreaming a gender perspective in the design, implementation and outcome of the Programme |
| **Lesson Learned** | * What key lessons were learnt from the projects? * How could these projects be done better in terms of design and implementation of the project for the second phase? |
| **Recommendations** | * What are the key recommendations for future enhancement of the programme? |

1. **Indicators**

It must be stated from the outset thatthe LGED-JP operates within the framework of the Local Government Act (LGA) of 2004 and the Decentralization Policy of 2010. The consultant will benchmark his findings based on the following indicators as stated and reflected in the four outputs outlined in the TOR:

* ***Output 1:*** MLGRD and MOFED strengthened to develop a National LED policy and strategy to enhance inclusive growth and economic diversification.
* ***Output 2***: Effectiveness of the Performance-Based Grant System (PBGS) enhanced through promoting participatory planning for inclusive LED.
* ***Output 3:*** Effectiveness of revenue collection and management of the property tax and business licenses improved.
* ***Output 4***: Local economies improved and micro and small enterprises (MSEs) capacities in target local councils strengthened to contribute to post-EVD recovery.

## 1.4 Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

With a fixed time frame of 32 working days for the assignment, the LGED evaluation, which was wide-ranging, was conducted using a three-tier process. The first tier covered the first 5 days and was devoted to debriefing sessions, preliminary document reviews, and holding consultations with UNDP management team, board members, which culminated in drafting of the inception report.

The second level of the assignment covered 7 days and was devoted to data collection, reviews and analysis. Documents reviewed included but were not limited to:UNDP Guidance for Outcome Evaluation, UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2013, UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System, 2008, UNDP Strategic Plan (2010-2013), UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-2017), UN Joint Vision Sierra Leone (2008-2012, UN Transitional Joint Vision Sierra Leone (2013-2014), UNDAF Sierra Leone 2015-2018, UNCDF LDF Business Plan 2011-2013, UNCDF LDF Business Plan 2014-2017, Annual progress reports, Monitoring reports, Evaluation Reports, among others.[[3]](#footnote-4)

The period under review also concentrated on Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with Development Partners, Board Members, UNDP Project Management Team, National Stakeholders in the targeted Councils and Provincial Secretary’s offices in Bo, Kenema and Makeni, and holding Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with IPs and beneficiaries. The consultant visited Makeni, Mgburaka, Bo, Kenema and Kailahun to observe and interact with and gauge the perception of IPs and beneficiaries on implemented projects. These were interspersed with periodic debriefings with the Program Manager and the Program team (through email exchanges and personal contacts) with the view to ensure that the consultant was on track, progress reviewed and issues that arose in the evaluation process were clarified. While the process of desk reviews, consultations and KIIs were underway, and based on the evidence gathered during these interactions, the consultant was able to form an interim opinion of the current state of play of the LGED intervention, along with an impression of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, successes, challenges, distil lessons learned, and provide overarching conclusion on UNDP results in the area of support, as well as recommendations on how the LGED will be designed for future implementation.

The next tier covered eleven (11) days and was devoted to data collation, analysis and preparation of draft report. The Consultant’s assessment of the information gathered from the KIIs, FDGs, observations and consultations was presented and draft report shared, and comments solicited in a consultative process. The last four (4) days was scheduled for incorporating comments and refining the report. The Final Evaluation of the LGED Report was developed and submitted to UNDP.

**The evaluation employed data collection information through the following methods:**

* **Desk review-**Documents reviewed and analysed included:- UNDP Guidance for Outcome Evaluation, UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2013, UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System, 2008, UNDP Strategic Plan (2010-2013), UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-2017), UN Joint Vision Sierra Leone (2008-2012), UN Transitional Joint Vision Sierra Leone (2013-2014), UNDAF Sierra Leone 2015-2018, UNCDF LDF Business Plan 2011-2013, UNCDF LDF Business Plan 2014-2017, Annual Progress Reports, Monitoring Reports, Evaluation Reports, among others.
* **Focus group interviews: C**onsultative meetings were held with groups of beneficiaries and IPs, community members, women’s groups and civil society on specific issues to assess their views, perceptions, suggestions and experience about the programme.
* **Semi-structured interview.** An interview guide, based on the evaluation matrix, was prepared and attached as an annex to the inception report, as well as the list of interview targets. The stakeholders interviewed included:
* UNDP Program Management Staff
* Board Members
* Development Partners
* Members of LCs
* Officials at the MLGRD, MOFED
* IPs
* Officials at the Provincial Secretary’s offices in Bo, Makeni and Kenema
* Civil society organizations, if applicable
* External stakeholders working in the areas /on similar issues: research centres, NGOs, CBOs etc.
* **Direct observation.**The evaluation reviewed the work related to the projects on the ground by attending meetings, project activities and conferences.
* **Visit to relevant target districts.** The targeted districts visited were done according to the following parameters:
* Type and level of interventions in the area
* Level of security, based on UNDSS approval
* Logistical access (road access, etc.)

## 1.5 Sampling

Because of the scope of the LGED evaluation and the time allocated to the consultant to complete the assignment, a random sampling method was adopted in carrying out data collection and field work. In targeting key informant interviewees, the consultant focused attention on Program team, MOFED, MLGRD, Board Members, DPs, IPs, Provincial Secretary’s offices, beneficiaries and CSOs.

A sample size of about six districts covering the four outputs was visited namely: Bo, Makeni, Kenema, Koinadugu, Pujehun and Kailahun.

## 1.6Approaches

Evaluation Considerations included:-The UNEG norms and standards, as well as UNDP corporate documents. Focusing on specific context of Sierra Leone, the region and UNDP corporate strategy, the evaluation applied the following principles:

* **Independence & neutrality**: The consultant did not have any financial or other ties with the contractor and its members, which could be construed as a conflict of interest. Review was undertaken in an impartial and objective manner.
* **Transparency**: The evaluation took place in a transparent manner, providing regular update on the progress, as well as potential changes, and constraints encountered.
* **Triangulation & Evidence based**: The consultant ensured that the findings were related to clear and fact based evidence and triangulated the findings in two ways:
* by using different sources
* by using different data collection methods
* **Participatory approach:** The community members played key roles in the evaluation process, for data collection, formulation of recommendations and identification of lessons learned. This approach involved focus groups meetings, direct beneficiaries, community members, leaders, partners and local civil society. The objective was to assess and promote appropriateness of the interventions, including of the monitoring and evaluation processes, and ensure the relevance of the recommendations.
* **Protection & Non-attribution:** Security was primary especially when analyzing and planning the data collection. Security concerns were assessed in collaboration with UNDP based on professional judgement of the team and recommendations of the relevant stakeholders. A second level of protection concerned the protection of interviewees according to the Chatham House Rules. ‘Confidentiality’ exhibited at all times, with assurance that no one will be put at risk while collecting data and that their contribution to the research will not result in any threat to their position or security.

**Consideration given at UNDP programmatic level, the evaluation focused on the following:**

* **Human Rights Based Approach.** The analysis took into account how equitable is the access to the programme and its benefits, and how the programme includes the needs of the vulnerable groups.
* **Gender mainstreaming**- Data was disaggregated by gender as and when necessary, and emphasis placed on inclusion of gender specific needs and characteristics

## 1.7 The Theory of Change

The consultant’s utilization of the theory of change was part of the LGED evaluation. The evaluation employed a mix of approaches to assess the program theory and to evaluate its relevance with the prevailing political economy of LGED in Sierra Leone. The methods included reviewing relevant program documents, conducting interviews with national and local stakeholders, reviewing prevailing literature on decentralization and local governance, and local economic development in Sierra Leone. Conclusions were also drawn regarding the level of concordance between the articulated program theory and the implementation of the program in reality.

It is very clear that the theory of change was embedded in the design and implementation of LGED through building initiatives the capacity of local government. The LGED was designed to bring on board lessons learned from the earlier Kenema project KDERP, but ‘should not be seen as a roll out of KDERP…as adjustments need to be made to enable the partners to achieve the expected results.” LGED-JP was built upon the UNCDF model of ‘LED through local government’. The key elements of this model, tailored to Sierra Leone’s context are designed to help local government to:

* Assume ownership of local economic development
* Understand and exploit their local economy for the functioning of LCs
* Engage with private sector and civil society actors to strategize on priority interventions to unleash the locality’s economic potentials
* Develop a LED strategy
* Enhance the regulatory environment for business in the locality
* Leverage private sector investments in infrastructure and other areas
* Make investments that unlock bottlenecks in prioritized value chains, particularly: Attracting inward investment through the promotion of economic potentials; Empowering women to reduce poverty; Inclusion of the socially marginalized groups; Supporting local producers and firms with increased access to finance, business development services, market information, etc.; Improving human skills; and Emphasizing the implementation of pro-poor initiatives.

The critical innovation in the approach to LED in Sierra Leone presented in this model is that no other approach to improving the economic viability at the sub-national level focuses on the role of local government. Following on the Joint Vision call to ensure that local government plans are based on natural resources and local business opportunities, the principle of this model was predicated on the fact that LED investments must be strategic and related to economic sectors and value chains that will generate growth and employment in the locality. In many respect, this would help alleviate poverty, which is the ultimate aim of the LGED.The theory of change also envisaged that documentation of the impacts of the LGED initiative in terms of increased investment, revenue generation, wealth creation and employment opportunities at the local level would be critical to influencing policy and practice of other stakeholders towards replication of the model in other councils.

## 1.8 Constraints and Limitations

The time frame set out in the TOR (21 days) for the assignment was quite inadequate for the consultant to complete the assignment of this magnitude. Attention needs to be paid to this in future. Equally worth noting is that the TOR needs to clearly state the expectations of the consultant from the onset. For example, the linking of LED to LG was not clearly articulated in the TOR but the consultant had gone ahead to address the issue because it is crucial in the overall planning of the future design of the LGED.

The LGED evaluation was also constrained by the fact that information came in drips and drabs, and some critical information was not all available at the most strategic preparation period. Some of the scheduled interviews with key informants (in Freetown) were inordinately delayed or never took place. This impacted on the data collection process and analysis of available information, and, by extension, on the consultant’s output.

# Chapter 2

## 2.1 Relevance

The LGED Evaluation demonstrates that UNDP’s engagement in Local Governance (LG) and Local Economic Development (LED) support clearly reflects strategic considerations. There was an especially strong and demonstrable strategic linkage of relevance to the development aspirations of the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL). The design of the governance program was in synch with the country’s Poverty Reduction Strategies especially I and II and other national development trajectories. As a matter of fact, UNDP’s contribution to LGED has been relevant, strategic and quite exemplary. Evidence includes progress made in capacitating women and men and provided with seed money to undertake Gara Dying and Soap Making trade in the Makeni City Council; the establishment of a Service Center for youths in Pujehun where youths receive skills training; the establishment of Business Service Centers in Kailahun and Kambia and SMEs are trained in book keeping, financial management, mentoring and value chain and trained to undergo business competition before they are qualified for grants; (see chapter 3.0 for detailed development results of UNDP interventions in LGED).

The Local Governance and Economic Development Programme (LGED) is responsive and relevance to the Government of Sierra Leone’s PRSP II and III (Agenda for Change and Agenda for Prosperity) under the 2nd and 4th priority areas: addressing pro-poor growth, and promoting the decentralization policy and devolution of functions to local governments. It also fits within the UN response to PRSP III and the outcomes of the United Nations Assistance Framework (UNDAF).[[4]](#footnote-5) This was confirmed during FGDs with stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Stakeholder consultations particularly with national and international partners reveal that UNDP is the leading agency on local governance issues and has comparative advantage particularly in building the capacities of council staff to serve at their optimum. The LGED program has helped recruit and provide training to Valuation Officers in the 19 councils with the view to help the councils collect and properly manage much needed own source revenue (Cadastral System). The support rendered to councils, unquestionably, hasthe potential to improve the financial capacities and strengthen council’s immune system against central government control especially over finance.

