Annex 1. EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducts “Independent Country Programme Evaluations (ICPEs)”, previously called “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.

This is the first country-level evaluation conducted by the IEO in Mali; it is conducted in close collaboration with the Government of Mali, UNDP Mali country office, and UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA). Results of the ICPE are expected to feed into the development of the new country programme 2020-2024.

2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Mali, a vast landlocked country, is located in north-western Africa, bordering Algeria, Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea, Burkina Faso, and Niger. The country has a total area of 1 241 238 km², with significant variations in population density between its regions.2 The total population of Mali is 17.8 million.3

Long considered a politically stable country, and a model for democracy in the region, Mali has been governed, since 1991, by civilian governments elected through democratic, multiparty elections held every five years. However, in 2012, fighting erupted between Government forces and Tuareg rebels, leading to a political and security crisis that has resulted in dire economic and social consequences. In January 2013, French-led military forces were deployed, which handed over to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in July 2013. Negotiations between government and rebel coalitions culminated in the signing of a peace agreement in 2015 (“Accord d’Alger”), which highlighted the need for decentralization and regional development, particularly in the North.

In July and August 2013, presidential elections deemed transparent and credible were held with the joint support of UNDP and MINUSMA. The current Head of State is President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, who holds a five-year mandate with a two-term limit imposed by the 1992 Constitution. The President appoints

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the Prime Minister, who, as the Head of Government, holds executive power and shares legislative power with the National Assembly.

After a decade of solid economic growth (5.7% on average for 2000-2010)\textsuperscript{4}, the 2012 crisis had a severe impact on the country’s economy. Net GDP growth rates went from 0% in 2012, to 1.7% in 2013 and reached 7.0% in 2014.\textsuperscript{5} Between 2015 and 2017, economic growth reached 5.5% on average. Mali’s agriculture, fishing and livestock sector represented approximately 40% of the GDP in the 2012-2015 period, and accounted for just under half of that period’s economic growth. Due to its potential demographic and economic impact, the development of the primary sector is a major challenge for the country, as it is subject to climate change and price fluctuations for primary commodities. Agriculture employs around two thirds of the workforce in Mali, making inclusive growth in the country highly dependent on the sector’s prospects.\textsuperscript{6}

In 2016, Mali’s Human Development Index was 0.442, ranking it 175 out of 188 countries in the 2016 index, which positions the country in the Low Human Development category.\textsuperscript{7} Progress towards the MDGs deteriorated due to the 2012 political and security crisis, with poverty rates increasing between 2012 and 2013. Overall progress on health indicators show encouraging results, but the nutritional situation remains precarious and access to quality health services must be further focused on in future governmental plans. The CSCRP framework had allocated 8% of its 2012-2014 budget to the health sector, but only 5% was spent on this sector.\textsuperscript{8} Education is a clear priority of Mali’s Governmental action plan for 2013-2018, and a key sector in the CSCRP, representing a fifth of its budget, which shows the government’s commitment to improving schooling in the country.

The Government adopted in November 2016 the Strategic Framework for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development 2016-2018 as a reference framework for the design, implementation and monitoring of various development policies and strategies. The CREDD is the new National Development Strategy which integrates all of the government's strategic orientations and makes it possible to realize the ambition displayed by the latter and the Technical and Financial Partners of a single reference document reflecting development priorities for the 2016-2018 period. It was adopted by the Council of Ministers on April 27, 2016 and formally approved by Decree No. 2016-0889 / P-RM of November 23, 2016 as a national policy document. Thus, the priorities of Mali's Plan for Sustainable Recovery (PRED 2013-2014), the Government Action Program (PAG 2013-2018), the Accelerated Development Program of the Northern Regions (PDA/ RN), New challenges of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali are translated into this new single reference document, making it possible to bring all these policies and strategies into coherence.

