ANNEXES – EVALUATION OF UNDP INTER-AGENCY POOLED FINANCING SERVICES

United Nations Development Programme
Independent Evaluation Office

Independent Country Programme Evaluation

Contents

Annex 1. EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

As part of its multi-year evaluation plan, approved by the UNDP Executive Board at its first regular session in January 2018, and in line with the UNDP Evaluation Policy, the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is undertaking an evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of UNDP inter-agency pooled financing services, the results of which will be presented to the Executive Board at its second regular session in September 2018.

In approving the plan for this evaluation, the Executive Board emphasized the relevance and timeliness of this evaluation as the UN development system undergoes restructuring under the UN Secretary General's reform proposal to reposition the UN development system to deliver the 2030 Agenda.

The evaluation has been conceived within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP Evaluation Policy with the following purposes: 1) to strengthen UNDP accountability to global and national development partners, including the UNDP Executive Board; 2) to support better oversight, governance and risk management practices in UNDP; and 3) to support organizational learning.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The objectives of the evaluation are to:

1. Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of UNDP in providing inter-agency pooled financing services.

2. Provide findings, conclusions and recommendations to improve and inform UNDPs comparative advantage and positioning as a provider of inter-agency pooled services.

3. SCOPE AND ITS LIMITATIONS

The evaluation will cover a period 2010-2017 to align with the structural changes that ensued in UNDP following the 'Agenda for Organizational Change' launched by the UNDP Administrator in 2010 which included efforts designed to improve efficiencies and a review of UNDP business model[1].

The IEO Multi-Year Evaluation Plan (2018-2021) also included- as a part of this evaluation- an assessment of the four 'UNDP Funding Windows' launched in 2016 to provide pooled, flexible funding for UNDP and partners to focus jointly on common goals in support of country level programming to achieve the SDGs. A preliminary review of this mechanism and its funded programmes/ projects indicated that- (1) since its launch in 2016, only nine Government partners have so far contributed a total $65 million to these funding windows of which only $12 million has been utilized as of December 2017; and (2) as such it is too early to review the results emerging from the projects and programmes funded under this umbrella. It was also noted that this is purely a UNDP pooled financing mechanism central to its own services delivery platform and not conceived as an inter-agency pooled financing mechanism. IEO Management, hence upon

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[1] E/2011/35

discussion, decided to defer this part of the evaluation to a later stage when the projects/ programmes are sufficiently mature to be evaluated.

4. INTER-AGENCY POOLED FINANCING

The first part of the evaluation will consider inter-agency pooled financing[2] services provided by UNDP through the MPTFO. Inter-agency pooled funds constitute one of the key stream of UN non-core funds and their provision to participating UN agencies by UNDP has not been independently evaluated previously. These services are central to the ongoing discussion on enhancing the functional efficiency within the UN System.

UN Inter-Agency Pooled Financing Mechanism: Established in 2003 and hosted by UNDP, the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO) manages, coordinates and facilitates design and administration of the pooled financing mechanism in the UN System. The portfolio of the UN MPTF Office includes more than 50 participating organizations and 100 contributors working in over 100 countries, with a combined deposit of $10.47 billion and transfers amounting to $9.81 billion between 2006 and 2017. In the period under consideration (2010-2017), MPTFO received deposits to pooled funds of approximately $7.06 billion and made transfers of $7.42 billion to participating organizations for development, humanitarian and transition programmes. Top five contributors during this period were United Kingdom ($2.38 billion), Norway ($854 million), Sweden ($828 million), Netherlands ($394 million) and Denmark ($240 million).

Since entry into force of the SDGs, all UN agencies, including and especially UNDP, have been gearing their strategies and programmes in support of member state efforts to fulfil these goals. As one of the UN's leading development agencies, UNDP's role too has evolved over time from mobilizing and funding grants to including broader support for countries to plan, access, leverage and measure financing for the SDGs and realize their development goals by 2030. One of the ways UNDP supports the UNDS in doing this is through the different pooled financing mechanisms.