The programme is in sync with and integrated into the national set-up for local governance and the Decentralization Policy which emphasizes the eradication of poverty in the rural areas. The LGED strategic focus is predicated on building “A resilient and vibrant local economies that exploit local opportunities, address local needs and contribute to national development objectives such as Agenda for Prosperity economic growth and poverty alleviation’’.[[5]](#footnote-6) This singular objective and vision is directly linked to national development priorities particularly the Decentralization Policy that puts emphasis on participatory governance and poverty eradication.

The evaluation found that the programme is contributing to or has the potential to create an enabling atmosphere for private sector investment and development *albeit* this can be clearly achieved with the passing of the LED Policy currently laid in Cabinet. The LED Strategy and Policy establishes the conceptual framework for piloting and injecting private sector innovative practice, which is critical for achieving LED vision and strategic approach.

The consultant noted that investments are very relevant to communities, especially among the rural poor whose livelihoods are constantly threatened by both internal and external economic shocks. However, most of the investments address the traditional needs-based rather than a strategic approach to LED. It is anticipated that with the passing of the LED Policy, investments will be more focused on an integrated approach to LED.

Document review reveals that the LGED efforts provide a strong strategic fit and linkage between the poverty reduction and governance pillars of UNDP’s strategic plan at the global level. Within the LGED Portfolio, the consultant established the very relevance and deliberate attempt which had been made to link improvements in decentralized governance, local economic development, poverty reduction and social inclusion to UNDP development outcomes within the wordings“...focuses attention on those left behind, reaching the furthest behind first”.[[6]](#footnote-7)UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-17 places emphasis on building the capacity of local government, including the caveat that UNDP will rely upon UNCDF’s financial mandate in specific areas of shared focus in LCs.

The LGED program has clearly attempted to support national efforts spearheaded by the government to address the underlying structural causes that are afflicting Sierra Leone in the pre and post-Ebola period. Working with the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), the program has sought to facilitate issues such as the passing into law the LED Policy that address some of the root causes of poverty, disempowerment, exclusion, marginalization and many more afflicting rural communities. The program has also addressed critical gender issues such as inclusion in decision-making, financial empowerment and protection against Gender-based Violence (GBV). These human rights issues quintessentially address issues that the LGED agenda is set to accomplish.

Some of the major reforms at the UN have influenced the relevance of UNDP support to the GoSL. In many respects, UNDP’s governance portfolio clearly works on deepening democratic governance, strengthening the functionality of state institutions, the maintenance of peace, justice and security, the call for diversity in this multi-layer world and the adherence and protection of human rights all of which are high on the UN reformed agenda. UNDP 2014-2017 Strategic plan: 1, Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded; 2. Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance. It is very clear that the LGED design is linked to UNDAF pillar 5: labor and employment, critical issue affecting youth empowerment.

One critical challenge noted by the consultant was that the program document or remnants of it from the 2014 was designed without consultation with the Councils. The decision to provide seed money (quota), for instance to implement the PBGS, were arrived at without the consent of the councils. In all intents and purposes, the failure on the part of UNDP not to involve councils in program design resulted in the inadequacy of the funds available to the councils to cater for more women and the socially excluded that could have had the required impact.

## 2.2 Effectiveness

The TOR expects the consultant to address the following questions: How well have the project intended results been achieved or not achieved? What changes have occurred as the result of project intervention?

It must be noted from the outset that this phase of the LGED program was implemented without a properly prepared Project Document. Rather, the program heavily relied on elements of the old ProDoc and Annual Work Plans (AWPs) to implement the current outputs under review.

Based on the desk review of documents, interviews with internal program teams and partners, as well as field visits, it is the consultant’s assessment that the LGED has made considerable contribution to the achievement of the program outputs. To a large extent, the LGED initiative has been effective in helping improve local governance and promote economic development at local level. To be sure, four councils namely: Makeni city, Kailahun, Pujehun and Koinadugu District councils were supported in LED micro project through the Performance Based Grant System (PBGS). The program initiative resulted in the building and furnishing of the Pujehun Youth Resource Centre where 300 Youths in Pujehun are currently using the facility as meeting points and recreational services; 60 trainees (60 % women) were trained in gara tie dying in Makeni City; 12 youth were trained in carpentry and 6 in tailoring in Kailahun; 30 Youth of equal number of male and female were engaged in sustainable waste management and cleaning activities in Kabala township. In Makeni, 70 females and 3 males were engaged in soap making ranging from Africana, cake soap to ball soap expedited by the council. The result was a net profit of Le 332, 000 was realized within 10 days of operation.[[7]](#footnote-8) A detailed achievement of these outputs is found in Chapter 3 of the report.

The effectiveness of the program was also demonstrated when the LGED supported the Councils to develop a fiscal cadastral system with a view to increasing the revenue base of the council and to improve on transparency and accountability in local revenue mobilization through the development of property cadastre system. Progress reports indicate that the exercise brought complete transformation in the revenue mobilization drive and the manner the tax was previously collected in most council where the revenue mobilization and collection output was implemented. Some of the intended results were: the review of the revenue administrative system with reference to property tax and business licenses wherein a framework was developed to assess properties and businesses to ensure increase in revenue. The tax base on property tax in 2015 was less than two million leones; a schedule was developed for business licenses and publicly displayed for residents to know how much businesses and other service providers should pay for the different kinds of businesses and other activities done within the council; six staff and councilors were mandated to ensure that all revenues were collected and banked accordingly and a monitoring mechanism has been developed to follow-up on all payments. This has greatly improved transparency and accountability in revenue mobilization with the potential for the council to undertake and fund projects independently.[[8]](#footnote-9) Detailed assessment of the effectiveness and results of the four outputs is available in the next chapter.

Additionally, better quality of gara is now available and better sales are experienced thus increasing the income levels of the women in Makeni and Kailahun. This has resulted to creating career path for the beneficiaries in the targeted districts. Under the records management output, there is easy access and retrieval of information on government staff that has made performance tracking at the Cabinet Secretariat uncomplicated.

One critical unintended result was quite noticeable in the Kenema City Council where the council’s revenue collection has engendered construct a Mini-Stadium with a capacity of 2,500. The stadium also houses a shopping mall, and other recreational and entertainment center. The completion of the stadium will undoubtedly provide jobs for residents and business opportunities for the people culminating in alleviating poverty in the city.

The consultant also noted from stakeholder interviews that revenue collection faced some critical challenges. Valuators were recruited and trained to undertake tax collection exercises but have refused to share information on how much have been collected. There is hardly any public information on the amount of taxes collected. The consultant did not find mechanisms in place to ensure that valuators are answerable to the councils or even where these existed, they have not been properly carried out. As such, leakages have been occurring which, in all intents and purposes, have resulted councils losing money that could have been spent on service delivery programs.

The evaluation reveals that the LGED program has collaborated with the GoSL through the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), Development Partners (DPs) and national partners, CSOs and the private sector to promote local governance and economic development in the country. The overall impression is that, the PBGS has gained traction among councils where the program has not been implemented. Since the PBGS is based on performance, every council is working hard to meet the criteria for qualification and this, in itself, is an indication that the PBGS is playing a vital role to provide much needed funds and resources for local economic development. This is promoting country ownership, development partner alignment with country priorities and mutual accountability although more progress is expected to be made in the future.

Records management at the MLGRD has been exemplary. People can now access chieftaincy and amalgamation records much easily than before. The Records Unit has been equipped with computers, metal cabinets, air conditioner services and other gadgets to ensure that information stored in the unit are kept safe and easily and that the public has easy access to them

Regardless of the fact that some gains have been made, the consultant established that the PBGS reports in most districts were not submitted on time and funds disbursements were sometimes problematic because of lack of transparency in the exercise. Proper record keeping has been difficult to say the least posing delivery problems at the Country Office (CO). Similarly, come councils continue to renege on being transparent with revenues collected at the local level.

## 2.3 Efficiency

The evaluation is expected to assessi) how economically the programme resources have been used to achieve the results with greater impact, (ii) the quality and timeliness of inputs including the Management arrangements, staffing, the reporting and monitoring system and the extent to which these have been effectively supporting activities directed towards achieving the outputs and (iii) how the partnership strategies have contributed to achieving the results.

The Evaluation discovered that UNDP has delivered most of its financial and technical support for the LGED program.In terms of financing to achieve planned outputs, the consultant’s review of the data on mobilization and utilization of programme resources revealed that UNDP has exhibited a high degree of efficiency in this regard.

The evaluation also noted that there has been economical use of financial and human resources. The consultant was able to assess other factors that relate to efficiency including:-Efforts devoted to institutional capacity development such as, capacity development trainings that were undertaken by the program and the utilisation of knowledge and skills obtained from the training programmes. Capacity development training undertaken by the projects plus the utilisation of knowledge and skills obtained are evident to the efficient use of resources. The capacity development of beneficiaries in Kailahun and Kambia SMEs and skills obtained in financial management, book keeping, numeracy and many others are examples worthy of note. Efforts devoted to institutional capacity development and enhancing South-South Cooperation (study tours to Ghana, Rwanda, South Africa and lately Japan are evidence of institutional strengthening) were also examined. At this point, the resources were efficiently utilised since there is evidence that most of the intended results were achieved.

Additionally, impact and outcome of some programme results were hampered by weak monitoring and evaluation due to insufficient investments of time and resources by UNDP. UNDP also lack enough staff to manage the program culminating in weak monitoring and playing oversight roles especially when programmatic activities have been extended to other councils in the regions. The CO needs additional staff to beef up the department and recruitment of technical expertise in LGED going forward. Also, the high turnover of council staff within LCs resulting in loss of champions and institutional memory that should be responsible to drive the LGED agenda has impaired the strategic planning process. This was very evident during the evaluation exercise where most council staff members that started program implementation have been transferred to other councils without any comprehensive hand-over notes to successors. This has resulted in los of institutional memory and capacity to efficiently implement program outputs.

The program funds were managed from two fronts. First, UNDP used the National Implementation Modality (NIM) approach to fund the implementation of the LGED programs. UNDP would hire the HACT to assess the level of capacity of IPs and MDAs to manage funds and recommendations are made thereafter before monies are disbursed. For instance, the MOFED and CEPAD were identified, assessed and recommendation to carry out the PBGS and SMEs respectively in the targeted councils. Based on the HACT recommendations, UNDP would enter into and sign agreements through Letter of Agreement (LOA) or Micro Capital Grant (MCG) with partner institutions. UNDP would then monitor projects while partner institutions would provide progress reports and account how funds were expended.

Second, UNDP used the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) in the implementation of the LGED program. In this case, UNDP would rely on the submission of concept notes prepared by MDAs particularly the MLGRD and terms of reference with accompanying budgets for project implementation. The concept papers are reviewed based on UNDP standards and funds would be released to the respective MDA for implementation. UNDP strictly manages and disburses the funds to service providers. UNDP coordinates, oversees and monitors the utilization of these funds requesting for quarterly financial reports from the MDAs.

One of the challenges UNDP faced in both NIM and DIM was the lack of proper reporting and accountability system especially from the MDAs and councils. UNDP experienced inordinate delays in receiving reports from the MDAs and the councils and in many cases, the financial reports were without supporting documents as proof for the expenditure. Adhering to its financial management system, UNDP would refuse to disburse funds until previous reports and supporting documents were submitted. This caused inordinate delays not only in the disbursements of funds but also in project implementation thus affecting timelines and, by implication, program targets.

The evaluation noted that the LGED initiative has been adversely affected by cumbersome procurement processes and rigid project management. Project partners, by and large, have agreed that UNDP procedures and processes have been ‘rather agile and unencumbered’ compared with those of the Government. At the same time, there have been frequent complaints that UNDP procedures have been lengthy, especially those linked to procurement, causing delays and adversely affecting the ability of UNDP to deliver against results. A case in point is the delay in the procurement of shelves for records management system in Makeni, Bo and Kenema. The delays have caused the project’s inability to deliver on time, which clearly affects efficiency.

