

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR): EVALUATION OF THE JOINT UNDP/DPA PROGRAMME ON BUILDING NATIONAL CAPACITIES FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION

March 2014

1. Background information

UNDP and DPA have collaborated on the development and implementation of conflict prevention initiatives in the field through the Joint UNDP-DPA Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention (the Joint Programme), which was first launched in 2004. Over the past decade, the Joint Programme has made a contribution to UN support to achieve violence-free elections or referenda in countries as diverse as Guyana, Ghana, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Benin, Togo, Lesotho, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, and the Solomon Islands; resolution of specific conflicts or deadlocks in Nigeria, Lesotho, Bolivia, Ghana, and Kenya; sustaining viable platforms for dialogue or conflict resolution in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Fiji, Georgia, Ukraine, and Malawi; and initiatives to reduce insecurity in Ecuador, Mauritania, and Bangladesh. These contributions have often been facilitated through the deployment of Peace and Development Advisors, or PDAs, a growing cadre of UN staff who support Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams analyze, and respond to, conflict dynamics and support the implementation of conflict-sensitive programming. While a number of lessons-learned processes have been undertaken internally based on these, and other, experiences, an external evaluation of the support extended through the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme has not yet been conducted. Recognizing the broader context in which the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme operates, it is also useful to take stock of the Joint Programme's contribution to UN system-wide efforts to strengthen the ability to understand, respond to, and support conflict prevention at national and sub-national level. In this regard, it has been decided to conduct an evaluation of the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme, for which International Alert has been commissioned.

The evaluation will largely focus on the country-level support provided by PDAs and the results engendered through this support. This evaluation also provides an important opportunity to place the Joint Programme in this broader context, reflecting on recent initiatives such as the 'Rights Up Front Plan of Action', the Policy Committee Decision on Special Circumstances in Non-Mission Settings, and the broader UN architecture on conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

2. Purpose and scope of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the contribution of the Joint DPA/UNDP Programme to the UN system's efforts to advance conflict prevention at country-level, including through the deployment of Peace and Development Advisors. This will be done, primarily, by assessing the degree to which the outputs outlined in the Programme Document outlining the work Joint UNDP/DPA Programme have been successfully delivered, and whether these outputs were well-targeted to best support the UN's conflict prevention engagement. While taking into consideration the support provided by the Joint Programme prior to 2012, the evaluation will focus on the last two years, reflecting on the contribution made since the reformulation of the partnership. As such, the evaluation will be guided by the following four outputs (which can be found in the Programme Document for the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme for 2012 to 2014):

- Develop strategic conflict prevention initiatives at the country level, including through the deployment of Peace and Development Advisors (PDAs);
- Provide targeted assistance for specific facilitation activities jointly undertaken in non-mission settings;

- Support joint assessment, analysis, and “knowledge development” by the United Nations Department of Political Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme, in the context of support for joint country level initiatives;
- Provide short-term support for conflict and/or political analysis through deployment of advisors in priority/crisis countries.

The evaluation will primarily consider contributions by the Joint Programme to building the capacity of the UN the country-level, including through results supported by PDAs, and identify recommendations and next steps to further strengthen these efforts. It is expected that the evaluation findings will assist the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme in strengthening its support for the UN system’s conflict prevention engagement and in further refining the Joint Programme’s design and implementation of appropriate strategies, policies and programme approaches to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, while also strengthening the Joint Programme’s contribution to the UN’s system-wide conflict prevention architecture.

The evaluation will be undertaken in the following countries:

To be discussed

3. Evaluation Objectives and Criteria

The key evaluation objective is to examine the Joint Programme’s contribution to building the UN’s capacity to engage in conflict prevention and enhance the capacity of the UN to respond in complex political situations. The following criteria will be used in support of this objective: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

The evaluation will be guided by the following questions pertaining to these respective criteria:

Effectiveness

- i) Are there specific contexts or thematic areas in which PDAs have been particularly effective?
- ii) Are the criteria and processes associated with deployment a PDA geared to ensure effective support?
- iii) What can be gleaned from instances where a PDA’s deployment (or other support from the Joint Programme) has supported efforts to enhance linkages between conflict prevention and other programmes supported by development partners, such as governance, peacebuilding, education, poverty reduction etc?
- iv) Is the information and analysis generated by PDAs utilized effectively at: a) country level?; b) at HQ level? How does the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme and other UN partners support the UN’s country analysis and information dissemination?
- v) To what extent are the current support services provided to PDAs by HQ (including verbal and online technical support, responses to reporting, interagency working group communications, joint missions, orientation, global retreats, online information dissemination, Community of Practice, website, e-discussions, etc.) perceived as being effective and how could they be changed or improved?
- vi) To what extent have the Joint Programme’s efforts to build system-wide capacity on conflict prevention and conflict analysis contributed to the UN’s effectiveness in engaging on conflict prevention?

Efficiency

- i) Are PDAs provided with the resources and support necessary to enable them to efficiently undertake their assignments? Where can additional resources be directed to support a PDA’s

- work at country-level?
- ii) Are there any unanticipated circumstances, events, opportunities or constraints that limit the value of Joint Programme support?
- iii) Was the objective and nature of support/ engagement relating to the deployment of a PDA effectively communicated to Resident Coordinators, UN Country Teams, local partners, beneficiaries, government, partners, donors and internally within UNDP and DPA?