The UN Pooled Funds managed by UNDP are designed to support a clearly defined programmatic scope and results framework through contributions from multiple funders that are held and managed by a UN fund administrator. The use of such funds are expected to help strengthen coherence and collaboration within the UNDS, bridging silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development assistance, and to better position the UN system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda. Pooled funds are also expected to help broaden the UN contributor base; and improve risk management.[3]

Pooled financing mechanisms operate in a wide range of contexts, as well as on different geopolitical scales- global, regional, national and sub-national. They can be UN or nationally managed. They may operate through a single or multiple funding windows, based on the scope and complexity of programmatic goals and the number and diversity of implementing partners. The main inter-agency pooled mechanisms currently managed and administered by UNDP include UN and National Multi-Donor Trust Funds (MDTFs) and Joint Programmes (JPs). UNDP acts as an Administrative Agent for these mechanisms, through the MPTFO, and- with firewalls constructed to

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2 An inter-agency pooled fund is a multi-entity funding mechanism designed to support clearly defined programmatic scope and results by contributions that are co-mingled, not earmarked to a specific UN entity and held by a UN fund administrator. In these, the UN takes a lead role in making fund allocation decisions as well as fund implementation, making these funds a more flexible form of non-core contributions.

3 Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet. Report of the Secretary General, (advanced unedited version), 20 December 2017.

avoid conflicts of interest- also implements projects and programmes as a participating UN organization.

UN Multi-Donor Trust Funds (MDTFs): MDTFs are a financing tool available to the UN for pooling funds from multiple sources to support a particular objective. The programmatic scope of MDTFs is broad and designed to be transformative. MDTFs can be established at the global, regional or country level. They are often thematic in nature, targeting specific development, transition, environmental and humanitarian needs and typically include several high-level outcomes. Funds can be structured within a single or multiple funding windows; for example, a UN MDTF can be established in isolation or as one of the funding windows in a larger-scope fund, with other windows administered by IFIs, such as the World Bank; alternatively, the UN MDTF may be complemented by a separate national MDTF.

By and large, all MDTFs have similar governance arrangements. Fund implementation is the responsibility of participating UN organizations, who may work with government and NGO partners as per their own rules and regulations. Fund operation is directed by a steering committee, chaired or co-chaired by the UN and supported by a secretariat (or the Resident Coordinator's Office in the case of a Delivering as One Fund). The steering committee sets overall direction, makes resource allocation decisions and carries out independent reviews. As the appointed fund administrator, the MPTF Office supports the fund design and channels the contributions received from various contributors to the implementing UN agency.

Between 2010-2017, the UNDP MPTFO managed a portfolio of $4.99 billion in deposits and transferred $5.52 billion to participating organizations. Table 1 highlights the top five MDTFs and Table 2 highlights the top five One UN Funds during the review period. In addition, it managed deposits of $282 million and $139 million for Multi-window funds (in Somalia, Colombia and Central African Republic) and National MPTFs (in DRC, Mali and Ethiopia), respectively.

Joint Programmes (JPs): Joint Programmes are stand-alone pass through financing tools available to UN organizations for pooling funds to support specific programmes. Each requires a Joint Programme document with a clear results framework and budget. Joint Programmes typically have a well-defined and limited scope and involve partnerships of two to five UN organizations and their government partners (which can be at both national and sub national levels). The programmatic scope is expected to be aligned with national priorities derived from an UNDAF/ Delivering as One Programme, or equivalent programming instrument or development framework. A Joint Programme can be established at national level (involving one country), regional or global levels (involving two or more regions or countries). Global and regional Joint Programmes typically address normative and policy issues at global or regional level, while national Joint Programmes aim more towards operational activities in specific thematic areas in one country.

Joint Programmes have governance arrangements similar to MDTFs. The fund implementation is the responsibility of the participating UN organizations, working with their government and NGO partners as per their own rules and regulations. Fund operation is directed by a steering committee, chaired or co-chaired by the UN and supported by a convening agency. The steering committee sets overall direction, makes resource allocation decisions and carries out independent reviews. The convening agency is responsible for operational and programmatic coordination, including the coordination of narrative reporting. As the appointed Fund Administrator/Administrative Agent, the MPTF Office receives the contributions from the contributors and channels them to participating UN organizations based on Steering Committee decisions.

Between 2010-2017, JPs received $495 million in deposits and close to $480 million was disbursed to partners for programme implementation. Table 3 provides a list of the top five JPs funded during the review period.

UNDP as a participating UN organization in MDTFs and JPs: Like other participating UN agencies, UNDP implements projects and programmes funded through the MPTFO. UNDP also acts as a Managing Agent for funding to NGO projects under Common Humanitarian Funds. Firewalls have been constructed to avoid the potential for conflict of interest between UNDPs dual roles as MPTFO manager, and implementing agency. During the review period (2010-2017) UNDP received $2.5 billion from the MDTFs and Joint Programmes and spent $2.3 billion towards programming. This was roughly 38 percent of the total funds disbursed by the MPTFO to different UN agencies during the period. Top five UN pooled funds received by UNDP during the review period were Peacebuilding Fund ($316 million), MDG Achievement Fund ($122 million), UN REDD Programme Fund ($110 million), UNDG Haiti Reconstruction Fund and Somalia Multi Window Trust Fund ($99 million each).

5. KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The following key questions will be addressed:

- How effective and efficient is UNDP in providing pooled financing services to its partners?

- What is the operational performance of UNDP pooled financing mechanisms?

- What are the value-added, benefits and risks of the pooled financing mechanism as a system-wide service?

- Do pooled financing mechanisms contribute in supporting country level UNDS priorities?

These questions will be elaborated in the evaluation matrix to be developed during the inception phase of the evaluation in consultation with key stakeholders.

6. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation approach shall be theory based[4], and considering the abridged Theories of Change (TOC) in Figure 1, as well as alternative theories that happen to be presented by the evaluand. The TOC will be further developed in consultation with stakeholders to include specific pathways for how UNDP's inter-agency services are contributing to the effectiveness of agencies contributions to the SDGs. Choices of methods and proposed strategy for undertaking the evaluation shall be grounded on these theories.

The evaluation methodology will adhere to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms & Standards[5]. Methods for data collection will be both quantitative and qualitative, including a detailed, calibrated survey with UN clients, partners and donors, a sample of desk and case studies, financial flows analysis and interviews with key stakeholders and beneficiaries. All pooled financing modalities and operational services provided by UNDP will be considered in selecting a diverse sample of desk and country case studies.

The evaluation will build on the available reports and previous reviews, both internal and external, conducted by MPTFO, and internal and external oversight entities on the subject, as well as related

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4 Theory-based evaluations are usually based on a theory of change that seeks to explain causality and changes, including underlying assumptions.

5 http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/21

examinations of interagency activity such as the ones commissioned by UNDG. It will also include case studies and a survey of a sample of United Nations Country Teams and UN participating organizations. Missions will be conducted to selected countries and programmes to represent the portfolio of activities funded under the pooled mechanisms; these will be supplemented with phone interviews as needed. The analysis of data collected shall be grounded in the proposed TOC to answer the evaluation questions with the prevalent triangulated evidence from surveys, desk and country case studies and interviews.

7. EVALUATION PHASES AND TIMEFRAME

The *inception phase* will include consultations with MTPFO to further map issues to be assessed and to identify relevant documents, literature and stakeholders to be consulted. During inception the TOC will be further detailed and validated with MTPFO and tools for data collection, such as surveys and interview protocols, will be developed.

The *data collection phase* will include document and financial analysis, surveys, case-studies and in-depth interviews. Surveys will be conducted with UN entities at the corporate and country levels to assess satisfaction and what could be improved about pooled financing services provided by UNDP through the MTPFO.

Preliminary research indicates the following as possible mission/interview locations, although changes to the below list and additional destinations might be determined during the desk review:

- **New York HQ**: UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Secretariat, UN Women, UNDG/DOCO, DESA, UNOPS, UNCDF, UNV, OCHA, UNDPKO, UNMAS, UNDPA, EOSG, UNITAR, UNOLA, Member State Representatives, others to be contacted via Phone/ Skype or during or *en route* to field missions.
- **Geneva-based agencies and entities**: ILO, ITC, ITU, UNAIDS, UNHCR, WHO, OHCHR, UNCTAD
- **Rome based agencies**: FAO, WFP, IFAD (possibly via skype or *en route* to field missions)
- **Copenhagen Service Centre**: UNDP GSSC for human resources and UNOPS, which also strives to provide services on a system-wide basis.
- **Kuala Lumpur Service Centre**: UNDP GSSU for operations in conjunction with OAI also conducting an audit.
- **Country/Theme/Issues based case studies** may include the following: Angola, Mali, Tanzania (Africa); Vietnam, China, Sri Lanka (Asia-Pacific); Albania (Europe and CIS); Paraguay and Brazil (South America). The list is tentative at the moment and subject to change following the desk review. Efforts will be made to select the case study countries that represent a mix of different funding modalities and diversity of funded programme portfolio.

The *analysis phase* will work with the tabulated answers from surveys and triangulate them with data coded from case studies, interviews and desk review and against the theories of change arrive at key findings, conclusions and recommendations.