Overall, assessment of the evaluation relative to delivery results for majority of the program outputs are satisfactorily on track and needs to be regularly monitored by UNDP Country Office to maintain and obtain excellent results at all times. The projects are being implemented in a reasonably efficient manner without duplication and the strategy of having the Program Specialist embedded in the line ministries is very cost-efficient. There is need to replicate the embedding UNDP project staff at council level as the case in KDC and KCC. This approach will inevitably promote efficiency and national ownership, and enhances development outcomes.

UNDP also emerges as a credible long-term partner under this arrangement. Additionally, the Monitoring & Evaluation mechanisms put in place to measure progress towards the achievement of results is not very effective as expected but still a working progress. As to date, it is worth noting that the programme has contributed satisfactorily to planned outcomes and results.

## 2.4 Sustainability

The TOR requires the consultant to answer the following questions: what is the likelihood that the program interventions will be sustainable? What institutional arrangements have been put in place at national and local levels to ensure sustainability? How was the private sector involved in program intervention?

Sustainability presupposes the capacity to endure. It does not necessarily posit the functionality of systems and processes at institutional level but also emphasizes the resilience of the systems and processes. Sustainability is better ensured through continued investments in capacity building of different stakeholders (not just Governments) at the local level over a long period of time. As such, there is the likelihood that some of the LGED program initiatives will be sustainable. For instance, the program’s support to building national and local capacities to be efficient and effective in carrying out their mandates and responsibilities point to sustainability because the training and skills development received will remain with the people after the expiration of the project. The trainings and capacity development of valuation officers to expedite the process of revenue mobilization and collection in the councils; the provision of laptops, printers, photo copiers, wall fans, metal cabinets and other office equipment to SMEs in Kailahun to increase efficiency; the trainings and financial support provided to women and men in the Makeni City Council to undertake Gara Tie Dying and Soap Making to generate wealth and alleviate poverty; the 96 entrepreneurs (70 females and 26 males) trained in nine modules such as book keeping, taking inventory, financial management, stock control, and marketing to improve livelihood and generate wealth have all helped build the capacity of beneficiaries in various fields of work. These skills and knowledge gained and awareness creation in these training sessions will remain with the beneficiaries (ownership) after the expiration of the current LGED program. Investing in the capacity development of IPs contributes to sustainability.

Generally, the LGED results of local governance and local economic development support to the councils with respect to sustainability are mixed. While the consultant’s assessment reveals that not much attention was paid to embedding a sustainability plan at the program design stage, which invariably has contributed to a weak record of sustainability. Nonetheless, the program’s initiatives and some mechanisms put in place in many respects have sustainability elements. For instance, LGED has been involved in building the human capital much required for longer term sustainability. The embedding of the Program Specialist at the MLGRD and the Program Officer at the local level in Kenema and the various training programs undertaken to strengthen councils and build skills and knowledge of beneficiary groups, particularly women, at the lower strata of the state will contribute to national ownership and sustainability.

To ensure that the program will be sustainable, LGED has enhanced MDAs and Councils’ understanding of engagement in the promotion of local governance and local economic development as the engine for growth and developmentin the country. This has been achieved through the drafting of the LED Strategy and Policy that has a broad framework projecting LED as the mainstay for poverty reduction and social inclusion in rural areas. LED involves locally based activities which serve to encourage: Economic growth in terms of sustained increase in economic output and jobs to raise average incomes and living standards; a better use of human resources by making the labour market work better (efficiency), improving the enterprise culture and supporting the access of less advantaged groups of people to jobs, incomes and business ownership (equity); and improved quality of life by providing for sustainable economic growth.[[9]](#footnote-10) The passing of the bill into law and implementation of the LED Policy certainly engenders sustainability.

Additionally, the support provided by the LGED to capacitate the MLGRD and MOFED to go on study tours to Ghana, Rwanda and South Africa, and recently to Japan to deepen their knowledge and learn lessons on integrating LED into the local governance architecture cannot be overstated. However, the consultant noted that the capacity of the MLGRD needs to be further strengthened especially in the areas of program management and implementation, financial management and program design if program sustainability can be assured. Furthermore, knowledge sharing after study tours by government officials should be made compulsory with the view to improve and strengthen the capacities of other officials in the MDAs.

There are examples where projects outputs are contributing and have promoted sustainability after the program comes to an end, and within which activities will surely continue. For instance, the SME development in Kailahun and Kambia districts has capacitated beneficiaries in financial management system, records keeping, numeracy and other capacity building efforts which has skilled them for life. In Makeni, the soap making efforts have contributed to increase in skills and by implication, increase in income generation for the people. The procurement of laptops, desk tops, giant photocopiers, wall fans, metal cabinets and other office equipment for Records Management at the MLGRD have enhanced the capacity of the unit to perform at its optimum. The likelihood for these activities to continue without support from outside is great. Improving and strengthening the skills of beneficiaries remains key to sustainability when donor contributions dry up.

The consultant discovered that the DIM modality employed to implement the four outputs have been viewed by MDAs and Councils as micro-management. MDAs and councils want to implement and manage their own projects and learn lessons from both successes and failures. They would want to see UNDP adopting the NIM and transferring major implementation responsibilities to government institutions. To them, UNDP should be seeing playing more of a facilitating and oversight role, establishing partnerships across board and identifying local experts to work on LGED future programs. This ensures sustainability and ownership of the LGED program. A caveat to this however is that it will be difficult for UNDP to shift to the NIM modality when the GoSL has not fulfilled its own part of the agreement to provide matching fund to support the LED initiatives in the country.

The sustainability of any aspects of LGED efforts will depend greatly upon continued interest and support from the MoFED/LGED. The agency has taken the lead in supporting both the revenue generation and council budget support activities. These two aspects of the programme represent great potential for continued operation beyond the life of LGED, but only if this agency maintains its interest and if financial resources are forthcoming to finance non-earmarked, but performance based, budget allocations.

By the same token, several factors have adversely affected sustainability. Weak risk analysis (political, administrative, social, corruption, and so on), poor advocacy to promote broad-based ownership, insufficient micro-macro linkages and unrealistic timelines have prevented adoption of projects for scaling up nationwide. Sustainability has been adversely affected when resource implications have not been fully factored in and this has resulted in insufficient capacity building efforts within Government and among non-state actors. In many cases, concerns of sustainability have not been adequately factored into the project at the design stage. Contributing to this has been the limited transfer of in-house knowledge on local governance to other units within UNDP and to development partners. Also, the withdrawal of funds and staff at the end of the project as well as the high turnover of staff in Government (at all levels), within partner NGOs and within UNDP have also adversely affected sustainability.

As a footnote, the consultant observed that there is no exit strategy presented in the outputs and AWPs. This may be due to flawed program template rather than lack of sustainability consciousness as the UNDP projects generally promote sustainability. However, a more deliberate approach to sustainability within the theory of lasting change may be necessary going forward. LGED needs to clearly establish the development changes that would occur at the implementation of programs at all levels.

## 2.5 Impact

Impacts are not normally realized and appreciated in the short term. Rather, they are measured in longer term period. The full impact of the LGED cannot be measured in such a short time of four years. As such, the program can only contribute to impact and not be in a position to attribute long term development changes just from initiatives at the end of the four-year program.

Establishing impact entails analyzing short term outputs, medium term outcomes as well as long term effects of the project interventions. These include positive and negative; direct or indirect and intended or unintended outcomes of the program. The aim is to determine whether the program has made a difference and how it has achieved the difference. In light of the aforementioned undertakings, there is strong evidence on the following impacts.

The evaluation found that the program has, to a large extent, achieved its outputs in increasing and building the capacity of groups of women (about 200 women) involved in and benefitted from gara tie dying and soap making in Makeni. The profits accrued from these businesses have been used to cater for individual family livelihood such as food, paying fees for school going children and caring for sick family members.

When we make profit, we do keep some and use some to

take care of our families. For me, I am now responsible for

paying fees for three of my children in school. I do also cater

for food since my husband is not employed. I can’t imagine

how we could have survived without the support provided

by UNDP (Fatmata Kargbo, Chairlady-Gara Tie Dying Association

Makeni) Translation mine

In the Kenema City Council, the water purification and pre-school projects, which targeted women, are the flagship LED projects that the city showcases. These projects are completely gender biased in favor of women with the view to empower women, particularly market women, improve their earnings and provide security for their children during the day.

The water purification and pre-school projects have been

quite successful. The projects have helped women increase

their earning powers and also provided security for their

children who attend the pre-school. (Mayor of KCC)

The evaluation found that some of the projects are having a catalytic and multiplier effect on the people and communities. For instance, the revenue mobilization output in the KCC has engendered then to start the construction of a Mini-Stadium that is completely been funded by the council.

However, the SMEs project in Kailahun and Kambia faced some challenges that are worthy of note. The purchasing power of customers (to the SMEs as well as the small business owners) has been affected by the economic challenge currently faced by Sierra Leone. This also has ripple effect on the volume of sales (decreased sales). As a result, entrepreneurs supported by CEPAD-SL were subjected to mentorship and coaching in order to enable them to manage the situation skillfully and avoid business failure.[[10]](#footnote-11)

Another critical impact of the LGED program has been the creation of an enabling environment to empower women (through small business opportunities, agriculture) in rural communities besieged by poverty and exclusion. In many instances, the program purposefully targeted women with the view to improve their socio-economic condition and capacitate and elevate them for their current economic status. A narrative from a market woman in Kenema is in order.

We, the women, are managing the water purification

project here in Kenema. We have been trained how to

purify and package water which we sell to take care of

our needs. Some of us are now able to pay school fees

For our children, provide support to our husbands most

of whom are unemployed and livelihood issues are now

been taken care of. To a large extent, we are experiencing

improvements in our lives (Baindu Saffa, KCC Water Purification)

The evaluation noted that most of the outputs have not facilitated a process of wealth generation. What is clear is that the outputs have improved the capacity of village retailers to upgrade their economic standing. It was however established that as the market products viewed by the evaluation were dominated by manufactured goods imported from outside the area, the extent to which the covered market has benefited the poorer rural subsistence farmers of the area in uncertain. Combining the covered market with the requested upgrade of the local river jetty may have helped, but a political, not financial, decision was made to give those funds for the, now moribund, youth centre in the district capital.

Records management has a high potential of impacting on the capacity of the MLGRD to serve as the hub for information gathering and research on local and chiefdom governance systems. Access and retrieval of information have been made easier; staffs’ capacity have been built, which has given them confidence to relate with the public; performance tracking from the Cabinet Secretariat has been positive and have referred to the records section of the MLGRD as a model; confidence level of file users have increased; decongestion of paper files in offices; accessing chieftaincy and amalgamation records have been computerized and easily accessible.

A critical constraint in assessing the impact of LGED is that the programme did not put in place any standard set of indicators that could guide the evaluation team in their assessment. The evaluation team uncovered very limited evidence of impacts beyond those created directly through UN funding and many of the metrics posited by programme management as proof of successful impact quickly unraveled upon inspection. For example, programme documentation claimed the creation of over 200 jobs, but the evaluation team was only able to verify eleven. Similarly, the programme manager stated that $32,000 is received annually by the KDC from the Guest House and Tongo Fields Cold storage. The District Council Chairman disagreed, stating that nothing had yet been received from the cold storage contractor and the guesthouse is not yet operating. According to donor representatives interviewed by the evaluation team, the LGED had failed to ‘prove its model’, hampering the programme’s ability to mobilize additional resources.

