

Annex 1. Terms of Reference

1. INTRODUCTION

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) conducts “Independent Country Programme Evaluations (ICPEs)”, previously known as “Assessments of Development Results (ADRs),” to capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of UNDP’s contributions to development results at the country level, as well as the effectiveness of UNDP’s strategy in facilitating and leveraging national effort for achieving development results. The purpose of an ICPE is to:

- Support the development of the next UNDP country programme
- Strengthen the accountability of UNDP to national stakeholders
- Strengthen the accountability of UNDP to the Executive Board

ICPEs are independent evaluations carried out within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP Evaluation Policy.¹ The IEO is independent of UNDP management and is headed by a Director who reports to the UNDP Executive Board. The responsibility of the IEO is two-fold: (a) provide the Executive Board with valid and credible information from evaluations for corporate accountability, decision-making and improvement; and (b) enhance the independence, credibility and utility of the evaluation function, and its coherence, harmonization and alignment in support of United Nations reform and national ownership.

Based on the principle of national ownership, IEO seeks to conduct ICPEs in collaboration with the national authorities where the country programme is implemented.

UNDP Sierra Leone has been selected for an ICPE since its country programme will end in 2019.² The ICPE will be conducted in 2018 to feed into the development of the new country programme. The ICPE will be conducted in close collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone, UNDP Sierra Leone country office, and UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa.

2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Political and economic context: Sierra Leone is still struggling to recover from the social and economic effects of two severe shocks in 2014. While the economy was at a high in 2012 and 2013 with GDP growth reaching 20.7% on the back of high iron-ore prices, the impact of Ebola and the collapse of iron-ore prices in 2014 led to a significant shrinkage of the economy with GDP reducing by 21.1% in 2015. In more recent years the economy has improved as it recovers from the Ebola crisis and sees improved mineral pricing.

In 2017, Sierra Leone’s GDP increased by nearly 6%. The economy remains agriculturally based with 61 percent of GDP being provided by the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting sectors in 2016.³

¹ See UNDP Evaluation Policy: www.undp.org/eo/documents/Evaluation-Policy.pdf. The ICPE will also be conducted in adherence to the Norms and the Standards and the ethical Code of Conduct established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (www.uneval.org).

² The Country Programme Document, 2015 to 2018, was extended for one year to 2019 at the Annual Session of the UNDP Executive Board.

³ African Economic Outlook, 2017

Democratic governance: Peace continues to be consolidated in the country with the fourth elections being held in 2018 following elections in 2002, 2007 and 2012. President Ernest Bai Koroma has stepped down as due to step down as his second term came to an end. . Elections in March 2018, which underwent a run-off- to determine the winner, were mostly peaceful and saw a close result with Retired Brigadier Julius Maada Bio finally winning the presidential elections.

Following a decade long civil war from 1991 to 2002 the country has considerably strengthened democratic elections, security and peace. However, challenges remain and with weaknesses in governance structures including accountability and transparency. Corruption continues to be a challenge and Transparency International has ranked the Country 130 out of 180 countries in its corruption perception index for 2017.⁴ . Local governance also needs further strengthening.

Poverty and development challenges: Sierra Leone faces numerous development challenges. Poverty rates, though improving before the decline in GDP due to the Ebola crisis and iron-ore price falls, was 52.9% in 2011, with multi-dimensional poverty of over 77.5%. The country's Human Development index remains low, at 0.262 in 2015 (ranking 179th/ 188 countries) with a Gini coefficient of 0.32 in 2011.⁵ Sierra Leone's Gender inequality index rankings are also low, 183/ 187 countries with an index of 0.643.⁶

A major challenge for the economy continues to be employment generation and especially youth unemployment and underemployment which remains high.

Humanitarian crisis: Recent years have been marked by considerable humanitarian crisis, most notably with the outbreak of Ebola in 2014, which impacted several West African countries, including Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia. As of October 2015 there were almost 15,000 reported cases of Ebola in Sierra Leone and 4,000 deaths. The outbreak has had significant economic, social and, to a degree, political consequences. It also saw an increase in overseas development aid to the country which has since decreased.

Heavy rains and subsequent flooding and the August 2017 mudslides led to the deaths of over 1,000 people and the displacement of more than 3,000 around Freetown and Sierra Leone's Western area.