During the *finalization phase* the draft report with recommendations will be subject to the IEOs quality assurance process, which includes external review. The quality assured report will then be shared with BMS and MTPFO for comments prior to the informal meeting of the Executive Board in July when member states will have their first chance to review the draft report before the final report with management responses is presented to the formal session of the Executive board in September.

Table: Evaluation process, timeframe with key milestones		
Evaluation Process	**Month**	**Milestone**

Design/ Team Composition	January/ February 2018	Concept Note/ ToR/ Team recruitment
Data collection	March 2018	Desk review, quantitative analysis, launch of survey
	March/ April 2018	Stakeholder and partner interviews, case studies, country field visits
Analysis and synthesis	May 2018	Data analysis and synthesis to arrive at findings, conclusions and recommendations
Report writing	May/ June 2018	Initial draft for IEO/EAP quality assurance
Report adjustments/ management response	June 2018	First draft report to UNDP management for comments
	July 2018	Final Draft report (unedited) presented at EB informal with UNDP Management Response
EB Paper and informal presentation	July 2018	Executive Board Paper (report summary and management response) uploaded on EB documentation site
Report editing and design	August 2018	Production of full evaluation report (editing and design)
Final Report	September 2018	Final Report uploaded on EB website
EB presentation	September 2018	Report presented at the EB second regular session in September 2018

8. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND EVALUATION TEAM

The *Independent Evaluation Office* has the overall responsibility for the conceptualization and design of the evaluation, managing the evaluation process and producing a high quality final evaluation report, for presentation to the Executive Board at the second regular session in September 2018. The IEO will constitute an evaluation team with one IEO senior evaluator, one external commissioned evaluator and one research consultant.

- Lead Evaluator (LE), Yogesh Kumar Bhatt: IEO staff member with overall responsibility for assessing inter-agency pooled financing.

- Consultants: 2 independent consultants will be recruited. Under the guidance of the LEs, they will conduct preliminary research and data collection activities, particularly case studies, prepare analysis papers with findings, and contribute to the preparation of the final evaluation report with conclusions and recommendations.

  o Consultant 1: Responsible for financial analysis of pooled financing provided by UNDP to UN Partner Agencies through the MPTFO, including fund performance and analysis of quality of services provided by UNDP. This will also include a comparative analysis of pooled financing mechanisms with other funding mechanisms used by other IFIs and donors to support international development efforts.

  o Consultant 2: Responsible to support background research for the evaluation on pooled financing services; data mining; launch and follow-up electronic surveys and data analysis as an input to the evaluation report; and support the evaluation team with project data and information pertaining to data collection missions in about 15 countries in 5 regions.

Other IEO staff will help to collect data for this evaluation in countries where they are also collecting data for other evaluations such as the ICPEs.

Annex 2. PERSONS CONSULTED

FAO
AL-FAYEZ, Talal
CHIANCA, Gustavo
GINSBURG, Michael
KHRESAT, Sa'eb
KIBOKO, Vicky
LWAKATARE, Moorine
MARA TAKEI, Sue
MASCARENHAS, Kathya
MCSHERRY, David William
QUEIROZ, Tiago
RAHMAN, Dina
ROMERA, Lilian
SIGALLA, Ajuaye
SONG HA, Nguyen
SUSAN, Kaaria
VALAT, Nadine
VANJA, Maslovarik

IFAD
M.W. VIEIRA, Hardi
MCHOMVU, Jabir

ILO
BORGES, Joana
BUIJZE, Sietse
CHAILLEt, Olivier
GURZUMAR, Fikri
HOANG HA, Nguyen
JOHNSON, Greg
KANE, Raki
MUSEE, Geoffrey
MWANGOSI, John
THI LAM NGA, Le

IMO
ALONSO, John
LUCIANO, Mara
PARSONS, Apphia
RANMUTHU, Darshana
VALEV, Ivaylo

IOM
ESCRIBANO, Pablo
GONÇALVEs, Quelita

GOODSTEIN, Gregoire
HOUVER, Vincent
RWEHUMBIZa, Ivetha
VERHAS, Andrea

ITC
BHUWANEE, Tara
FRAUENRATH, Marie-Claude
HAUSWIRTH, Iris
JIMENEZ, Miguel
ZHANG, Jicheng

Joint UNDP/UNFPA/UNICEF office
CARNEVALI, Ilaria
MAXIMIANO, Paula
MENDES, Elisabete
MONTEIRO, Joao
PINTO, Anita
PIRES, Antonio
RICHARDSON, Ulrika
RODRIGUES, Nelida