The seed money for the PBGS mechanism will have a multiplier effect if it stimulates GoSL interest in channeling other monies to LCs, triggered by compliance with standardized parameters. Establishing the assessment of the performance of councils in the conduct of their statutory obligations as the first step in the approval of their grant proposals is noteworthy. This will make a real change in the nature of intergovernmental fiscal transfers in Sierra Leone, one that could have a positive impact on public perception of local governance quality and service delivery. However, the funds had not been disbursed at the time of the evaluation, preventing any objective assessment of the efficacy of the mechanism.

## 2.6 Gender and Social inclusion

The evaluation is expected to examine, among others, the extent to which initiatives have considered mainstreaming a gender perspective in the design, implementation and outcome of the program.

Although the LGED has no clearly designed Project Document for the period under review, elements of the previous Prodoc and the AWPs considered gender perspective as critical to LGED initiative in the program design. Aside, the LGED design is a pro-poor initiative targeting vulnerable groups including women and the socially excluded in society. In its implementation, the PBGS and Revenue Collection outputs deliberately targeted more women than men and aimed at empowering them to fight poverty afflicting them. In the targeted councils, women have become the focus and locus of the LGED intervention and they take the center stage for promoting the LED. The impact, in the short term, has been tremendous as more women who have benefitted from the intervention have access to funds that take care of their basic livelihood.

The LGED staff contributed substantially to ensuring the viability of GELD supported initiatives, including the Pre-school and water purification projects in the KCC. The evaluation observed the water plant is now in operation, which became nearly dysfunctional during the outbreak of the Ebola epidemic. The FGDs with KCC council reveal that the benefit of these two projects on women empowerment cannot be overemphasized. In Kailahun District Council, about 80% of the 230 participants trained in financial management, banking skills, record keeping and marketing for SMEs were women. The Youth Service Center targeted youths and trained them in a variety of skills ranging from carpentry, masonry to tailoring. In kabala, youths received training in the use of the waste management equipment provided by the LGED intervention. Access to PBGS funds that is operational at the LGFD in the MOFED is predicated on focus on women and gender equity. All of the staff members working in the Records Management Unit at the MLGRD are women. There is no denying the fact that women visibility of the program has been deliberate.

From the foregoing, there are every indication that the LGED promoted the inclusion and mainstreaming of gender issues in local governance and economic development program. However, the consultant notes that a strategic and systematic effort at mainstreaming gender concerns into local governance and local economic development has been fully accomplished. In other words, the systematic gender analysis of local governance interventions has not regularly been conducted. It is no gainsaying the fact that there has been recognition that women’s empowerment has meant more than their participation in decision making and wealth creation, appropriate indicators for assessing improvements in gender relations and greater equality in the benefits flowing to women and men have not been worked out for most local governance initiatives. Similarly, capacity-building initiatives have targeted women but adequate data have not been gathered to assess whether or not women have benefited from greater awareness and training initiatives.

It is obvious to state that a number of women are engaged in activities associated with LGED activities (including those passed on from KDERP and GELD). However, the evaluation is of the view that the use of externally mobilized funds to generate jobs for women does not constitute a meaningful improvement in gender equity. It is not unsurprising that the number of employed women used to substantiate programme impact amounts to confusing improving the immediate condition of women with improving the strategic position of women. Actually, with the exception of the service contract for the GELD-initiated KCC water treatment and cold storage (run by a woman who is based in the USA), the jobs held by women in facilities associated with LGED, i.e., fishmongers, market saleswomen, nearly all existed before the investments of LGED. A more deliberate strategy to improve the strategic position of women is in order.

## 2.7 Linking LED to LG

Linking LED to LG requires the institutionalization of LED in the MLGRD, the home Ministry of Local Governance and Decentralization in Sierra Leone. A critical condition to be fulfilled, therefore, is to ensure the complete devolution of power, authority, assets and financial and human resources to the councils. At the moment, only 56 out of the 79 functions have been devolved.

LED as a policy and strategy has to be well articulated, informed and mainstreamed with other national policies particularly with the Decentralization, Local Content, Chiefdom Governance and National Investment Policies. Although LED is contained in the Decentralization Policy of 2010, the current advocacy is more about strategic positioning and policy anchoring of LED as the driver of and engine for poverty reduction in the rural areas. First, it has to sit well in the local governance architecture with the view to address the following: addressing the multidimensional nature of poverty and promote sustainable development; and promoting projects in localities with limited infrastructure and low human resource capacities through attracting both public sector and private sector resources. LED is indeed the frontline for promoting local development where in most cases it never existed before and, therefore, there is a need to adopt a medium to long term perspective which has to be holistically and comprehensively designed as part of the national development plan.

LED as a policy and process attracts key local, national and international partners together to invest in, and stimulate local economies for growth and poverty reduction. It is designed as a bottom up process emanating from localities, advocating for and attracting external investments, retention and expansion of local enterprises, connecting global value chains and mobilising the private sector. This can only be achieved when LED is directly linked to LG, the latter providing the political, policy, legal and infrastructural framework for LED implementation in Sierra Leone.

Whilst focusing on localities, LED requires well-articulated national and local policies, strengthened local and national institutions and the regulatory frameworks, committed and purposeful planning, and commitment to financing by the government, development partners and the private sector.LGED program should be seen partnering and collaborating with private sector institutions such as the banking system, the Sierra Leone Chamber of Commerce, SLIEPA, the mining sector and others to recognize LED as the life blood for national development andinvest in the process. The deployment of financial and human capital is the key to strengthening the spiral of cumulative economic growth of which LED is centrally about. LED must be seen as central to repackaging factors of production at the lower strata of the state –land, labour, capital and technology. Local authorities are able to mobilise land and labour, but rely on other stakeholders for capital and technology investments.

LED is, therefore, multi-actor in terms of implementation, and all the key actors become part of the continuous learning and lesson sharing. Most fundamentally, the GoSL and local councils have to steer local economic development creating the necessary conditions and space for engagement with the private sector, community groups and other non-governmental actors. This is the first and most important condition for effective LED – recognising the critical division of labour among the key stakeholders and creating recognisable forums for action. Effective LED also requires strong community involvement particularly in the rural and urban informal sectors.

LED seeks to attract new investments and therefore the LED authority has to invest in making the localities attractive and viable. This requires a public sector investment commitment beyond the short project horizons. Both hard and soft infrastructures are needed to make places attractive to investors. Mainstreaming LED into national budget cannot be more urgent.

The emerging general model of LED seeks to address underdevelopment in terms of seeking to tap on local potentials, local comparative and competitive advantage, using local skills and empowering local communities and their institutions across the board as opposed to only a selected few centers. There is also a mix of the typical structures that support LED, whose bottom line is the political support by the central government or established bureaucracies at the local level.

## 2.8 Strategic Positioning and Prioritization of LGED for the Next Phase

UNDP’s response to a changing world should draw upon its comparative advantage and informed by its overall technical knowledge and experience of how LGED interventions take place in an ever-changing global environment. UNDP should refocus its attention more on and reposition itself, and prioritize its programmatic engagement and future strategies by aligning its new Program Document with national development priorities and strategies. The program should be seen narrowing its focus on the under-mentioned projects and avoiding been over-stretched.

**Strengthening Joint Programs and Resource Mobilization**

A critical issue discussed with stakeholders in relation to LGED future position and prioritization speaks directly to the strengthening of joint programs and resource mobilization for programmatic activities. In this regard, the following are in order: (1) narrow and focus more on strengthening SME development and the PBGS; ( 2) Reinforce strong government buy-in, leadership and ownership; (3) Ensure that the UNDP strategically lead the joint program and mobilize resources; (4) Ensure the joint program is in sync with the national development agenda; (5) Plan to access different possible funding sources (e.g. voluntary contributions, the private sector, non-traditional partners,assessed contributions, government cost-sharing and different multi-donor trust funds and windows); (6) Capitalize on existing strengths but adjusts to new realities in this changing world.

**Develop the Private Sector through SMEs**

Concentrate more on developing the private sector through capacity development of SMEs to graduate into entrepreneurs. This can be achieved by collaborating with the Local Content Agency, SLIEPA, Chambers of Commerce, Financial Institutions, Development Partners and MDAs. The program should also develop adequate policy framework for SME development and connect the policy to the Local Content Policy, Public Investment Policy etc.

**Counter-part Funding**

Counterpart funding or matching funds from the government are critical for the future of the LGED. Over-reliance or dependence on external funding for a locally conceived program is bound to be counter-productive. The government should be seen owning the process and integrating funding for the program by setting aside seed money in its national budget

**Institutionalization of the LED**

LED programs such as the PBGS should be institutionalized with established policy framework so that it becomes part of the state architecture rather than being a stand-alone project. It should be anchored in the Rural Development Directorate at the MLGRD with an established committee comprising officials from the MLGRD, MOFED, UNDP, overseeing its management processes and functionality aimed at ensuring accountability and ensuring poverty reduction and social inclusion. The HRMO should recruit key personnel: finance officer, Budget Analyst, M&E officer, Human Resource, Public Relations etc to provide backstopping

**Localization of the SDGs**

The Rural Development Directorate, in sync with MOFED and UNDP, should champion the localization of the SDGsand linked to LED. This is critical for attracting funding much required for pushing, rolling out and implementing the LED strategy

**Joint Programming**

UNDP should take the initiative and ownership for coordination among traditional and non-traditional development partners while the national partners should be more involved in joint planning, programming and sitting on steering committees. There is need for more joint approach in planning and programming and focusing on building and institutionalizing systems and processes as opposed to ad hoc approaches

**DIM to NIM**

Transitioning to a national execution modality is in place but has to be gradual, with a system of direct payment to start with leading to advances over a period of time. As part of the transition process, regular management and financial audits need to be conducted in order to assess performance. This is quintessential for capacity building of state institutions particularly financial management and accountability.

# Chapter 3

# 3.0 Assessment of Outputs Results

## 3.1 Output 1: MLGRD and MOFED Strengthened to develop a National LED Policy and Strategy to enhance inclusive growth and economic diversification

### 3.1.1 Output Activities

* The National LED policy has been developed and tabled in Parliament for debate and passage;
* Support provided to LOCASL to carry out impact assessment of EVD on LGED-JP investment in target LCs;
* Support LOCASL to organize consultative workshop with LCPU to ensure LCs involvement in the implementation of LCP;
* Five-year LED strategy documents were rollout to local councils and other stakeholders in the

target districts;

* Support MLGRD on study tours in Ghana and Rwanda, and international conferences in South Africa and recently in Japan that involved the Minister and the PS;
* In collaboration with LOCASL and the LCPU, a LCP a two-day consultative workshop was held in Bo on the 22-23 October 2015, bringing on board 57 participants in the 19 local councils to map a way forward and to ensure the total involvement of LCs in the implementation of the Local Content Policy;
* Participation of the MLGRD and MOFED to undertake study tours in Ghana and Rwanda relating to LED have helped build their capacities in LGED;

### 3.1.2 Activities on Rolling out the Local Economic Development Strategy

* The LED strategic policy documents to local councils and other stakeholders rolled out in Tonkolili, Kenema City, Kenema District and Moyamba respectively;
* 300 copies of the strategy document distributed to all districts and relevant MDAs in the country;
* The roll out attracted 270 males and 90 females;

### 3.1.3 Key Achievements

* Major activities in the LED strategy were integrated into the respective local council plans for implementation within the period of three years;
* LED committees were established comprising 11 persons from the relevant MDAs , Market women and local councils, charged with the task of overseeing the implementation of LED activities in the respective districts, which has improved greater participation of stakeholders;
* Some private companies were for the first time part of the rollout and there were some indication of future partnership with the local councils;
* The Development Planning Officers (DPOs) were identified as focal persons for the implementation of LCP in the 19 local councils;
* The LCP was integrated into the respective development plans of councils to ensure ownership of the process