3. UNDP PROGRAMME STRATEGY IN SIERRA LEONE

Over the Country Programme document period, 2015 to 2018, UNDP Sierra Leone has been closely aligned to the Sierra Leone Government's Agenda for Prosperity as well as emerging needs, such as the Ebola crisis in 2014 & 2015 through support to the development and implementation of the 2015-2017 Ebola Recovery Strategy. UNDP's support has been coordinated with other UN Agencies and strongly linked to outcomes under the UNDAF (2015 to 2018). UNDP's Country Programme document (2015 to 2018), has focused on three areas of priority i) Inclusive growth and poverty reduction, ii) Democratic Governance and iii) Environment and Energy as well as response and recovery work due to the Ebola crisis and natural disasters that have occurred.

Across Inclusive growth UNDP Sierra Leone developed projects focused on local economic development as well as strategies for strengthening youth employment including support to business as policy

⁴ https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2017#table

⁵ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/indicators/138806#>

⁶ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index>

development. Work in inclusive growth has also included a number of recovery projects in response to the 2014 Ebola crisis such as reintegration of response workers, including Red Cross volunteer teams and livelihood programmes for Ebola survivors and affected households.

Democratic Governance work continues to support the Sierra Leone Government in the organising and implementation of credible and peaceful elections, including the presidential elections of 2018. A further considerable area of support has been both support to parliament as well as a comprehensive constitutional review. Access to justice and strengthening of the rule of law, including key institutions such as the police, the judiciary, the correctional service, the Legal Aid Board, the Independent Police Complaints Board and the Human Rights Commission have also received considerable support during the CPD period.

Environment and energy has supported a range of activities supporting Government policy as well as decision makers in the public and private sectors in strengthening the Countries response to climate change. UNDP Sierra Leone has also been active in preparing and strengthening the Government in its disaster response preparedness and response work, development of capacity for effective early warning systems at upstream and downstream levels, as well as developing national capacity for the mobilisation of funds and implementation of programmes to achieve targets for the Nationally Determined Contributions agreed at COP 21 in Paris, 2015. This ADR will focus on the ongoing country programme (i.e., from 2013) while taking account of some longer-term activities that extend from the previous country programme cycle.

Table 1: Country Programme outcomes and indicative resources (2015-2018)

Country Programme Outcome		Indicative resources 2015-2018 (US\$)	Expenditures to date 2015-2017 (US\$)
Outcome 30	Low income and food insecure households have improved access to sustainable income generating opportunities (on-farm and off-farm).	33,200,000	11,394,956
Outcome 31	By 2018, targeted Government institutions, the private sector, and local communities manage natural resources in a more equitable and sustainable way.	4,600,000	9,596,229
Outcome 32	Capacity of democratic institutions strengthened to enable good governance.	44,200,000	17,600,013
Outcome 33	Justice and security sector delivery systems improved in compliance with international human rights standards.	22,000,000	9,021,931
Total		104,000,000	47,613,129

Source: The Indicative Resources were extracted from UNDP Sierra Leone Country Programme Document 2015-2018 (DP/DCP/SLE/3); Expenditures to Date were extracted from Corporate Planning System (2018).

4. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

ICPEs are conducted in the penultimate year of the ongoing UNDP country programme in order to feed into the process of developing the new country programme. The ICPE will focus on the current programme cycle, with consideration to the Country Programme document, 2013 to 2014. The ICPE will also follow up on the implementation of recommendations from IEO's previous Assessment of Development Results for Sierra Leone undertaken in 2013.⁷

ICPEs focus on the formal UNDP country programmes approved by the Executive Board. The country programmes are defined – depending on the programme cycle and the country – in the Country Programme Document (CPD) and the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP). The scope of the ICPE includes the entirety of UNDP's activities in the country and therefore covers interventions funded by all sources, including core UNDP resources, donor funds, and government funds. There will also be initiatives from the regional and global programmes that are included in the scope of the ICPE. It is important to note, however, that a UNDP country office may be involved in a number of activities that may not be included in a specific project. Some of these 'non-project' activities may be crucial for the political and social agenda of a country.

5. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology will adhere to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms & Standards.⁸ The ICPE will address the following three key evaluation questions.⁹ These questions will also guide the presentation of the evaluation findings in the report.