MDG-F JP
FUJIWARA, Luis
MACHADO, Erica
SPEZIA, Carlos

MPTFO
KEIJZERS, Henriette
MORETTA, Louise
TOPPING, Jennifer

OCHA
DE DOMENICO, Andrea
JHA, Ashutosh
KETER, David
MOHAMMED, Adnan
NJOROGE, Emily

OHCHR
CATALDO, Camilo
MISAKI, Isabella
KALAMEU, Omer Kebiwou
MORALES, Mercedes
PEARCE, Eldon
WARD, Kyle

PAHO/WHO
MONRROY, Rodrigo

PBSO
FRANCHE, Marc-Andre
SMITH, Tammy

Resident Coordinator Office
BECCARO, Alice
CHATTERJEE, Siddharth
FABIANCIC, Niky
JACQUAND, Marc
KNUTSSON, Per
KUMSSA, Asfaw
LEITE, Larissa
LIBORO-SENGA, Anna
MALHOTRA, Kamal
MSHANGAMA, Mirhame
N. LIKIMANI-GACHANJA, Jane
OHRSTEDT, Pontus
ORANITA, Heli
RODRIGUEZ, Alvaro
SANCHEZ, Franco
DIMOND, Marie
KAKYOMYa, Violet
JORGO, Merita
ST GEORGE, Charles

UN Habitat
BAHTTACHARJEE, Debashish
MUNDARA, Rahab
QUANG, Nguyen
SILVA, Janice

UN Women
ALARAKHIA, Mahjabeen
DOMINICK, Marlin
FURTADo, Vanilde
GALVÃO, Myriam
GLEMAREC, Yannick
KIGEN, Leonard
LUBANGA, David
NGUGI, Nyambura
NGUYET LINH, Pham
SHEIKH, Ziad
TESHA, Lucy
THUMBI, Edwin

UN-REDD
XUAN THON, Vu

UNAIDS
DE BARROS, Daniela
KAPES, Chantal
REHNSTROM, Joel
USSING, Morten

UNCTAD
MOREIRA, Teresa
MYINT, Win
RODDE, Jean-Philippe

UNDOCO
BAILEY, Richard

UNDP
AL-HEBSHI, Nesreen
ANBURDO, Betty
BAIONI, Maristela
BICH Ngoc, Phan
BOUCLY, Natalie
CAMARA, Moriken
FERNANDES, Caroline
FROMHOLt, Johannes
FUJII, Akiko
GBA, Clement
HIEN, Dang
JORGE, Bernardo
KARAGU, Cecilia
KHEIR, Rashid
KIDA, Victor
KYRIACOU, George
LASKER, Romano
MALLONGO, Jeremiah
MASAKA, Catherine
MBAE, Maturafi K
MBUGUA, Margaret
MCDADE, Susan
MY HANH, Tran
N'DOMAN, Leyla Nuya
NGATIA, Sheila
NGUYET MINH, Vu
OLIVELLA, Sara Ferrer
PHUONG, Catherine
SAADi, Abdou-Salam
SERUMAGA, Amanda
SHAH, Darshak
SIGALLA, Veronica
SIONGOK, Anabel
SIREGAR, Ida
THI HONG, Tran

THUY Ha, Nguyen
TIEN PHONG, Nguyen
TREBUCQ, Didier
WHITEHEAD, Elizabeth
WIESEN, Caitlin
WOLL, Bettina
XUAN LAI, Dao
OMEDO, Geoffrey

UN Environment
AMBROSIO, Marco
FEABES, Alex
MAKENYA, Clara
WANJIRU AKUMU, Jane

UNESCO
AL SHABBI, Bilal
BOKOSHA, Spencer
CROFT, Michael
FARINA, Costanza
MBONYINGINGO, Emeline
MONTEIL, Karalyn
NOLETO, Marlova
PAOLINI, Anna
SINANE, Ali-Mohamed

UNFPA
AKWAH, Benjamin
ANDIAMANANA, Tolotra
BANT, Astrid
BOINA Maecha, Mamdou
BONI Outtara, Edith
DISII, Claudette
IHALAINEN, Mira
KANUKI, Nicholas
KWEKA, Proseper
OLHAGARAY, Esteban
OLIVEIRA, Jorge
PLAYFAIR, Nadine
SASSENRATH, Yves
THU HA, Do
ZAFAR, Salman

UNHCR
ARAKI, Hiroko
BASCHETTI, Sara
BUSKENS, Anna
MUSHI, Anna
MUTAI, Gilbert
SHARPE, Tammi