Gender equality, and in particular women’s participation in economic and political activities, remains an important challenge. In 2015, Mali’s Gender Inequality Index (GII) value was 0.689, ranking it 156\textsuperscript{th} out of 159 countries. In Mali, 8.8 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women, and 7.3 percent of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education – compared to 16.2 percent of their male counterparts. Female participation in the labour market is 50.1 percent compared to 82.3 for men.\textsuperscript{9}

Mali’s key environmental challenges arise from desertification, natural disasters and decreasing rainfall due to climate change. Due to the large share of a rural, small-farm holding population, impacts of environmental challenges negatively affect livelihoods and food security. Mali was hit by a drought in 2011, resulting in poor harvests, and floods in 2012, further compounding the regional inequalities preceding the 2012 conflict and political crisis.\textsuperscript{10} Rapid demographic growth and urbanization puts additional pressure on natural

\textsuperscript{4} African Economic Outlook (AEO), 2017  
\textsuperscript{5} Rapport de mise en œuvre à mi-parcours du CSCRP 2012-2017, 2015. The 2013 growth rate was updated to 2.3% (source : World Bank data)  
\textsuperscript{6} International Monetary Fund, Mali Country Report No. 15/340, December 2015  
\textsuperscript{8} Rapport de mise en œuvre à mi-parcours du CSCRP 2012-2017, 2015  
\textsuperscript{10} European Parliament, Mali: Economic factors behind the crisis, 2014.
resources, and access to water is also a key concern. In 2014, the country adopted a national policy for climate change, as well as a strategic framework for investment and sustainable land management (Cadre stratégique d’investissement et de Gestion durable des terres – CSI-GDT).

3. UNDP PROGRAMME STRATEGY IN MALI

Mali’s most recent UNDAF was developed by the UNCT in Mali for the period of 2015-2019, in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and International Cooperation, and with 20 funds and agencies of the United Nations System11.

In accordance with the UNDAF which has become UNDAF+ to take into account the presence of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), a Country Programme Document (CPD) was developed for 2015-2019. The CPD addresses all four UNDAF results areas, i.e. Peace, security and national reconciliation; Governance; Basic social services (GFATM and HIV-AIDS focused), and Sustainable development and inclusive growth, through the 4 corresponding outcomes and 11 programme outputs indicated in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNDAF / Country Programme Outcome</th>
<th>UNDP specific country programme outputs</th>
<th>Indicative resources (US$ millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By 2019, social cohesion is facilitated by transitional justice, community dialogue, culture and peace education.</td>
<td>The institutions responsible for the national reconciliation process have the technical and operational skills needed to drive social cohesion-building for sustainable peace.</td>
<td>6.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Peace, security and national reconciliation]</td>
<td>Decentralized and local authorities and civil society (community leaders, religious leaders, women's and youth organizations) in the north have the necessary capabilities for local conflict prevention and resolution.</td>
<td>6.5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>IDP reintegration and rehabilitation is ensured through the effective implementation of a sustainable solutions strategy.</td>
<td>11.943</td>
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<td>By 2019, vulnerable populations, particularly women and young people, benefit from productive capacities in a healthy (natural) environment that is conducive to poverty reduction.</td>
<td>Ministries in charge of the economy, finance and planning have improved their capacity for policy formulation, public finance management and aid coordination in order to stimulate broad-based growth and reduce inequality.</td>
<td>18.5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The resilience of the most vulnerable populations in rural areas is strengthened through better use of natural resources, promotion of disaster and climate risk reduction, utilization of renewable energy sources and better access to economic opportunities and financial services.</td>
<td>49</td>
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11 FAO, ILO, IOM, OCHA, OHCHR, UNCDF, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNMAS, UNODC, UNOPS, UN Women, WFP and WHO.
4. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The ICPE will focus on the current programme cycle, i.e. 2015 – 2019, while also considering the cumulative results of projects running from the past programme cycle into the current one to provide a set of forward-looking recommendations as input to UNDP Mali’s formulation of its next country programme.