1. What did the UNDP country programme intend to achieve during the period under review?
2. To what extent has the programme achieved (or is likely to achieve) its intended objectives?
3. What factors contributed to or hindered UNDP's performance and eventually, the sustainability of results?

The ICPE is conducted at the outcome level. To address question 1, a Theory of Change (ToC) approach will be used in consultation with stakeholders, as appropriate. Discussions of the ToC will focus on mapping the assumptions behind the programme's desired change(s) and the causal linkages between the intervention(s) and the intended country programme outcomes. Where data gaps are apparent, a qualitative approach will be taken to fill those gaps to aid in the evaluation process. As part of this analysis, the CPD's progression over the review period will also be examined. In assessing the CPD's progression, UNDP's capacity to adapt to the changing context and respond to national development needs and priorities will also be looked at. The effectiveness of UNDP's country programme will be analysed under evaluation question 2. This will include an assessment of the achieved outcomes and the extent to which these outcomes have contributed to the intended CPD objectives. In this process, both positive and negative, direct and indirect unintended outcomes will also be identified.

⁷ http://web.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/adr/sierra_leone.shtml

⁸ <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/21>

⁹ The ICPEs have adopted a streamlined methodology, which differs from the previous ADRs that were structured according to the four standard OECD DAC criteria.

To better understand UNDP's performance, the specific factors that have influenced - both positively or negatively - UNDP's performance and eventually, the sustainability of results in the country will be examined under evaluation question 3. They will be examined in alignment with the engagement principles, drivers of development and alignment parameters of the Strategic Plan,¹⁰ as well as the utilization of resources to deliver results and how managerial practices impacted achievement of programmatic goals. Qualitative rating scales will be used to assess (i) the degree to which a factor was a significant constraint on effectiveness of program implementation and achievement of outcomes; and (ii) the degree to which the UNDP was successful in addressing/managing the constraint.

Special attention will be given to integrate a gender equality approach to data collection methods. To assess gender across the portfolio, the evaluation will use the gender marker¹¹ and the gender results effectiveness scale (GRES). The GRES, developed as part of the corporate evaluation on UNDP's contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment, classifies gender results into five categories: gender negative, gender blind, gender targeted, gender responsive, gender transformative.

6. DATA COLLECTION

Assessment of data collection constraints and existing data. An assessment was carried for each outcome to ascertain the available information, identify data constraints, to determine the data collection needs and method. The assessment outlined the level of evaluable data that is available. The assessment indicates that 8 evaluations have so far been completed under the current evaluation plan, with five more planned during 2018. With respect to indicators, the CPD, UNDP Results-Oriented Annual Report (ROAR) and the corporate planning system associated with it also provide baselines, indicators, targets, as well as annual data on the status of the indicators. In this context, in terms of evaluability there is a good availability of UNDP projects, strategic documents, and monitoring reports. However, the evaluation may be limited in travelling to projects areas due to logistical and safety concerns.

Data collection methods. The evaluation will use data from primary and secondary sources, including desk review of documentation, surveys and information and interviews with key stakeholders, including beneficiaries, partners and project managers. Specific evaluation questions and the data collection method will be further detailed and outlined in the outcome analysis. A survey will be administered to counterparts in the country office at the onset of data collection. A multi-stakeholder approach will be followed and interviews will include government representatives, civil-society organizations, private-sector representatives, UN agencies, multilateral organizations, bilateral donors, and beneficiaries of the programme. Focus groups will be used to consult some groups of beneficiaries as appropriate.

The criteria for selecting projects for field visits include:

- Programme coverage (projects covering the various components and cross-cutting areas);
- Financial expenditure (projects of all sizes, both large and smaller pilot projects);
- Geographic coverage (not only national level and urban-based ones, but also in the various regions);

¹⁰ These principles include: national ownership and capacity; human rights-based approach; sustainable human development; gender equality and women's empowerment; voice and participation; South-South and triangular cooperation; active role as global citizens; and universality.

¹¹ A corporate tool to sensitize programme managers in advancing GEWE through assigning ratings to projects during project design to signify the level of expected contribution to GEWE. It can also be used to track planned programme expenditures on GEWE (not actual expenditures).