Sustainability

- i) Is there a suggested minimum time period for PDA deployment to be most effective? Do successive PDA deployments need to take place to develop and sustain entry points or, alternatively, can 'quick wins' be sustained?
- ii) In instances where national PDAs have been deployed, has such an approach strengthened: the sustainability of other interventions? The long-term presence of relevant skills and capacities at country level? And/or the subsequent inclusion of conflict prevention issues in the work of UNCT/ UNDP Country Offices? Are there other initiatives and measures that could be part of a PDA deployment that would further the sustainability of the conflict prevention engagement?
- iii) What types of roles can PDAs play in affecting change at national and local level? Within the UNCT? In supporting national partners?
- iv) Were exit strategies for PDA deployments appropriately defined and implemented, and what steps have been taken and should be taken to ensure sustainability of results?

Relevance

- v) Through the deployment of PDAs and other support made available through the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme, have UNCTs and UNDP Country Offices been able to help design conflict prevention and peacebuilding interventions in line with local and national priorities and other development strategies?
- vi) Does the support provided through the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme serve the needs of Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams? Does it address a niche within the UN system?

Additional questions pertaining to each of the four outputs, and linked to the four criteria areas, may also be considered, upon further discussion between International Alert and the Technical Committee of the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme.

4. METHODOLOGY

The Evaluation will be undertaken by International Alert, a London-based NGO with expertise in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Through funding made available by DFID as part of a recent contribution to the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme, International Alert will undertake this evaluation during the second and third quarters of 2014. The evaluation will be led by Ms. Sara Batmanglich (Senior Programme Officer, International Alert), who will liaise closely with the Technical Committee of the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme via the Programme Analyst (Joint UNDP/DPA Programme).

The evaluation will be overseen by a Reference Group to be comprised of UNDP and DPA staff, members of the PDA Advisory Group, as well as representatives from relevant UN agencies and bilateral and multilateral partners. Subject to further discussion, the proposed Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) could include:

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| i) UN DPA; | v) Members of the PDA Advisory Group; |
| ii) UNDP; | vi) Representative from DFID; |
| iii) PBSO; | vii) Representative from EU (EEAS); |
| iv) UNICEF; | viii) Representative from SIDA; |

- ix) Representative from Norway;
- x) Representative from Finland;
- xi) Representative from Switzerland.

The Reference Group will be involved throughout key stages of the evaluation, including: initial discussion regarding TOR and methodology prior to evaluation being undertaken; review of the inception report; draft evaluation report; and discussions on the findings of the final evaluation report and next steps. Recognizing the high-level of engagement in the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme, members of the Reference Group may also be involved in stakeholder interviews to be undertaken as part of the evaluation.

The following will be the approach adopted in conducting the evaluation, subject to discussions with International Alert:

Initial briefings/ discussions in New York: The evaluation will begin with a series of initial briefings with DPA and UNDP colleagues, as well as UN partners and, potentially, relevant Member State Missions, to discuss the evaluation. The consultant will work with the Technical Committee of the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme to determine the timelines and structure of the exercise.

Desk reviews: The Evaluation team will conduct desk reviews of relevant project documents and related documentation such as routine monitoring reports, Standard Operating Procedures, TORs, project progress reports, and relevant review and evaluation reports, lessons learned studies, and other analytical studies.

Country visits: The in-country evaluations will require extensive review of existing documentation with particular attention to evaluations and studies, consultations with senior and operational managers and field staff (including Resident Coordinators and PDAs), as well as consultations/interviews with a sample of key partners and key local stakeholders in-country. This will also include review of existing programme evaluations and assessments of relevant UNDP and UNCT programming in which PDAs have supported, as well as studies, research and evaluations conducted by other development partners, and other relevant documentation. The Evaluation Consultant will conduct individual country visits in up to five countries to validate the documentary data against the experience at the country level¹. The focus will be to triangulate information from documents and interviews by gathering objective data on key achievements and areas for improvement. At the end of each country visit, the Evaluation Consultant is expected to present initial findings to the concerned country offices for validation of factual information and findings.

Finalizing reports: The third phase of the evaluation will include a discussion of the findings and the draft report with the Evaluation Reference Group, the subsequent finalization of the evaluation report, as well as dissemination of lessons learned through existing UNDP and DPA mechanisms. The report should specifically highlight key lessons learned and good practices that could be replicated in future programs.

5. Evaluation Deliverables:

The evaluation consultants will produce the following deliverables (to be discussed/clarified with International Alert):

- **At the end of the first week of the assignment and based on a discussion at HQ,** the Evaluation consultant will submit the Inception Report describing the overall understanding of what is being evaluated, the methodological/analytical framework for the evaluation and the proposed schedule

¹ Two country visits are to be funded through the DFID contribution, with three additional country visits to be funded through the Joint UNDP/DPA Programme.

of tasks, activities and deliverables, with clear responsibilities for each team member. The inception report should also include the evaluation matrix, showing how each of the evaluation questions will be answered by way: proposed methods, sources of data and data collection procedures.

- **Desk studies:** Following the completion of the desk studies of the selected countries, the consultant will share draft country notes and share with key partners, country office management, and DPA and UNDP HQ.
- **Two weeks after the completion of all country visits and studies:** The evaluation consultant will prepare a draft note and share with key partners, country office management and DPA and UNDP HQ.
- **Evaluation brief and presentation:** Following discussion with the Review Group, the evaluation consultant will develop an Evaluation Brief and a Power Point Presentation, providing a concise synthesis of key findings, lessons learned and recommendations for presentation and dissemination among key stakeholders and partners.
- **Final report:** The consultant will submit a final report outlining the key findings, lessons learned, and recommendations, as well as an annex which is to include the country note summaries and other background material that informed the study.