

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 Document
- Strengthen accountability of UNDP to national stakeholders
- Strengthen 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 Mauritius and Seychelles have been selected for ICPEs since their country programmes will end in 2020. ICPEs will be conducted in 2018–19 to feed into the development of new country programmes for these countries. The ICPEs will be conducted in close collaboration with partner Governments of the two countries, UNDP country offices, and the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa.

This Terms of Reference covers both the Mauritius and Seychelles ICPEs. However, the process will result in two separate reports, one covering each country.

2. CONTEXT

Mauritius and the Seychelles are small island states in the Indian Ocean and have many of the vulnerabilities typically faced by countries in this grouping.

They have small populations. Mauritius has a population of just under 1.3 million (158/235) in the United Nations list of the world countries and areas ranked by population. Seychelles population of 95,000, places it 30th from the bottom of this list (201/235). This creates labour market and capacity constraints, and also a constrained tax base from which to cover the costs of government.

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).

They are geographically isolated, with their nearest neighbours over 1,000km away from their centres. This imposes high costs on trade. Imports are costly, and exports are less competitive. The costs of service delivery to populations in remote islands is prohibitively expensive.

They are ocean states, with limited land masses and resources, but large marine areas. Mauritius is among the largest marine territories in the world with an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 1.9 million square km and a co-managed economic zone with Seychelles of 0.4 million square kilometres. Seychelles has an EEZ of approximately 1.4 million km², about 3,000 times the size of its land territory or 2.5 times the size of France.

They are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Mauritius (not Seychelles), is amongst the most exposed countries for risk of natural disasters (cyclones), which will become more acute as a result of climate change. As coastal nations, both Mauritius and Seychelles will have to bear the costs of sea level rises, including likely increases in coastal erosion, damage to coastal infrastructure, and salination of soil and aquifers.

Mauritius and Seychelles strong performance demonstrates that the challenges they face as small island states are not insurmountable. With a GNI per capita of \$10,140 Mauritius is in the top tier of upper-middle-income economies and is pushing towards the Bank's threshold for achieving high-income status. The Seychelles achieved high-income status in 2012, exceeding the World Bank's threshold for graduation of GNI per capita of \$12,056 or more and graduated to the OECD's high-income list in 2018. Absolute poverty is minimal in both countries and the two countries have done well on many social indicators. Gender Mainstreaming has now been incorporated as one of the top ten priorities of Mauritian Government in its current three-year Strategic Plan.

Preservation of environmental and marine assets is a significant feature of Mauritius and Seychelles national development strategies. This reflects the importance of marine resources to their economies, including fisheries and tourism. Seychelles' economy has benefitted its reputation as a world biodiversity hotspot. This reputation is one it is keen to preserve given tourism accounts for about a quarter of Seychelles GDP and employment (it accounts for around 13 per cent of GDP in Mauritius), and is a key source of foreign exchange.

Mauritius and Seychelles' emphasis on environmental sustainability in their development plans also reflects the vulnerability of the two countries to the impacts of climate change. Given neither country is a significant contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions, efforts to develop renewables and improve energy efficiency are driven less by mitigation objectives than by offering an alternative to their dependence on imported fossil fuels which is a source of economic vulnerability.

A more detailed analysis of some of the context of UNDP programmes in Mauritius and Seychelles is contained in Annex 1.

3. UNDP PROGRAMME STRATEGY IN MAURITIUS AND SEYCHELLES

Reflecting the importance of managing the impacts of climate change in both countries, and availability of funds, UNDP's portfolio is mostly comprised of energy, environment and climate projects. TRAC resources are very limited, which means there is little scope for programming in other areas, including social protection (which is a focus of both countries CPDs), and gender equality challenges, public sector

transformation (focus for Mauritius only). Since 2017 Mauritius has received \$150,000 TRAC annually, while Seychelles has received a third of that amount.

Limitations on TRAC resources reduce scope to mobilize resources from other donors, which in any case have become scarce. In recent years donors have responded to the strong economic performance of both countries by reducing or phasing out their ODA. Seychelles reached high income status in 2015 and graduated from ODA eligibility in 2018, which will further constrain resource mobilization opportunities. Mauritius is pushing towards graduation, recording a GNI per capita of \$10,140 in 2018, which is not far off the threshold for high-income status (\$12,056). Regardless of their income levels, both Governments have continued to seek technical and financial assistance from UNDP.

Assuming Seychelles' current economic trajectory, access to finance can be expected to become increasingly difficult. As a middle-income country, the window for Mauritius to access to development finance is still open, and the recent mobilization of a large GCF grant (\$28.2m) and \$37.9m French Government loan for a renewable energy project shows there are still such opportunities around. However, continued strong growth will make grant and concessional finance progressively harder to access.

Relative to the size of Mauritius' and Seychelles' economies UNDP's contribution is small, representing less than a quarter of one per cent of general government expenditure in Mauritius and less than one per cent in the Seychelles. This means that UNDP's ability to generate benefits directly is limited by the small scale on which its interventions operate, or by its ability to use resources to generate larger impacts by prompting deep, systemic and sustainable impacts in their areas.