The ICPE will focus on UNDP’s contributions to the country as defined at the outcome level in the CPD or any underlying strategies that may have been developed or adapted during the period under review. In line with the CPD’s identified programme priorities, the ICPE will assess the results of programmes implemented through advisory support and capacity building of target groups and institutions. The ICPE covers interventions funded by all sources of finance, including UNDP regular (“core”) resources, thematic funds, donor funds and government funds.

In line with UNDP’s gender mainstreaming strategy the ICPE will examine the level of gender mainstreaming across all of UNDP Mali programmes and operations. Gender disaggregated data will be collected, where available, and assessed against its programme outcomes.
5. METHODOLOGY

The ICPE will address the following three key evaluation questions:

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, to the sustainability of results?

Specific factors that explain UNDP’s performance will be examined in alignment with the engagement principles, drivers of development and alignment parameters of the Strategic Plan, as well as through alignment with the SDGs, the utilization of resources to deliver results and how managerial practices impacted achievement of programmatic goals. To assess the above, the evaluation will take into account country-specific and other factors that may have shaped UNDP’s engagement in the country and contributed to, or hindered, UNDP’s performance.

The ICPE is conducted at the outcome level. A Theory of Change (ToC) approach will be applied in consultation with the stakeholders, where appropriate. Discussions of the ToC will focus on mapping the assumptions made about a programme’s desired change and causal linkages expected and these will form a basis for the data collection approach that will verify the theories behind the changes found. Where data gaps are apparent, a qualitative approach will be taken to fill those gaps to aid in the evaluation process.

Assessment of data collection constraints and existing data. An evaluability assessment was carried out to understand potential data collection constraints and opportunities. The assessment outlined the level of evaluable data that is available. The Evaluation Resource Centre information indicates that 24 decentralized evaluations were carried out for the 2008-2014 cycle, although of those only one outcome, one thematic and two UNDAF evaluations were carried out. For the 2015-2019 cycle, to date 16 evaluations were completed, all of which are project-based. Six (6) remaining evaluations are planned, of which one CPD mid-term evaluation is planned in December 2017. With respect to indicators, the CPD and the corporate planning system associated with it also provide baselines, indicators and targets; updated 2016 data, where available, has been provided for each CPD indicator in the corporate system. Mali’s own statistical capacity, as measured by the World Bank’s Statistical Capacity Indicator is considered fair, and has been consistently above the average for countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The National Statistical Institute (INSTAT), which received support from UNDP, publishes updated statistical data, and conducted annual household surveys.

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12 The ICPEs have adopted a streamlined methodology, which differs from the previous ADRs that were structured according to the four standard OECD DAC criteria.
13 The Strategic Plan 2014-2017 engagement 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.
14 This information is extracted from analysis of the goals inputted in the Enhanced RBM platform, the financial results in the Executive Snapshot, the results in the Global Staff Survey, and interviews at the management/operations in the country office.
15 Theory of Change is an outcome-based approach which applies critical thinking to the design, implementation and evaluation of initiatives and programmes intended to support change in their contexts. At a minimum, it is considered to encompass discussion of the following elements: (1) context for the initiative, including social, political and environmental conditions; long-term change that the initiative seeks to support and for whose ultimate benefit; process/sequence of change anticipated to lead to desired long-term outcome; and (2) assumptions about how these changes may happen, a check on whether activities and outputs are appropriate for influencing change in the desired direction in this context; diagram and narrative summary that captures the outcome of the discussion. Source: Vogel, Isabel, “Review of the use of ‘Theory of Change’ in International Development” (April 2012), DFID.
17 http://www.instat-mali.org
since 2011. The CSCRP 2012-2017 and CREDD 2016-2018 were accompanied by a detailed indicator matrix, which facilitated monitoring the progress made on its key objectives.18

Due to the current security situation in Mali, constraints to primary data collection do exist. Incidents occurring in the past years have prompted UNDSS to categorize five out of eight regions in the Substantial (4) or High (5) security levels19, and the threat of incidents occurring in northern Mali is still very high. The capital Bamako, however, remains relatively calm. Given the geographical dispersion of project locations20 and taking security considerations into account, the evaluation will consult with the country office to determine the accessibility of project locations. Some data collection will take place in Bamako, and further interviews with programme partners and beneficiaries located outside of the capital will be conducted from the capital, to fill remaining data gaps.