### 3.1.4 Noted Challenges

* Capacity challenges at the MLGRD and MOFED remains a problem in implementing this output;
* Coordination between the MLGRD and MOFED needs to be improved to ensure the smooth out implementation;
* Capacity strengthening of councils on LED should be prioritized if the LGED is to succeed;
* The private sector, both national and international, must be fully involved in the rolling out of the LED;
* The institutionalization of LED in the MLGRD particularly seated in the Rural Development Directorate is critical for the promotion of LED and subsequently pro-poor interventions in the country

### 3.1.5 Lessons Learned

* Linking LED into the LG architecture leads to investing in the demand side of decentralization and hence enhances income generation of councils to address pro-poor activities and social needs of the greater majority living in the rural sector;
* A capacitated MLGRD should take the lead in promoting and rolling the LGED agenda across all councils with the view to coordinate development partners, financial institutions, local businesses and other private sector institutions to have a buy- in;
* GoSL has enough instruments and tools (institutional framework, decentralization policy, LGA of 2004 etc) to strengthen local economic development initiatives in the country;
* UNDP and the GoSL need to mobilize a lot of resources from the private sector, development partners to fund LGED

## 3.2 Output 2: Effectiveness of the Performance-Based Grant System (PBGS) enhanced through promoting participatory planning for inclusive LED

The Performance Based Grant System (PBGS), solely financed under the LGED-JP, was introduced in July - August 2014 to support implementation of objectives 2 and 3 of the LGED-JP. It was initially designed jointly by the LGFD and the UNDP/UNCDF/LGED to comprise of a set of phases. **Phase 1** involved providing seed money to councils that exhibit performance in terms of proactiveness in putting together appropriate financial management documentation; undertaking sustainable projects, based on the quality of proposals submitted and the councils contribution (cash and/or kind) to the project implementation before release of funds. **Phase 2**also involved providing seed money to councils that that met key performance indicators to implement LED related and gender sensitive projects.[[11]](#footnote-12)

### 3.2.1 Output Activities

* A technical workshop was organized for the beneficiary local councils to develop skills on how to prepare action plans in line with their projects to be implemented before first disbursement was made thereby preventing reoccurrence of the challenges relating to PBGS 1 implementation;
* UNDP supported government partners with the opportunity to gain international experiences in the implementation of Performanace Based Grant System in Ghana from 15-19 June 2015 and another group of government officers and LOCASL attended the 7th edition of the Africities summit in Johannesburg, South Africa from the 29th November to the 3rd December 2015 to promote South-South Cooperation;
* Consultations are ahead to ensure that all local councils fully integrate LED related projects in their medium term development plans
* The 7th edition of Africities summit offered an opportunity for local authorities to engage in an in-depth exchange among many African stakeholders in order to come up with appropriate policies and strategies to improve integration, peace and unity in Africa starting from the grassroots.

### 3.2.2 Key Achievements

*Makeni city*

* The MCC facilitated the training of 230 participants in Marketing, Financial Management, Business Development and Banking skills
* 10 Gara Tie Dying and 1 Soap making association registered with Council and now paying taxes to the council;
* Marketing of soap and gara have increased incomes and help to promote businesses and sustainability

*Kailahun District Council*

* Service providers in gara tie dying, carpentry and tailoring identified and registered with the council;
* Training materials associated with gara tie dying, carpentry and tailoring procured and supplied to service providers, which is helping in promoting businesses thus increasing incomes;
* Training provided to service providers and skills in gara tie dying, carpentry and tailoring enhanced

*Pujehun District Council*

* Youth resource centre constructed and handed over to the community and youths receiving training and skills development in various fields engendering employment for them;

*Koinadugu district*

* Labour intensive work program fully supported and short term employment created for youths in the district;
* Training and waste management equipment provided to youth groups and technical skills of youth improved to seek employment and, in some cases, operate independently
* Logistics provided and existing dumpsite rehabilitated to a more improved standard and solid waste and environmental protection issues effectively managed thus keeping the environment clean

**Study tours;**

* The mission also benefitted from the Performance Assessment System refer to as Functional Organizational Assessment (FOAT) and how these performance measures are met by respective local councils before they could benefit from the PBGS. The FOAT has already been accepted by MLGRD and MOFED for the 2016 implementation of PBGS.
* Based on the experience gained in Ghana, MLGRD and MOFED are determined to ensure that LED policy and Strategy are developed and articulated in the government national development plan
* The summit also stimulated and strengthened a foresight culture among local authorities in development and democracy.
* An international exhibition was also part of the summit which provided opportunity for the national and local governments, private sector, research institutions and academia, internal cooperation agencies and development partners to showcase their projects, products and proposals.

### 3.2.3 Noted Challenges

* Funds to carry out the PBGS were insufficient to make a remarkable impact on poverty reduction and women empowerment
* GOSL failed to come up with matching fund to cushion fund s made available by UNDP;
* There was little private sector involvement in funds mobilization for the output;
* Illiteracy among beneficiaries continue to be a challenge as many could not keep proper record of their businesses;
* The construction of the Technical Training Center in the KCC at the Eastern Polytechnic remain a white was project as the college has failed to design courses for students;
* Poor construction work done on the Cold Room in KCC that has rendered the project dysfunctional;
* The quality of gara produced in Sierra Leone is not of international standard and as such, the gara tie dying women face stiff competition with other business women, for example, from Mali and Ivory Coast;
* Expertise for gara tie dying is missing and needs to be strengthened;
* There is always the tendency for women to utilize monies given to them for businesses on family issues such as provision of food, school fees. As such, they tend to lose money and focus on their businesses

### 3.2.4 Lessons Learned

* The concepts of Performance Based Grants System (PBGS) and Local Economic Development (LED) are appreciated in principle by councils. However the process of transforming them to reality especially the aspects of owning the process and ensuring councils contribution (both in kind or cash) to the process remain a big challenge. There is need to further escalate PBGS and LED implementation in all 19 local councils and the LGFD should be proactive in ensuring PBGS and LED are integral part of the existing government intergovernmental fiscal transfer system.[[12]](#footnote-13)
* In addition is the selection of projects, some councils still see LED as purely a poverty related tool not necessary a blend of tools (to address poverty and create jobs), the latter, to empower local residents (financial, logistics, skills) to be self reliant, establish their businesses and in the process gain employment to give back (both in cash or kind) to the council and communities they dwell.
* The Ministry of Finance must appoint a focal person solely responsible for PBGS. This may enhance timely implementation and effective monitoring of PBGS activities;
* LC need to be trained on PBGS reporting using the UNDP reporting template;
* Regular monitoring on PBGs activities at local council level must be enforced
* Joint monitoring of MLGRD and MOFED should be introduced to ensure ownership and quality assurance

## 3.3 Output 3: Effectiveness of revenue collection and management of the property tax and business licenses improved

### 3.3.1 Output Activities

* Development of a framework to assess properties and businesses to ensure increase in revenue;
* A schedule for business licenses was developed and publicly displayed for residents to know how many businesses and other service providers should pay for the different kinds of businesses and other activities done within the council.
* A monitoring mechanism has been developed to follow-up on all payments;
* Training of 6 enumerators to pretest survey instruments;
* Sensitization of stakeholders such as PCs, CSOs, Councilors and Ward Committee members to get the buy in;
* Review of Cadastre software and training of valuator on use of software;
* The valuator was provided with some intensive training on the use of the revised software;
* Renumbering of Houses with paints using International Standards;
* In line with international standards all residential properties and businesses were renumbered using paint;
* Inputting of information into the revised software by the valuator;
* Determination of Mill Rates and Adjustment Factors and training of Valuation Committee was carried out;
* Printing of Demand Notices and Sensitization of Communities on need to pay property Tax undertaken;
* While the consultant awaits the council to put modalities in place to gain access to Rutile Estate quarters for assessment, the consultant has so far helped councils to print Demand Notices for all **5, 514** properties and businesses

### 3.3.2 Key Achievements

* A schedule for business licenses has been developed and publicly displayed for residents to know how many businesses and other service providers should pay for the different kinds of businesses and other activities done within the council;
* 6 enumerators trained to pre-test survey instruments;
* Sensitization of stakeholders such as PCs, CSOs, Councilors and Ward Committee members to ensure the buy in was successful;
* Renumbering of Houses with paints using International Standards was done;
* In line with international standards all residential properties and businesses were renumbered using paint;

### 3.3.3 Noted Challenges

* Assessing Rutile Estates which has a good number of high valued properties remain a challenge. Here, more needs to be done to ensure good partnership with the mining company
* Accountability remains a huge challenge as Valuators not transparent with taxes collected;
* People find it difficult to pay property taxes due to the current economic conditions;
* Not proper mechanism are in place for the collection or taxes;
* Monitoring remains a critical challenge

### 3.3.4 Lessons Learned

* Own sources are critical for the financing of councils;
* Valuation officers tend not to be transparent;
* Revenue collection remains a challenge for councils largely due to lack of accountability systems

## 3.4 Output 4: Modernizing the administrative management at MLGRD through effective modern records management system

### 3.4.1 Output Activities

* An assessment of the current records management system and recommendations for strengthening and establishing fully functional paper-based and IT-based records and information management carried out;
* Centralized and institutionalized Records Storage and Filing System established in MLGRD and in the Provincial Secretary’s Offices in Bo, Kenema and Makeni
* Payroll Files for two thousand personnel at both headquarters and the provinces maintained in MLGRD, using newly printed files for all staff;
* . A complete reliable data on staff has been maintained and could be reviewed and accessed when necessary
* Relevant data relating to information gaps on local and chiefdom governance have been collated and digitized;
* Training manuals have been developed and distributed to records users;
* Training sessions for 25 staff were conducted on every activity outlined in the plan;
* The records office staff continue to type lists of printed materials and other bound documents in pamphlet boxes;
* Electronic copies of lists of inactive records transferred to the National Records Centre have been completed;
* Records office users are trained on accessing files in the National Records Centre and in the Ministry’s records office.

### 3.4.2 Key Achievements

* This particular exercise made the verification of staff of the Ministry by the Ministry of Finance very easy as all of them had their new files with complete documentation which is a big challenge in most government departments;
* It has also helped to avoid repeated payroll fraud;
* Information regarding Protectorate Chiefs as far back as 1904 who administered five districts: Karene, Bandajuma, Panguma, Koinadugu and Ronietta Chiefdoms are now available at the MLGRD;
* From the diaries are information on the election of chiefs, boundary disputes and other references to treaties of amalgamation, agreements, and lists of tribal authorities, trade activities and boundaries with other chiefdoms are available.

### 3.4.3 Lessons Learned and challenges

* A proper records management system ensures availability and access to critical information;
* Procurement of additional office equipment such as a giant photo copier is required;
* ICT connect will hasten the accessibility of information from the records unit;
* Creation of website is critical;
* Decentralization of the same system to the provincial, district and council level is essential to ensure information flow at all levels

# 4.0 Challenges

The under-mentioned are broad challenges whilst challenges of each output have been discussed in Chapter 3 of this report.