Given the limited number of Resident Agencies in Mauritius and Seychelles, combined with the limited existence/scope of existing Programming Frameworks, they are classified as "Category C / non-harmonized cycle" countries for which a CCA/UNDAF process is not mandatory. In lieu of these frameworks, UNDP has developed strategic partnership frameworks to formalise their work in the two countries. Mauritius' partnership framework is under development, but it has completed a CCA to position the UN system in the country and inform programming decisions. With the upcoming UN reform where UNDP will no longer be responsible for the United Nations Resident Coordinator function, the UNDAF will take on renewed importance as the document guiding UN delivering as one.

Country Programme Outcome		Indicative resources (US\$ million)	Expenditures to date (US\$ million)
Outcome 1	Improved public sector management supporting poverty reduction, social inclusion and gender equality is promoted through responsive strategies.	Regular: 0.9 Other: 0.9	0.3
Outcome 2	Design and implementation of a portfolio of activities and solutions developed at national and subnational levels for sustainable management of natural resources, integration of ecosystem services approaches, sound management of chemicals and waste while ensuring that climate change challenges in terms of adaptation and mitigation are fully addressed	Regular: 0.1 Other: 46.9	7.9
Total		48.8	8.2

Source: UNDP Mauritius Country Programme Document 2017-2020 (DP/DCP/MUS/4)

Table 1: Seychelles Country Programme outcomes and indicative resources (2017-2020)

Country Programme Outcome		Indicative resources (US\$ million)	Expenditures to date (US\$ million) ²
Outcome 1	A sustainable Seychelles with enhanced economic growth, income opportunities and social inclusion, supported and promoted by responsive strategies towards poverty reduction and gender equality. Building economic and environmental resilience through the design, implementation and integration of sustainable solutions into development planning processes at national and subnational levels to support the blue economy concept, while ensuring climate change adaptation and mitigation concerns are fully addressed.	Regular: 0.4 Other: 35.9	
Total		36.3	4.3

Source: UNDP Seychelles Country Programme Document 2-17-2020 (DP/DCP/SYC/3)

4. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

ICPEs are conducted in the penultimate year of the ongoing UNDP country programme to feed into the development of new country programmes. The results of the ICPEs will also feed into a thematic evaluation being conducted by the IEO of UNDPs assistance to vulnerable developing countries for disaster risk reduction and climate change resilience, and of UNDP's support for middle income countries.

The IEO previously conducted an evaluation of the Seychelles country programme in 2009. The ICPE will consider the recommendations of this past evaluations to the extent that they remain relevant given the length of time that has elapsed since it was completed. This is the first ICPE of the Mauritius country programme.

ICPEs focus on the 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 ICPEs includes the entirety of UNDP's activities in the country and therefore covers interventions funded by all sources, including core UNDP resources, donor funds, 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 county 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.

The scope of the evaluation (in particular the short time available for fieldwork), will not allow systematic collection of beneficiary views and unintended consequences of the project on non-target groups. Where this information is not available it will be identified as a limitation.

The extent to which the evaluation will be able to assess outcomes from different aspects of UNDP's

² Executive snapshot report. Figure covers 2017 expenditure, and 2018 expenditure to July 2018.

work will also depend on the stage of completion of different components of the work. Where projects are in their early stages, the focus of the evaluation will be on whether there is evidence that their design reflects learning or builds on outcomes achieved from previous projects. The projects that are proposed as being in the scope of the evaluation are set out in the tables to Annex 1. These have been identified on the basis that:

- A) they are or have been active in the current CPD period, or they are precursors to currently active projects;
- B) they are evaluable, in the sense that they are doing work in their area that has been a focus for UNDP over a long enough period to be able to say something meaningful about their progress, likely or actual outcomes;
- C) they are large enough to warrant specific attention.

Given the small size of the Mauritius and Seychelles portfolios, it is proposed that all projects that meet these criteria are included in the scope of the evaluation.

5. METHODOLOGY

The ICPEs will address the four evaluation questions.³ 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?
4. What can UNDP learn from the evaluation about how it can best position itself to support small island states that are pushing towards graduation, or have graduated from ODA eligibility?

The ICPEs are 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. Both positive and negative, direct and indirect unintended outcomes will also be identified.

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 Plan⁴, as well as the

³ The ICPEs have adopted a streamlined methodology, which differs from the previous ADRs that were structured according to the four standard OECD DAC criteria.

⁴ These principles include: national ownership and capacity; human rights-based approach; sustainable human development;

utilization of resources to deliver results and how managerial practices affected achievement of programme 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.

Finally, some consideration will be given to whether there are broader lessons for UNDP from the evaluation, about how it can best address the needs of small island states, and in particular those that have graduated, or are moving towards graduation from ODA eligibility.