**Data collection methods and analysis.** The evaluation will use data from primary and secondary sources, including desk review of documentation and interviews with key stakeholders, including beneficiaries, partners and managers. An early survey will be administered to counterparts in the country office at the onset of data collection and the evaluation team may reach out to select stakeholders on key questions through a second survey, to validate corporately available self-reported data. (e.g. ROARs).

A multi-stakeholder approach will be followed and consultations and interviews will include government representatives, civil-society organizations, private-sector representatives, UN agencies, multilateral organizations, bilateral donors, and beneficiaries of the programme. At the start of the evaluation, a stakeholder analysis will be conducted to identify all relevant UNDP partners, as well as those who may not work with UNDP, but play a key role in the outcomes to which UNDP contributes. Focus groups will be used to consult some groups of beneficiaries as appropriate. Special attention will be given to integrate a gender equality responsive approach to the evaluation methods and reporting. The evaluation will use existing nationally produced data (i.e. from INSTAT or the CSCRP review), to the extent possible.

A list of projects will be developed, based on a purposive sampling for in-depth review of clusters that represent the major area of intervention of UNDP in the country. The criteria for selection includes programme coverage (a balanced selection of key focus areas/issues under each outcome), maturity, budgetary and geographical considerations, and the gender marker.21 Attention will be paid to include both flagship projects of significant scope, outreach, and visibility, as well as those that experienced challenges.

The IEO and the country office will identify an initial list of background and programme-related documents. The following secondary data will be included in the review: background documents on the national context, documents prepared by international partners during the period under review and documents prepared by other agencies in the UNCT; programme plans 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. The ICPE will also support, where possible and appropriate, the ongoing data collection endeavours being undertaken by UNDP projects for outcome monitoring.

The evaluation will use triangulation of information collected from different sources and/or by different methods to ensure that the data is valid.

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21 The gender marker, a corporate tool at UNDP, is assigned for all projects, using scores from 3 to 0. A score of 3 means the project has gender equality as the main objective; a 2 indicates that the intended outputs that have gender equality as a significant objective. A 1 signifies outputs that will contribute in some way to gender equality, but not significantly, and a 0 refers to outputs that are not expected to contribute noticeably to gender equality.
6. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

**Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP:** The IEO will conduct the ICPE in consultation with the UNDP Mali country office, the RBA, and Government of Mali. The IEO lead evaluator will manage 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 Mali:** The country office will support the evaluation team to liaise with key partners and other stakeholders and ensure that all necessary information regarding UNDP’s programmes, projects and activities in the country is available to the team, and provide factual verifications of the draft report on a timely basis. The country office will provide the evaluation team in kind organizational support (e.g. arranging meetings with project staff, stakeholders, beneficiaries; assistance for project site visits). To ensure the independence of the views expressed, country office staff will not participate in interviews and meetings with stakeholders held for data collection purposes. The country office will jointly organize the final stakeholder meeting, ensuring participation of key government counterparts, through a videoconference with the IEO, where findings and results of the evaluation will be presented. Additionally, the country office will support the use and dissemination of the final outputs of the ICPE process.

**UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa:** The UNDP RBA 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 with expertise in integrating a gender and human rights based approach to evaluations. The evaluation team will include:

- **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 preliminary and final debriefing, as appropriate, with the country office. The LE will also be supporting in the field the thematic coverage of the area of Sustainable Development.

- **Consultants:** 2 independent consultants (preferably national or regional consultants) will be recruited to assess the other three areas of national reconciliation, governance and social development. Under the guidance of the LE, they will conduct preliminary desk review, data collection in the field, prepare sections of the report as required, and contribute to the preparation and review of the final ICPE report.