* LED remains a distinct activity of LCs tied to the continued provision of UN financial and technical assistance. By concentrating programme resources on the construction of buildings for specific businesses and away from a broader re-orientation of the LCs towards promotion of private sector development that supports sustainable development for disadvantaged groups, LGED has deflected attention away from the integration of LED into comprehensive district development planning;
* The MLGRD currently lacks the capacity to absorb LGED programmatic activities and outputs and implement them effectively without capacity development of the ministry;
* DECSEC remains detached from the MLGRD even though the staff receive salaries and other emoluments from the consolidated fund;
* There is a de-link between LED and LG and this has the potential to impact negatively on any future LGED programs
* The MLGRD powers are undercut by the control of local governance finances by the MOFED. There is need to reverse this trend to ensure that the MLGRD houses all aspects of LG and LED and become the engine for the development of rural communities;
* Poverty reduction and social inclusion are aspects of development that take time to be actualized. Huge resource mobilization, integrated effort among DPs, sound commitment on the part of the GoSL and the inclusion of the private sector is critical. But the commitment of central government to commit resources for these programs remain to be seen;
* M&E is weak and this has be scaled up to ensure that programs are monitored to detect/uncover challenges and fix them on time;
* UNDP lacks adequate staff (specialists in LED) to champion the implementation of the LGED in the future

# 5.0 Lessons Learned

* A critical lesson reveals that LED needs to be conceived holistically as part of national economic development not as a series of ad hoc projects happening when some donor funding is acquired. It must be the policies, programming and resource mobilisation by the state, through local governments and other sub-national units, which form the fundamental base and building block for LED. This certainly creates the platform from which LED programming takes off. Once mainstreamed at national level in terms of legislation, policy and budget, funding of LED becomes a regular activity in rural, urban and national development and this regularisation is a big challenge facing the GoSL, and an area where they need significant support;
* Institutional development, infrastructure and investment from sector ministries only becomes effective for LED when resources generated from the centre flow to local levels (through sector and fiscal decentralisation) and are complemented by local efforts to mobilise and generate revenues. The role of national sector ministries and parastatals should primarily be the shaping of both the policy and investment instruments whilst local organisations shape the implementation. This balance of engagement is a critical prerequisite for sustainable LED.
* UNDP effectiveness in supporting the LGED depends on a broader network base. UNDP’s ability to understand problems, provide advice, play an advocacy role or provide technical assistance is greatly enhanced by a broadened, more flexible network of contacts, experts, advisers, facilitators and other resources at both the national and international levels. The more that UNDP can directly tap into and access such resources particularly from the private sector, DPs, WB, Chambers of Commerce, SLIEPA et al, the greater the quality and cost-effectiveness of its support.
* The efficacy of LGED support depends on close donor coordination. The program’s success and cost-effective utilization of scarce resources can be significantly enhanced by better donor coordination at the policy, planning and implementation/operational levels. Different donors operate according to different priorities and policy agendas - often in the context of a single national programme - and not always in synchronization with national policies and priorities. UNDP (and other donor) effectiveness can be enhanced by a greater understanding of each other’s strengths, policy objectives, constraints and priorities and, to the extent possible, the harmonization of such priorities and policies for specific initiatives;
* The LGFD at the MOFED has recommended to the Financial Secretary an annual vertical allocation of at least 10% of domestic development budget to councils for development projects from FY 2018 and beyond. This will be used to allocate resources to councils on an annual basis for development projects. The funds will be divided into three components - Local Economic Development projects, non- Local Economic Development projects and matching grants for performance based grant. As such, a percentage of funds have been set aside to target LED;
* Currently, 59 functions have been devolved to the councils out of 79. Even some of the functions that have been devolved, resources, staff and assets have largely remained under the control of the central government. And most, if not all of the staff, are answerable to central authorities. This has had a catalytic effect on the proper functioning of local governance.
* LGED is both an incremental process and a rural development biased program and, therefore, needs to be based on and anchored in existing structures at the MLGRD, particularly in the Rural Development Directorate (RDD) if sustainability and real impact are to be felt. In this regard, it remains key to capacitate and strengthen the RDD with the required human, financial and material resources to ensure that there is proper integration of and greater merger of LED and LG.
* The localization of the SDGs with the view to integrate the SGDs into LED cannot be overstated. Linking LED to the SDGs increases investments in poverty reduction strategies, ensuring social inclusion of marginalized groups, promote local content and opens LGED to resource mobilization and funding windows much required to push for the implementation of the LED strategy and policy;
* Additional recruitment of technical staff both at UNDP and at the MLGRD with the requisite knowledge in local governance and local economic development will be critical for the next phase. At present, there is dearth of staff and motivation at both the Country Office and in the MLGRD to effectively champion the LGED into the next phase;
* Frequent and uncoordinated transfer of local council staff during project implementation has had a negative impact on project outcome and results. There is no mechanism in place where council staff that have been trained in a particular output stays with the council until the project folds up. Instead, staff are transferred in the middle of project implementation and replaced with new staff with no knowledge of the implemented project. No flow of the program culminating in lack of institutional memory.
* Transparency and accountability over the public funding mechanisms and decision making processes remain central to ensure that decentralization supports LED. This covers internal accountability from the local governance structures to the central level, and from the central level to the local government institutions, as well as external accountability of the State institutions to the population, which will guarantee State legitimacy.
* Decentralization is a multiple layer process requiring complex stakeholders’ engagement, with specific interests. As such, it must play with the political dynamics, and ensure some reactivity as well as broad but specific approach to the different types of stakeholders.
* Political leadership is central to decentralization and hence, it remains key to be able to engage adequately the different levels of political stakeholders using the various political dynamics in place.
* Exit strategies are key to increase ownership and avoid situation that the programme remains an end in itself. An exit strategy should be included into the LGED next phase, which implies that the created structures are financially sustainable and capable of producing resources for program implementation. Generally, applying or setting out an exit strategy at an initial stage of programme implementation identifies the potential barriers to sustainability. The issue then becomes primarily about providing solutions to mitigating those potential risks.
* Harmonization of programmes and projects to mainstream decentralization intoboth government and partners’ interventionsis required in order to have a multiplier effects and impact when done through collaboration, coordination and synergy building.
* Monitoring &Evaluation systems/mechanisms needs to be strong while coordination and clear definition of tasks is required between the various stakeholdersfocusing around the same performance indicators and systems, and taken into account the outcomes and impacts of the programme.
* Decentralization needs to be linked with overall State reforms and capacity building to advance the competence of local administrations to effectively manage local affairs, ensure the effective delivery of basic social services and improve the lives of Liberians.
* A gradual incremental changes rather than one-off deliverables, and if the project is aimed at building local capacity, then the chances of success will more likely be higher if the project personnel are located within the concerned host units of Government with a planned agenda for knowledge transfer to national counterparts;
* The initiation of a government managed grant transfer mechanism tied to nationally recognized performance standards and explicitly linked to gender equity considerations is a novelty. This establishes the basis for introducing LED into all districts, and for increasing the possibility that council staff oriented on LED principles will still be able to utilize their skills even when transferred to other councils;
* The lack of any indicator system prevents the programme from assessing progress in other than an ad hoc manner. The reports from programme management are focused on noting activities undertaken. There was no baseline assessment or set of indicators in place that can substantiate the contribution of the LGED model for local economic development. This has the proclivity to reduce donor interest as the utility of the model cannot be confirmed;
* The strong adherence of the MOFED/LGFD to implementing the national Fiscal Decentralization Strategy (2012-2017) played an important role in galvanizing the local councils to pay attention to enhancing their own source revenue collection. In return, some local councils have begun to realize that they have a responsibility to increase their own revenues in order to play a more meaningful role in the development of their local areas

# 6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

## 6.1 Conclusion

From the foregoing discussions, the evaluation concludes that the LGED program design and implementation was apt, timely and highly relevant initiative that addressed the promotion of local governance and local economic development issues with the view to reduce poverty and empower women. In a large measure, the overall implementation strategy that targeted women and poverty in the rural sector is relevant and appropriate. However, the LGED initiative will only meet its objectives of poverty reduction and women empowerment and equity by ensuring rapid progress are made towards the complete devolution of functions from the central state authority to the councils, linking LED to LG and the institutionalization of LED in the revamped and capacitated MLGRD. This will be followed by increased transparency and accountability in the management of institutions and financial resources at all levels of interaction.

The evaluation also notes that significant progress has been made in terms of developing the LED Strategy and Policy, alignment of the LGED with other national policies such as the Local Content Policy, the National Investment Policy, and a vital tool for decentralization. However, more work needs to be done in order to ensure that LGs have full autonomy to effectively achieve optimum outcomes for local communities. The political leadership needs to pay particular attention to the total devolution of functions, reaching and involving other structures (ward committees) below the councils with the view to comprehensively make LGED participatory, people-centered and holistic.

Funding for the next phase is critical. The current state of funding, though appreciable, needs to be scaled up if a meaningful LGED implementation is to be assured. UNDP’s role in this cannot be over-emphasized but the GoSL must take responsibility and ownership to fund LGED as the mainstay for human development in the country. Dependence on external funding, though critical, merely reduces the government’s inability to take full control of its own development agenda.

As stated many times in this report, the capacity development and institutional strengthening of the MLGRD is the way forward for any meaningful implementation of the LGED. It is all too clear that the Ministry needs support from the political leadership of the country and development partners in rebranding its image through strengthening its staff, systems, procedures, policies and status for it to take full responsibility of LGED implementation in future.

**6.2 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proffered for consideration:

**To the GoSL**

* Institutionalize LED and anchored it in the Rural Development Directorate at the MLGRD. To actualize this, the Directorate should be fully capacitated by the HRMO office and strengthened by the mainstreamed DECSEC technical staff.
* Ensure that the MLGRD is in control of all aspects of local governance and local economic development including the mobilization and control of its finances. Facilitate top level discussion between the MOFED and the MLGRD on how to expedite the process of transferring key financial functions and personnel relating to local government finances to the MLGRD;
* Ensure that the devolution of functions, assets, staff and financial resources are facilitated to guarantee the completion of the devolution process that results in the proper design and implementation of future LGED;
* Localize the SDGs with the view to integrate the SGDs into LED. Linking LED to the SDGs increases investments in poverty reduction strategies, ensuring social inclusion of marginalized groups, promote local content and opens LGED to resource mobilization and funding windows much required to push for the implementation of the LED strategy and policy;
* Recruit additional technical staff particularly in LED to strengthen the MLGRD with the requisite knowledge in local governance and local economic development. At present, there is dearth of qualified and technical staff and motivation in the MLGRD to effectively champion the LGED into the next phase;
* Put mechanisms in place where council staff that have been trained in a particular output stays with the council until the project folds up instead of encouraging frequent and uncoordinated transfer of local council staff during project implementation that negatively impact project implementation. Institutionalize transfers to ensure smooth flow of the program and assuring institutional memory;
* Institutionalize and make functional an effective transparency and accountability mechanism over the public funding and decision making processes to ensure that councils are responsive to and responsible for funds flowing from own sources, grants from central government and from donors.
* Facilitate the approval of the proposed 10% recommended by the LGFD at the MOFED to be integrated into national budget for the funding of LGED programs in future;
* Ensure the complete inclusion, participation and involvement of Ward Committees in the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of LGED programs in future. This layer of the decentralized process has been neglected for a very long time and until they are part of the process, the LGED program will hardly succeed;
* Link decentralization with overall State reforms and capacity building agenda to advance the competence of local administrations to effectively manage local affairs, ensure the effective delivery of basic social services and improve the lives of Sierra Leoneans

**To UNDP**

* Strengthen Joint Programs and Resource Mobilization for LGED future programmatic activities. Ensure that the UNDP strategically leads the joint program and mobilize resources and that the joint program is in sync with the national development agenda;
* Plan to access different possible funding sources (e.g. voluntary contributions, the private sector, non-traditional partners, assessed contributions, government cost-sharing and different multi-donor trust funds and windows) for future LGED programs;
* Concentrate more on developing the private sector through capacity development of SMEs to graduate into entrepreneurs. The strategy is significant for poverty reduction in rural communities. This can be achieved by collaborating with the Local Content Agency, SLIEPA, Chambers of Commerce, Financial Institutions, Development Partners and MDAs. The program should also develop adequate policy framework for SME development and connect the policy to the Local Content Policy, Public Investment Policy etc.
* UNDP should take the initiative and ownership for coordination among traditional and non-traditional development partners while the national partners should be more involved in joint planning, programming and sitting on steering committees. There is need for more joint approach in planning and programming and focusing on building and institutionalizing systems and processes as opposed to ad hoc approaches
* Transition to a national implementation modality gradually, with a system of direct payment to start with leading to advances over a period of time. As part of the transition process, regular management and financial audits need to be conducted in order to assess performance. This is quintessential for capacity building of state institutions particularly financial management and accountability.
* Exit strategies are key to increase ownership and avoid situation that the programme remains an end in itself. An exit strategy should be included into the LGED next phase, which implies that the created structures are financially sustainable and capable of producing resources for programme implementation. Generally, applying or setting out an exit strategy at an initial stage of programme implementation identifies the potential barriers to sustainability. The issue then becomes primarily about providing solutions to mitigating those potential risks;
* Harmonize programmes and projects to mainstream decentralization into both government and partners’ interventions in order to have a multiplier effect and impact promoting the LGED;
* Increase the strength and improve the capacity of UNDP staff to effect the implementation of the LGED in all councils in future;
* Monitoring &Evaluation systems/mechanisms need to be strong while coordination and clear definition of tasks is required between the various stakeholders focusing around the same performance indicators and systems, and taken into account the outcomes and impacts of the programme.