UNICEF

ASHOK, Madhavi
COPE, Simon
GITAU, James
KEPLER, Diane
MILLER, Lesley
RADONJIC, Nenad
SHESHE, Frederik
VITORIA, Rodrigo
ZEMENE, Solome
OUTTARA, Marcel

UNIDO
B. KARGBO, Stephen
DOLUN, U. Muge
HANGO, Asha
LEVY, Rui
MAKOBORE, Digna
MEIRELLES, Everaldo
PERERA, George
REGUEIRO, Juliana
SLATER, Jason
T.S. LANDRICHTER, Jean-Paul
THANH THAO, Le

UNITAR
SETH, Nikhil
THALLA, Joel
VASILESCU, Marina

UNODC
ANDRADE, Cristina
ANH TRA, Nguyen
BELALCAZAR, Monica
FARIA, Sandra
MIRELLA, Flavio
MURRAY, Gillian
NGUYET MINH, Nguyen
SILVA, Ingrid
STROBEL-SHAW, Brigitte

UNOPS
GILYANA, Raad Yousif
KARIM, Moin
MENEZES, Alessandra
PUKCHAREON, Kanit
REESE, Andrew
W. GUENTHER, Niels

UNV
ANYOTI, Sarah
TIKUM, Njoya

World Bank
KACHINGWE, Martin

WFP
CHATAURWA, Farirai
CHIARINI, Azzurra
LEVINS, John
MELLO, Carmelucia
MSOCHA, John
OUEDRAOGO, Moumini
OUMA, Sophies
WANJIKU, Lydiah
YAMASAKI, Raira

WHO
BAKIR, Hamed
CABRAL, Antonietta
CRESPO, Mariana
DIZIER, Hubert
GRISS, Cornelia
JEFFREYS, Nick
KEBE, Mouhamadou Amine
KURUP, Anand Sivasankara
LUZOT, Anne-Claire
MILOVANOVIC, Ivana
PAPPAS, Jane Stewart
PARK, Kidong

Others
AKLILU, Bisrat
NABARRO, David
NEKY, Arif
SANOGO
SIDIBE

Donors
VAN ACKER, Peter, Belgium
SPOEREl, Christine, Canada
PINDERA, Joanne, Canada
STEFFEn, Susan, Canada
SOW, Kola, Denmark
LE ROITH, Ben, DFID, UK
BARNES, Helen, DIFD, UK
STRAMMER, Geza, EU
BOUZOn, Julien, EU
JONEs, Timo Mahn, Germany
HENEGHAn, Louisa, Ireland
CARr, Bronagh, Ireland
DA CRUz, Angèle, Luxembourg
WAHNOn, Jorge, Luxembourg
VAN HOUWELINGEN, Heino, Netherlands
VAN DER HORST, Linda, Netherlands
FLADBy, Berit, Norway
BENDIKSBy, Trygve, Norway
W SKANCKE, Gunvor, Norway
GACUGIA, Dorcas, Norway
LATORRE, Fernando, Spain
MARTELES, Maria Luisa, Spain

Non-UN Organizations (NUNOs)
CAPROTTI, Matteo. Handicap International
BOYOU, Semindje Kouleon. Care International
SCHAUB, Antoine. Interpeace
BROWNSBERGER, Colin. Mercy Corps

HALFAN, Sarah. Mercy Corps

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Online tools and database consulted

MPTFO Gateway database of contributions, transfers and expenditures

DOCO UN Pooled Funding Database

Annex 4. ENTITIES RESPONDING TO SURVEY

1. UN Entities

1. ECA
2. EOSG
3. FAO
4. IFAD
5. ILO
6. IOM
7. OCHA
8. OHCHR
9. PAHO/WHO
10. PBSO
11. RCO
12. UNAIDS
13. UNCDF
14. UNCTAD
15. UNDG
16. UNDP
17. UNEP
18. UNESCO
19. UNFPA
20. UNHABITAT
21. UNHCR
22. UNICEF
23. UNIDO
24. UNOPS
25. UNOWAS
26. UNSOM
27. UNWOMEN
28. WFP
29. WHO

2. Non-UN Organizations (NUNOs)

1 Acord International
2 CARE
3 Educare_Liberia
4 Handicap International
5 Interpeace

3. Donors

1 Australia
2 Canada
3 European Union
4 France
5 Germany
6 Moldova
7 Norway
8 Peru
9 Sweden
10 Switzerland
11 Unknown