- **Associate Evaluator (AE):** IEO member to backstop the ICPE, with responsibility for research, collection of data and key documents; support the development of the evaluation design and terms of reference; coordinate and consolidate inputs from evaluation consultants for the finalization of the final report; and liaising, as appropriate, with the country office. The AE will also be providing support in covering the specific outputs within the area of Sustainable Development, and other areas as required.

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

| Table 2: Data collection responsibilities by area |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| **Team member** | **Area / Outcome** |
| Lead Evaluator | Sustainable Development (supported by national and regional consultants) |
| Associate Evaluator | Primarily support on Sustainable Development, and other programme areas as needed, together with support from the national and regional consultants |
| Regional evaluation consultant | National Reconciliation and Credible Institutions/Governance |
| National evaluation consultant | Social Development, Health and HIV as well as support on Governance and Sustainable Development areas as needed, with specific attention to gender mainstreaming and GEWE results and developing the mission agenda |
7. EVALUATION PROCESS

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

**Phase 1: Preparatory work.** The IEO prepares the TOR and the evaluation design and recruits additional evaluation team members, comprising international and/or national development professionals. They will be recruited once the TOR is approved. The IEO starts collecting data and documentation internally first and then filling data gaps with help from the UNDP country office, and external resources through various methods.

**Phase 2: Desk analysis.** Further in-depth data collection is conducted, by administering an “early survey” and interviews (via phone, Skype etc.) with key stakeholders, including country office staff. Based on these, the key evaluation questions will guide the evaluation matrix containing detailed questions and means of data collection and verification to guide data collection based on an overall evaluation matrix for the ICPEs. Evaluation team members conduct desk reviews of reference material, prepare a summary of context and background information, and identify the outcome theory of change, gaps and issues that will require validation during the field-based phase of data collection.

**Phase 3: Field data collection.** The phase will commence in February 2018. During this phase, the evaluation team undertakes a mission to the country to engage in data collection activities. The estimated duration of the mission is a total of 3 calendar weeks. Data will be collected according to the approach outlined in Section 5 with responsibilities outlined in Section 6. The evaluation team will liaise with CO staff and management, key government stakeholders and other partners and beneficiaries. At the end of the mission, the evaluation team holds a formal 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 produce the ICPE report. The first draft (“zero draft”) of the ICPE report will be subject to peer review by the IEO and the International Evaluation Advisory Panel (IEAP). Once the first draft is quality cleared it will be circulated to the country office and the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa for review including factual corrections. The second draft, which takes into account any factual corrections, will be shared with national stakeholders for further comments. Any necessary additional corrections will be made and the UNDP Mali 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 initial and final versions of the ICPE report will be produced in English and follow the standard IEO publication guidelines. A French version of the report will be produced, as needed and requested by the country office. The evaluation report will be made available to UNDP Executive Board at the time of its CPD approval. 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 Mali country office and the Government of Mali will disseminate the report to stakeholders
in the country. The report and the management response will be published on the UNDP website\textsuperscript{22} 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.\textsuperscript{23}

**8. TIMEFRAME FOR THE ICPE PROCESS**

The timeframe and responsibilities for the evaluation process are tentatively\textsuperscript{24} as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Timeframe for the ICPE process</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 1: Preparatory work</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOR – approval by the Independent</td>
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<td>Selection of other evaluation team</td>
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<tr>
<td>members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 2: Desk analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preliminary analysis of available data and context analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 3: Data collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data collection and preliminary findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 4: Analysis, report writing, quality review and debrief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis and Synthesis</td>
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<tr>
<td>First draft ICPE for CO/RB review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second draft shared with GOV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft management response</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final debriefing with national</td>
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<tr>
<td>stakeholders</td>
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<td>Phase 5: Production and Follow-up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Editing and formatting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final report and Evaluation Brief</td>
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<td>Dissemination of the final report</td>
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\textsuperscript{22} web.unpd.org/evaluation
\textsuperscript{23} erc.unpd.org
\textsuperscript{24} The timeframe is indicative, and does not imply full-time engagement of the evaluation team during the period.