# Annexure

## Annex 1: Data collection Tools

1. **Stakeholder Interviews**

**UNDP Program Staff, DPs, Board members, Provincial Secretary’s offices, MOFED and MLGRD**

**Relevance:**

1. Was the program aligned to national development priorities? If yes, which ones?
2. How relevant and appropriate was the program in addressing issues of local governance and local economic development?
3. Was the program responsive to UNDP corporate plans especially its Strategic Plan? How?
4. How did it respond to gender equality and youth empowerment?
5. How did the program respond to emerging national and local development priorities?

**Effectiveness**

1. How effective was the program in addressing local governance and local economic development?
2. Were the outputs (specific to institutions/implementing partners) achieved?
3. What were the intended and unintended results?
4. What did it take to achieve them?
5. How did it contribute to intermediate goals?
6. What changes occurred in implementing the initiatives? How do you measure the changes?
7. What were some of success stories? Any challenges?
8. What is your overall assessment of the four outputs?

**Efficiency**

1. Were the program resources put into good use? How?
2. What results were achieved?
3. How did it impact communities where they were implemented?
4. What were the qualities of the inputs especially management strategies, staffing, M&E?
5. Were partnerships forged in program implementation and how did it contribute to outputs results?

**Sustainability**

1. Was there any sustainability plan in the program design?
2. Is there any likelihood that the program will continue after support ends?
3. What institutional arrangement exited at national and local to ensure sustainability?
4. How involved were the private sector and the people in program design and implementation?
5. Did you experience ownership of program results?
6. Was there any exits strategy?

**Impact**

1. What were some of the program impact on the people?
2. How did the program contribute to poverty reduction, gender empowerment and support to councils?
3. What were some of the concrete goods, services, social and economic support did the program provide for the people?

**Gender and Social Inclusion**

1. Was gender critical in the program design and implementation?
2. What strategies were used to target women and how much did they benefit from the program?
3. How inclusive was the program and what social issues did the program address?

**Lessons Learned**

1. What key lessons could be distilled from program design and implementation?
2. Could this program have been done better in terms of design and implementation?

**Recommendations**

1. What recommendations would you proffer for any future similar program?
2. **Focus Group Discussions**

**Implementing Partners and Councils**

**Relevance**

1. How relevant was the program?
2. Did it address your needs or was it responsive to your needs?
3. Did it have relationship with the decentralization policy and LED strategy?
4. Did you participate in the program design?
5. Was the program design gender sensitive?

**Effectiveness**

1. How involved were you in the implementation of the four outputs?
2. How effective was the program in addressing local governance and local economic development?
3. What were the specific achievements and challenges?
4. What were the intended and unintended results?
5. How did it contribute to intermediate goals?
6. What changes occurred in implementing the initiatives? How do you measure the changes?
7. What were some of success stories? Any challenges?
8. What is your overall assessment of the four outputs?

**Efficiency**

1. How adequate were the resources provided for project implementation?
2. What results were achieved?
3. How did it impact communities where they were implemented?
4. How do you assess UNDP management strategies, staffing, M&E?
5. What type of partnership existed between you and UNDP?
6. How did it contribute or not contribute to the success of the program?

**Sustainability**

1. How do you assess sustainability of the program?
2. Is there any likelihood that the program will continue after support ends?
3. What institutional arrangement exited at national and local to ensure sustainability?
4. Were the private sector and the people involved in program implementation?
5. Did you experience ownership of program results?

**Impact**

1. What were some of the positive and negative program impact on the people?
2. How did the program contribute to poverty reduction, gender empowerment and support to councils?
3. What were some of the concrete goods, services, social and economic support the program provided to the people?

**Gender and Social Inclusion**

1. Was gender critical in the program design and implementation?
2. How were women targeted and how much did they benefit from the program?
3. How inclusive was the program and what social issues did the program address?

**Lessons Learned**

1. What were the key lessons could be distilled from program design and implementation?
2. Could this program have been done better in terms of design and implementation?

**Recommendations**

1. What are your recommendations for UNDP in any future similar program?

## Annex 2: Programme of Work

The evaluation will be implemented as per the timeframe below, including external constraints.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Weeks** | | **Days** | **Activities** | **Key Deliverable** |
| Week 1 - Mainly in Freetown | | | | |
| 1 (20-23-17) | 20th-27th June | | Document Review |  |
|  |  | | Entry Debriefing with Program Staff, MLGRD,UNDP and others/ Development of Data collection Tools/drafting Inception Report- | Data collection tools developed and submission of inception report |
| Week 2- Field Work in sampled districts | | | | |
|  | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| 2 (26-30-17) | 29th June (Thur) | | Travel to Bo (engage stakeholders on records management, performance based grant system)-PBGS in Bo District Council and R/Mmgt at the Provincial Secretary’s office |  |
|  | 30th June (Fri) | | Travel to Kenema (engage stakeholders at the KDC revenue collection and records management at the Provincial Secretary’s office) |  |
|  | 3rd July (Mon) | | Travel to Kailahun (engage stakeholders on SMEs (IPSs), and performance based grant system at Kailahun District Council) |  |
|  | 4th July (Tues) | | Travel to Makeni (Engage stakeholders on Performance based grant system and records management)The Performance Based Grant System (PBGS) support is in the Makeni City Council and the records management is in the Provincial Secretary’s office in Makeni |  |
|  | 5th July (Wed) | | Travel to Kabala (engage stakeholders Performance Based Grant System) |  |
| Week 3- stakeholder interviews in Freetown, data collation and analysis | | | | |
| 3 (July 3-7-17) | 6th July (Thur) | | MLGRD, Board Members |  |
|  | 7th July (Fri) | | MOFED, DPs |  |
|  | 10th July (Mon) | | UNDP Project Team |  |
|  | 11th July (Tues) | | Data Collation/analysis |  |
|  | 11th July (Wed) | | Data Collation/analysis |  |
| Week 4 –Prep., Presentation of Preliminary Findings and Draft Report Writing | | | | |
| 4 (July 10-18-17) | July 12-13 (Wed-Thurs) | | Prep. of Preliminary findings |  |
|  | July 14 (Fri) | | Morning ( presentation of preliminary Findings and  Start Report Writing | Presentation of Preliminary Findings to the Board |
|  | July 17-24 | | Report Writing |  |
|  | July 25 | | Submission of Final Evaluation Report | Final Evaluation Report |

## Annex 3: Stakeholders Interviewed

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Hon. Mraya Kaikai | Minister of LGRD |  |
| Ghulam Sherani | Team Leader-Inclusive Growth | 099369049 |
| Pious Bockarie | Program Specialist-UNDP |  |
| Samuel Palmer | UNDP |  |
| Edward Gbemeh | Program Officer-UNDP | 076670541 |
| Sadiq Kapuwa | Permanent Secretary-MLGRD | 078918842 |
| Adams Tommy | Deputy Director=LGFD | 078365692 |
| Adams Kargbo | Director-LGFD | 076614710 |
| Alhassan Kanu | Director-DECSEC | 076768846 |
| Colina Macauley | M&E Manager-DECSEC | 077883366 |
| Kpakiwa | Capacity Building Manager-DECSEC | 076611639 |
| Mayor Sunkari | Mayor-Makeni City Council | 076690616 |
| William Alpha | Chief Administrator-MCC | 076369530 |
| Abass Gbla | Soap Making Chairman-MCC | 076745191 |
| Gbessay Conteh | Member-MCC | 077579643 |
| Adamsay Turay | Member-MCC | 077675345 |
| Fatmata Kargbo | Gara Tie Dying Association-Chair | 088301876 |
| Mafereh Koroma | Member | 099220979 |
| Joseph Keifala | Mayor Kenema City Council |  |
| Esther Kaisamba | Deputy Mayor-KCC | 076726829 |
| Abdul Ngegba | Procurement Officer-KCC | 078524406 |
| Daniel Moiwo | CEPAD-Director |  |
| Pious Bockarie Jr | Pujehun-DC | 076915192 |
| Sahr Moiguah | LUCASU | 099769444 |
| Dalton Charles | DPO-Pujehun DC | 076286220 |
| John Kamara | Accountant-Pujehun DC | 078136322 |
| Muniru Kawa | Consultant-Records Management | 076539718 |
| Kalibu Thomas | Senior Records Officer | NA |
| Omu Kanu | Records Officer | NA |
| Fatmata Sheriff | Records Officer | NA |

## Annex 4: Terms of Reference

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **National Consultant for the Evaluation of the LGED** | |
| **Location :** | Freetown, SIERRA LEONE |
| **Application Deadline :** | 26-May-17 **(Midnight New York, USA)** |
| **Time left :** | 4d 13h 38m |
| **Additional Category :** | Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction |
| **Type of Contract :** | Individual Contract |
| **Post Level :** | National Consultant |
| **Languages Required :** | English |
| **Starting Date :** (date when the selected candidate is expected to start) | 05-Jun-2017 |
| **Duration of Initial Contract :** | 21 days |
| **Expected Duration of Assignment :** | 21 days |