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 marker⁵ and the gender results effectiveness scale (GRES). The GRES, developed by the IEO, 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. Beyond information collected in stakeholder interviews, the evaluation will not involve primary data collection. The rigour of the evaluation's outcome assessments will depend on the quality of the available documentation about the objectives and outcomes of UNDP's work, with interviews used to identify data sources and explore lines of inquiry. The evaluation will seek to tap into a diversity of data sources, including government data and documentation, project documentation reporting, media reporting and independent reviews and evaluations. The evaluation will assess whether there is valid and reliable information about the views of intended beneficiaries about UNDP projects and where this is available, will include this in reporting. 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. Effort will be made to tap into a diversity of views about UNDP's work, to develop a fuller understanding of the political context.

Data collection methods. Specific evaluation questions and the data collection method will be further detailed and outlined in the outcome analysis, following consultation with Mauritius and Seychelles program staff. The IEO and the country offices 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.

gender equality and women's empowerment; voice and participation; South-South and triangular cooperation; active role as global citizens; and universality.

⁵ 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).

Stakeholder involvement: a participatory and transparent process will be followed to engage with 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 ICPEs in consultation with the UNDP Mauritius and Seychelles country offices, the Regional Bureau for Africa and the Mauritius and Seychelles Governments. 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 Offices in Mauritius and Seychelles: The Mauritius and Seychelles country offices 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 COs 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 COs and IEO will jointly organize the final stakeholder meeting, ensuring participation of key government counterparts, through a videoconference, where findings and results of the evaluation will be presented. Additionally, the COs will prepare management responses in consultation with RB 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 ICPEs. The team 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 two ICPE reports; and organizing the stakeholder workshop, as appropriate, with the country office.
- **Consultants:** Depending on availability, a suitable national consultant may be recruited to help assess the programme and provide technical guidance to the lead evaluator. Depending on skills and experience, under the guidance of LE, he/she will conduct preliminary research and data collection activities, prepare outcome analysis, and contribute to the preparation of the final ICPE reports.
- **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			
Country	Outcome	Report	Data collection
Mauritius	Outcome 1	LE	LE and consultant
	Outcome 2	LE	LE and consultant
	Strategic positioning issues	LE	LE and consultant
	Operations and management issues	LE	LE and consultant
Seychelles	Outcome 1	LE	LE and consultant
	Strategic positioning issues	LE	LE and consultant
	Operations and management issues	LE	LE and consultant

8. EVALUATION PROCESS

The ICPEs will be conducted according to the approved IEO process⁶. 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 offices, and external resources in various ways. Further data will be collected through interviews (via phone, Skype etc.) with key stakeholders, including country office staff. The evaluation team will 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 2: Field data collection. During this phase, the evaluation team will undertake consecutive one-week missions to Mauritius and Seychelles, starting with Mauritius. 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 each mission, the evaluation team will hold a debrief presentation of the key preliminary findings at the country office.

Phase 3: 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 reports. The first drafts (“zero draft”) of the ICPE reports will be subject to peer review by IEO and the International Evaluation Advisory Panel (IEAP). It will then be circulated to the country offices and the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa for factual corrections. The second drafts, which incorporate any factual corrections, will be shared with national stakeholders for further comments. Any necessary additional corrections will be made and the UNDP Mauritius and Seychelles country offices will prepare management responses, under the overall oversight of the regional bureau. The reports will then be shared at final debriefings where the results of the evaluation are presented to key national stakeholders. Ways forward will be discussed with a view to

⁶ The evaluation will be conducted according to the [ICPE Process Manual](#) and the [ICPE Methodology Manual](#)

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 4: Publication and dissemination. The ICPE reports and brief summaries 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 new Country Programme Documents. 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 Mauritius and Seychelles country offices and the Governments of Mauritius and Seychelles will disseminate the report to stakeholders in the country. The reports and the management responses will be published on the UNDP website⁷ as well as in the Evaluation Resource Centre. The regional bureau will be responsible for monitoring and overseeing the implementation of follow-up actions in the Evaluation Resource Centre.⁸

9. TIMEFRAME FOR THE ICPE PROCESS

The timeframe and responsibilities for the evaluation process are tentatively⁹ as follows:

Table 3: Timeframe for the ICPE process		
Activity	Responsible party	Proposed timeframe
Phase 1: Preparatory work		
TOR – approval by the Independent Evaluation Office	LE	August 2018
Selection of other evaluation team members	LE	September 2018
Preliminary analysis of available data and context analysis	Evaluation team	Sept-October 2018
Phase 2: Data Collection		
Data collection and preliminary findings	Evaluation team	26–30 Nov 2018 3–7 Dec 2018
- Mission to Mauritius - Mission to Seychelles		
Phase 3: Analysis, report writing, quality review and debrief		
Analysis and Synthesis	LE	December 2018
Zero draft ICPEs for clearance by IEO and EAP	LE	January 2019
First draft ICPEs for CO/RB review	CO/RB	January 2019
Second draft ICPEs shared with GOV	CO/GOV	February 2019
Draft management responses	CO/RB	February 2019
Final debriefings with national stakeholders	CO/LE	March-April 2019
Phase 4: Production and Follow-up		
Editing and formatting	IEO	March-April 2019
Final reports and Evaluation Briefs	IEO	March-April 2019

⁷ web.undp.org/evaluation

⁸ erc.undp.org

⁹ The timeframe, indicative of process and deadlines, does not imply full-time engagement of evaluation team during the period.