- Maturity (covering both completed and active projects);
- Programme cycle (coverage of projects/activities from the past and mainly the current cycles);
- Degree of “success” (coverage of successful projects, as well as projects reporting difficulties where lessons can be learned).
- Partnership arrangements

The IEO and the country office will identify an initial list of background and programme-related documents which is posted on an ICPE SharePoint website. Document reviews will include: background documents on the national context, documents prepared by international partners and other UN agencies during the period under review; programmatic documents such as workplans and frameworks; progress reports; monitoring self-assessments such as the yearly UNDP Results Oriented Annual Reports (ROARs); and evaluations conducted by the country office and partners, including the quality assurance reports. All information and data collected from multiple sources will be triangulated to ensure its validity. The evaluation matrix will be used to guide how each of the questions will be addressed organize the available evidence by key evaluation question. This will also facilitate the analysis process, and will support the evaluation team in drawing well substantiated conclusions and recommendations.

Stakeholder involvement: a participatory and transparent process will be followed to engage with multiple stakeholders at all stages of the evaluation process. During the initial phase, a stakeholder analysis will be conducted to identify all relevant UNDP partners, including those that may have not worked with UNDP but play a key role in the outcomes to which UNDP contributes. This stakeholder analysis will serve to identify key informants for interviews during the main data collection phase of the evaluation, and to examine any potential partnerships that could further improve UNDP’s contribution to the country.

7. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP: The UNDP IEO will conduct the ICPE in consultation with the UNDP Sierra Leone country office, the Regional Bureau for Africa and the Sierra Leone Government. The IEO lead evaluator will lead the evaluation and coordinate the evaluation team. The IEO will meet all costs directly related to the conduct of the ICPE.

UNDP Country Office in Sierra Leone: The country office will support the evaluation team to liaise with key partners and other stakeholders, make available to the team all necessary information regarding UNDP’s programmes, projects and activities in the country, and provide factual verifications of the draft report on a timely basis. The CO will provide support in kind (e.g. arranging meetings with project staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries; assistance for field site visits). To ensure the anonymity of interviewees, the country office staff will not participate in the stakeholder interviews.

The CO and IEO will jointly organize a debriefing session at the end of the data collection mission to deliver initial findings and a final stakeholder meeting after completion of the ICPE report, with participation of key government counterparts, through a videoconference, where final findings and results of the evaluation will be presented. The final stakeholder meeting will be held within one month of receipt of comments from the Country office and stakeholders. Additionally, the CO will prepare a management response in consultation with Regional Bureau and will support the use and dissemination of the final outputs of the ICPE process.

UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa: The UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa will support the evaluation through information sharing and will also participate in discussions on emerging conclusions and recommendations.

Evaluation Team: The IEO will constitute an evaluation team to undertake the ICPE. The IEO will ensure gender balance in the team which will include the following members:

- **Lead Evaluator (LE):** IEO staff member with overall responsibility for developing the evaluation design and terms of reference; managing the conduct of the ICPE, preparing/ finalizing the final report; and organizing the stakeholder workshop, as appropriate, with the country office.
- **Associate Lead Evaluator (ALE):** IEO staff member with the general responsibility to support the LE, including in the preparation of terms of reference, data collection and analysis and the final report. Together with the LE, the ALE will help backstop the work of other team members.
- **Consultants:** Up to two external consultants (preferably national/regional but international consultants will also be considered, as needed) will be recruited to collect data and help assess the programme and/or the specific outcome areas. The experts will support the evaluation across Democratic Governance interventions including support to the recent constitutional review as well as in conflict prevention and peace building. Under the guidance of Lead Evaluator, they will conduct preliminary research and data collection activities, prepare outcome analysis, and contribute to the preparation of the final ICPE report.
- **Research Assistant (RA):** A research assistant based in the IEO will provide background research and documentation.

The roles of the different members of the evaluation team can be summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Data collection responsibilities by outcome/area		
Outcome/area	Report	Data Collection
Outcome 1: Inclusive Growth	LE	LE
Outcome 2: Democratic Governance	LE	LE and Consultant
Outcome 3: Environment and Energy	LE	LE
Strategic positioning issues	LE	LE
Operations and management issues	LE	LE and Consultant

8. EVALUATION PROCESS

The ICPE will be conducted according to the approved IEO process.¹² The following represents a summary of the five key phases of the process, which constitute framework for conducting the evaluation.