|  |
| --- |
| **Background** |
| In 2004 the Government of Sierra Leone re-introduced political decentralization with a view to opening political space as well as improving inclusiveness as a way of addressing some of the root causes of the 1991-2002 conflict. Local Council elections were held in May 2004, with 19 local councils established thereafter. With the enactment of the Local Government Act 2004, the Act provides the legal framework that guides the decentralization process. Because there was no decentralization policy to draw upon in the formulation and enactment of legislation, this posed several challenges including clarification of roles between key actors in the decentralization process - Local Councils and Paramount Chiefs, Ministries, Departments and Agencies, the allocation of revenue and expenditure assignments, securing broad agreement to the devolution process, securing an inclusive and participatory engagement by local communities.  The Local Governance and Economic Development Joint Programme (LGED-JP) was designed by UNDP/UNCDF and the Government of Sierra Leone to support the decentralization of governance and the building of the local government system. It responds to the Government of Sierra Leone PRSP II, Agenda for Change (now Agenda for Prosperity) under the 2nd and 4th priority areas: addressing pro-poor growth, and promoting the decentralization policy and devolution of functions to local governments. It also fits within the UN response to PRSP II1 and the outcomes of the United Nations Assistance Framework (UNDAF).  The overarching goal of the LGED-JP is poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The purpose of the LGED-JP is the promotion of local economic development, i.e. clarity on functional assignments and implementation of the national policy on decentralisation; local economic development functions institutionalised in local councils; and improved local economic development. The intermediate outcome is an expanded and more effective and efficient role of local governments in the promotion of local economic development.  The LGED-JP operates within the framework of the Local Government Act (LGA) and the Decentralization Policy. The Programme pursues four outputs:   1. ***Output 1:*** MLGRD and MOFED strengthened to develop a National LED policy and strategy to enhance inclusive growth and economic diversification. 2. ***Output 2***: Effectiveness of the Performance-Based Grant System (PBGS) enhanced through promoting participatory planning for inclusive LED. 3. ***Output 3:*** Effectiveness of revenue collection and management of the property tax and business licenses improved. 4. ***Output 4***: Local economies improved and micro and small enterprises (MSEs) capacities in target local councils strengthened to contribute to post-EVD recovery.   **Evaluation Purpose**   1. The present consultancy fits into the above outputs. As provided for by the ProDoc, the programme will be evaluated in 2017, unless there is agreement to move into a second phase. In that case, the mid-term evaluation suffices, and a programme formulation will take place. This evaluation was supposed to be preceded by a mid-term review in 2016 to help keep the programme on track and feed into formulation of phase II. However, the outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in 2014 diverted programme focus and concentrated on fighting the disease. After Sierra Leone was declared free of Ebola in 2015, the national programme focus changed, so did the LGED to support recovery of lost livelihoods. As such the programme, could only achieve tangible results as from 2017 onward with the completion of the first round of SME capacity building and investments. |
| **Duties and Responsibilities** |
| The objective of the Evaluation is to assess (i) the relevance, (ii) the effectiveness, (iii) the efficiency, (iv) the sustainability and the impact of the programme. The evaluation will also identify potential project design problems, document lessons learned from programme implementation and make recommendations to be considered in designing the second phase for replication. The specific scope of the evaluation is as follows:   * *Relevance (i)*the extent to which the programme and its outputs were and are consistent with national development policies and priorities (PRSP II and PRSP III, National Decentralization Policy etc) and local policies and priorities, (ii) the responsiveness of the programme to UNDP and corporate plans (including the UNDP Strategic Plans -2014-2017) and human development priorities of empowerment and gender equality and the extent to which the programme has been able to respond to changing and emerging development priorities at national and local levels. * *Effectiveness:* The extent to which the programme intended results (outputs or outcomes) have been achieved or progress made toward achieving them. The evaluation will assess the results achieved against the 4 project outputs and contribution to the intermediate goals including effectiveness of development assistance initiatives. The evaluation will consider the following three main steps (measuring the changes in the 4 outputs, assessing the extent to which these changes result from the programme interventions and value (positive/negative) of the changes. * *Efficiency:* (i) how economically the programme resources have been used to achieve the results with greater impact, (ii) the quality and timeliness of inputs including the Management arrangements, staffing, the reporting and monitoring system and the extent to which these have been effectively supporting activities directed towards achieving the outputs and (iii) how the partnership strategies have contributed to achieving the results.; * *Impact:* To assess the end results in terms of **(i)** goods, services, social and economic supports and opportunities delivered to the communities and contributing to poverty reduction, women’s empowerment and providing necessary support to LCs and * Cross-cutting issues: Gender and social inclusion: the extent to which initiatives have considered mainstreaming a gender perspective in the design, implementation and outcome of the Programme. * *Sustainability:* the likelihood of the project results to continue and expand beyond the lifespan of the project. The evaluation will assess the institutional arrangements at national and local levels including local councils’ strategies, the involvement of the private sector and the communities as a way of ensuring ownership and the continuation of the results. * Lessons learned and recommendations: to collate and analyse lessons learned and best practices which will be taken into consideration for the second phase of the programme and to make recommendations for future enhancement of the programme.   **Methodology**  While it is the responsibility of the evaluation team to propose the appropriate methodology, UNDP is very much interested in considering the following for accurate data collection and analysis to generate relevant information:   * The consultant will undertake the desk review and analysis of the key primary and secondary documentation (list in annex 1). * He/she will undertake individual interviews and group consultations with the key stakeholders, including the members of the National Steering Committee. * Field visits. The consultant will conduct field visits to LGED target districts for first-hand information gathering. * Structured and semi-structured interviews will be organized with key stakeholders to collect information;   The consultant will comply with the UNDP Evaluation Policy and UNEG norms and standards for evaluation of the UN System, the UNEG ethical guidelines for evaluators and the Code of Conduct for Evaluators in the UN system.  **Deliverables**  **.** *Inception Report* – Prior to going into the full data collection exercise the consultant will prepare and submit and inception report (IR) to UNDP and MLGRD. The IR will provide details on the evaluators’ understanding of what are being evaluated and why, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by way of: proposed methods, proposed sources of data and data collection procedures. The inception report should include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables, designating a team member with the lead responsibility for each task or product.  **.** *Draft Evaluation report –* The consultant will prepare and submit a draft Report to UNDP and MLGRD. The Draft Report will follow the outline stated below:   * Executive summary (2 pages) * Introduction (1 page) * The methodology used (1-2 pages) * Development context under which the programme was implemented (1-2 pages) * UNDP’s programme strategy and interventions (3-4 pages) * Assessments as per the criteria and questions defined (10-15 pages) * Conclusions and recommendations (2-3 pages) * Annexes: terms of reference, persons consulted, documents reviewed   The Consultant will organize a session to validate the draft report and to incorporate the views and feed-back of stakeholders into the final report and submit to UNDP and MLGRD.  **Implementation Arrangement:**  . The  PMSU of UNDP Sierra Leone country office will be the evaluation manager. The Team Leader or Deputy Team Leader of inclusive growth and Sustainable Development will provide overall quality assurance and oversight of the evaluation.  . A reference group consisting of the UNDP Sierra Leone Country Director, LGED Programme Manager and, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (see annex II) is established to enhance the quality of the evaluation. The group assists the evaluation manager in reviewing the terms-of-reference, the inception report and the draft report.  Although the final report must be cleared and accepted by UNDP before being made public, the UNDP Evaluation Policy is clear that the evaluation function should be structurally independent from operational management and decision-making functions in the organization. UNDP management will not impose restrictions on the scope, content, comments and recommendations of evaluation reports. In the case of unresolved difference of opinions between any of the parties, UNDP may request the evaluation team to set out the differences in an annex to the final report. |
| **Competencies** |
| **Corporate Competencies**   * Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN’s values and ethical standards. * Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability. * Treats all people fairly.   **Job Knowledge/Technical Expertise**   * Demonstrated knowledge of environmental challenges in Sierra Leone * Strong analytical skills, particularly applied to environment profiling   **Functional Competencies:**   * Building Strategic Partnerships * Ability to identify needs and interventions for capacity building of counterparts, clients and potential partners.   **Results Orientation**   * Ability to take responsibility for achieving agreed outputs within set deadlines and strives until successful outputs are achieved.   **Team Work and Communication skills**   * Excellent time management, monitoring and evaluation skills. * Openness to change and ability to receive/integrate feedback. * Creating and promoting enabling environment for open communication. * Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.   **Organizational Learning and Knowledge Sharing**   * Identifies new approaches and strategies that promote the use of tools and mechanisms. * Knowledge of inter-disciplinary development issues. |
| **Required Skills and Experience** |
| **Education**   * Master’s degree in Economics, Political Science, Public Policy or any other relevant field.   **Experience**   * At least 15 years of experience with strong comparative experience in field of decentralization and local economic development; fiscal decentralization; decentralized infrastructure and service delivery; local government capacity building for decentralized public expenditure management and operationalization of decentralized systems of planning and budgeting, policy, legal and regulatory reform related to decentralization including rural development; * At least 8 years of experience in leading evaluations of decentralization and local development programme, including experience using a range of qualitative evaluation methodologies to assess programme results at the institutional, sector and policy level. * Experience in providing technical assistance in project proposal, project appraisal and project cycle strategy (from social preparation to operations and maintenance) in the implementation of service delivery. * Proven experience in gender mainstreaming in the implementation of projects of local government institutions. * Experience in UNDP Evaluation preferred.   **Language Requirement**   * Fluency in written and spoken English is essential.     Remuneration   * Payment for this consultancy will be a lump sum based on the UNDP national consultancy fee rate and payable upon submission based on payment schedule.  This will be inclusive of the DSA, travel and other costs payable to national consultants.   **Payment Schedule:**   * **1st payment -  20% payment upon signing of the contract** * 2nd payment - 50% payment after the first draft report is provided and accepted by UNDP and the LGED project board. * 3rd payment - 30% payment after the Final report has been submitted by the consultant and accepted by UNDP and LGED project board.   **Evaluation Criteria**   * **Applicable Experience.**   Record of previous and actual engagement and/or work experience including quality of performance in similar projects.       Knowledge in results-based M & E preferred 40%. * **Relevant Projects for similar international organization**.    Applicable experience that contributes to the overall understanding and experience of the assignment with projects funded by other government agencies and/or international organization particularly in public sector reform, decentralization and small grants facility 20%. * **Previous relevant UNDP Projects.**Knowledge of UNDP cluster portfolio, particularly governance and decentralization is preferred. Experience in UN System is desirable 10%. * **Qualifications and relevant training or specialization:**Qualification of personnel to be assigned to the project compared to the complexity of the undertaking. This includes the education and applicable length of experience related to the project to be undertaken 20%.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              **Application procedure** * Interested qualified individual consultants that meet the above requirements are invited to submit the following: * This Opportunity is open to male and female candidates. Applications from qualified female candidates are encouraged. * E-mail application to ghulam.sherani@undp.org with cc to [pious.bockarie@undp.org](mailto:Charles.mback@undp.org)  or drop mail at UNDP Country Office, 55 Wilkinson Road, Freetown, Sierra Leone * Financial proposal stating: Lump sum cost that includes a) fees or daily rate and minor miscellaneous expenses and b) travel costs and insurance. * Technical Proposal providing details of the methodology envisaged for the assignment * Curriculum Vitae that includes list of previous work, contractual responsibility and successful completion of consultancy services related including name, contact numbers and email address of focal persons for each contract. * Cover letter/EOI that indicate how the consultants meet the selection criteria and state the specific posts applied.   **ANNEX 1:** Reference Documents (available online. The programme unit can also support to provide)   1. **UNDP**  * UNDP Guidance for Outcome Evaluation * UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, 2013 * UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System, 2008 * UNDP Strategic Plan (2010-2013) * UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-2017) * UN Joint Vision Sierra Leone (2008-2012 * UN Transitional Joint Vision Sierra Leone (2013-2014) * UNDAF Sierra Leone 2015-2018 * UNCDF LDF Business Plan 2011-2013 * UNCDF LDF Business Plan 2014-2017   **LGED Documents**   * Pro Doc Programme 16, UNDP UNCDF, 2012 * LGED Sierra Leone Project Document (ProDoc), 1st April 2011 * KDERP Evaluation report, 2010 * Report of the National Conference on LED, July 2012 * Report of the LED Peer review and methodology Workshop, Makeni, 2012 * LED Mapping report for Kenema City Council, Kenema District Council, Moyamba District Council, Tonkolili District Council, December 2012 * LED Strategy for Kenema City Council, Kenema District Council, Moyamba District Council, Tonkolili District Council, December 2013 * LGED-JP Annual report, 2015 * LGED-JP Annual report, 2016 * LGED AWP 2016 and 2017  1. **GoSL Policy Documents:**  * National Decentralization Policy (2010) * Chiefdom and tribal Administration Policy (2011) * The Local Government Act 2004     **Annex II:**  **Members of Reference Group**    **Name                             Designation                                   Institution**                                        Deputy Country Director                    UNDP  Pious Bockarie                 Programme Manager-LGED-JP            UNDP   Alhassan Kanu                Director, Decentralization Secretariat   MLGRD  John Sumailah                 Development Secretary                       MoFED  Adams Tommy                 Senior Economist                            LGFD/MOFED                                        President                                          LOCASL  Sahr Moigua                    Executive Secretary                           LOCASL |

1. Based on stakeholder consultations and literature review, the consultant agrees with this as stated in the ProDoc [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The introduction is copied directly from the TOR [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. This was provided in the TOR [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. The LGED ProDoc of 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. See the 2016 LGED Strategic Focus for details [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. See UNDP Strategic Plan, 2017-2021 for details [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. See Quarterly Progress Report of 2015 for details [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Progress Reports of 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. See the Draft LED Policy for details [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Quarterly Report on the SME output in Kailahun [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Final Progress Report on the PBGS, 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Final Report on the PBGS, 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)