Phase 1: Preparatory work. The IEO prepares the TOR and evaluation design and recruits evaluation team members, comprising international and/or national development professionals. The IEO collects data first internally and then fill data gaps with help from the country office, and external resources in various ways.

¹² The evaluation will be conducted according to the [ICPE Process Manual](#) and the [ICPE Methodology Manual](#).

The evaluation questions are finalized in an evaluation matrix containing detailed questions and means of data collection and verification to guide data collection based on an overall evaluation matrix for the ICPE.

Phase 2: Desk analysis. Further in-depth data collection is conducted by administering a “survey” and interviews (via phone, Skype etc.) with key stakeholders, including country office staff. Evaluation team members conduct desk reviews of reference material, prepare a summary of context and other evaluative evidence, and identify the outcome theory of change, specific evaluation questions, gaps and issues that will require validation during the field-based phase of data collection.

Phase 3: Field data collection. During this phase, the evaluation team undertakes a mission to the country to engage in data collection activities. The estimated duration of the mission will be up to 3 weeks. Data will be collected according to the approach outlined in Section 6 with responsibilities outlined in Section 8. The evaluation team will liaise with CO staff and management, key government stakeholders, other partners and beneficiaries. At the end of the mission, the evaluation team holds a debrief presentation of the key preliminary findings at the country office.

Phase 4: Analysis, report writing, quality review and debrief. Based on the analysis of data collected and triangulated, the LE will undertake a synthesis process to write the ICPE report. The first draft (“zero draft”) of the ICPE report will be subject to peer review by IEO and the International Evaluation Advisory Panel (IEAP). It will then be circulated to the country office, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa and Government stakeholders for comment and factual corrections. Any necessary additional corrections will be made and the UNDP Sierra Leone country office will prepare the management response to the ICPE, under the overall oversight of the regional bureau. The report will then be shared at a final debriefing where the results of the evaluation are presented to key national stakeholders. Ways forward will be discussed with a view to creating greater ownership by national stakeholders in taking forward the recommendations and strengthening national accountability of UNDP. Taking into account the discussion at the stakeholder event, the final evaluation report will be published.

Phase 5: Publication and dissemination. The ICPE report and brief summary will be widely distributed in hard and electronic versions. The evaluation report will be made available to UNDP Executive Board at the time of its approval of a new Country Programme Document. It will be distributed by the IEO within UNDP as well as to the evaluation units of other international organisations, evaluation societies/networks and research institutions in the region. The Sierra Leone country office and the Government of Sierra Leone will disseminate the report to stakeholders in the country. The report and the management response will be published on the UNDP website¹³ as well as in the Evaluation Resource Centre.¹⁴ The regional bureau will be responsible for monitoring and overseeing the implementation of follow-up actions in the Evaluation Resource Centre.

¹³ web.undp.org/evaluation

¹⁴ erc.undp.org

9. TIMEFRAME FOR THE ICPE PROCESS

The timeframe and responsibilities for the evaluation process are tentatively¹⁵ as follows:

Table 3: Timeframe for the ICPE process going to the Board in 2019 (September)		
Activity	Responsible party	Proposed timeframe
Phase 1: Preparation		
TOR – approval by the IEO	LE	March 2018
Selection of other evaluation team members	LE	May 2018
Phase 2: Desk analysis		
Preliminary analysis of available data and context analysis	Evaluation team	May-August 2018
Phase 3: Data collection		
Data collection and preliminary findings	Evaluation team	September-October 2018
Phase 4: Analysis, report writing, quality review and debrief		
Analysis and Synthesis	LE	
Zero draft ICPE for clearance by IEO and EAP	LE	December 2018
First draft ADR for CO/RB and Government stakeholder review	CO/RB	January 2019
Draft management response	CO/RB	February 2019
Final debriefing with national stakeholders	CO/LE	February 2019
Phase 4: Production and Follow-up		
Editing and formatting	IEO	March 2019
Final report and evaluation brief	IEO	April 2019
Dissemination of the final printed report	IEO/CO	July 2019

¹⁵ The timeframe is indicative of the process and deadlines, and does not imply full-time engagement of the evaluation team during the period.