

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 Document
- Strengthen accountability of UNDP to national stakeholders
- Strengthen accountability of UNDP to the Executive Board

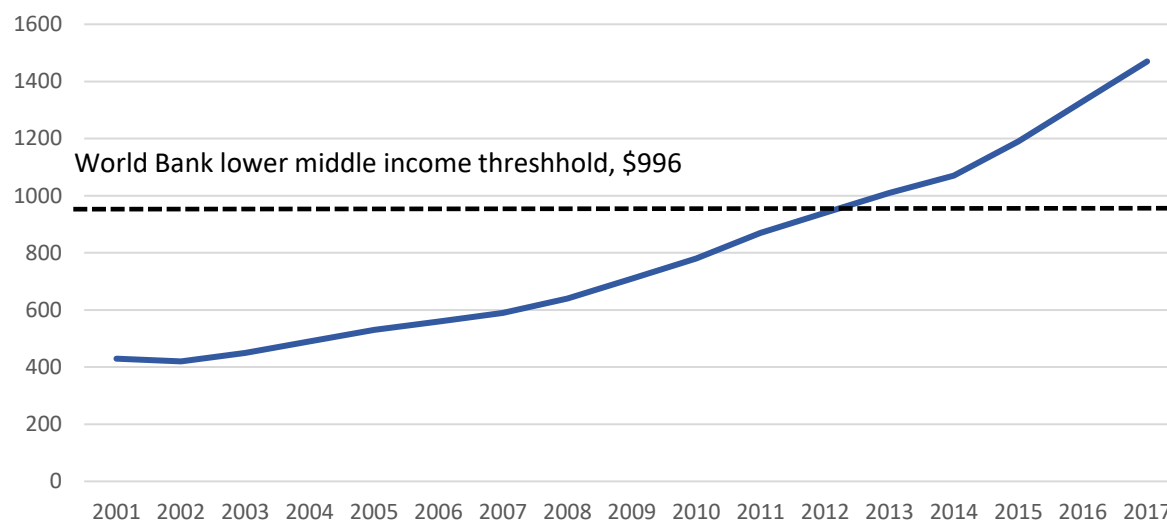
ICPEs are independent evaluations carried out within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP Evaluation Policy. The IEO is independent of UNDP management and is headed by a Director who reports to the UNDP Executive Board. The responsibility of the IEO is two-fold: (a) provide the Executive Board 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 Bangladesh has been selected for an ICPE since its country programme will end in 2020. The ICPE will be conducted in 2018–19 to feed into the development of the new country programme. The ICPE will be conducted in close collaboration with the Bangladesh Government, UNDP Bangladesh country office, and UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific.

2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

While Bangladesh is a poor country, but recent economic and social trends have been very positive. Bangladesh economy grew by an average of 6.5% annually in the last decade and by 7.9% in 2018 its best growth performance ever. On the back of this trend, Bangladesh attained lower middle-income status in 2015 (Figure 1), and met the three criteria for LDC graduation in the triennial review by the UN Committee for Development Policy in early 2018. Strong growth has been accompanied by macroeconomic stability. Bangladesh’s debt to GDP ratio is lowest in South Asia and credit rating is favorable. This has generated higher aspirations among the policy makers to graduate the country to a developed country by 2024.

Figure 1. Bangladesh: GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$), 2001–2017



Source: World Bank

There has been a steady decline in numbers of people living below the poverty line and in extreme poverty. The proportion of the population living below the national poverty line declined from 57 per cent in 1992, to 31.5 per cent in 2010 and 24.3 per cent in 2016¹. Over a similar period, the incidence of extreme poverty declined from 34.3 per cent in 2000 to 12.9 per cent in 2016².

Notwithstanding these impressive strides, the number of poor and vulnerable remains high as about 30% people are just above the poverty line making them susceptible to internal and external shocks. The eight most populous country in the world, there are still some 40 million Bangladeshis that live below the national poverty line.³

Bangladesh positive economic results have translated into some encouraging trends in gender equality. The Human Development Index (HDI) for gender equality increased from 0.388 in 2000 to 0.567 in 2017. The Gender Development Index (GDI) has increased by 17 per cent moving from 0.753 in 2000 to 0.881 in 2017.⁴ Women's share of parliamentary seats increased from 9.1 per cent in 2000 to 20.3 per cent in 2017. 44 per cent of Bangladeshi adult women have attained at least secondary schools compared to 48 percent of men. The World Economic Forum's annual Gender Gap Report identified Bangladesh as South Asia's best performer in curbing the gender gap.⁵

However, there are other trends that are concerning. For example, the female to male unemployment ratio rose on average from 0.85 to 2.12 between 2000 and 2017, meaning women in 2017 are twice likely

¹ Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (2017) and Bangladesh Country Programme Document (2017-2020). Assessed 14th November 2018

² Ibid

³ [Bangladesh Country Programme Document](#) (2017-2020). Accessed 14th November 2018.

⁴ [Human Development Reports \(2018\)](#). Accessed 14th January 2019

⁵ World Economic Forum (2018), [Global Gender Gap Report](#), Accessed 11 January 2019.

to be unemployed than men.⁶ And while the share of women with accounts in financial institutions increased from 26 per cent to 35.8 per cent between 2011 to 2017 respectively, only eight percent of Bangladeshi entrepreneurs are women.⁷ Men earn on average 2.6 times more than women in 2017⁸. Gender-based violence remains very high—87 percent of married women have reported that they have experienced domestic violence.

Bangladesh is a majority Muslim nation, with large Hindu and Christian minorities. While Bangladesh has strong secular origins and traditions, Bangladesh's political and social cohesion and security apparatus have become increasingly challenged by what some prominent commentators have described as an increase in religious extremism over the last decade.⁹ Bangladesh's challenges with extremism attracted international attention with the July 2016 attack on a café in an affluent neighborhood in Dhaka which houses most of the diplomatic community. The attack resulted in the death of 20 hostages, mainly foreign nationals, and two police officers. There has also been a spate of murders of online activists, including secular bloggers and two members of the LGBTI community, the most recent of which occurred in June 2018. While the nature of the international links is contested, international groups including Daesh (formerly referred to as ISIL) and groups affiliated to Al Qaeda in the Indian sub-continent have claimed responsibility for several attacks.

Bangladesh also experienced an influx of about one million Rohingya refugees from Rakhine state of Myanmar. Bangladesh's humane response sheltering the refugees has been widely acknowledged, but this is placing severe stresses on local capacity and there is protracted uncertainty about the issue of refugee repatriation.

Bangladesh is highly exposed to cyclones and floods, particularly in the country's extensive coastal areas. Tens of millions of people whose incomes depend on the land and river systems of the Bengal Delta are threatened by rising sea levels, saline intrusion, waterlogging and riverbank erosion. An estimated 26,000 people per year lose land to flooding¹⁰ and erosion. Bangladesh is also in a geologically active zone and is overdue for a large earthquake which would likely have devastating consequences. The capital Dhaka, with a population of 11 million, is especially vulnerable. The product of rapid, unplanned urbanization, Dhaka is one of the densest cities in the world and has very few earthquake-resistant buildings.

These factors explain Bangladesh's high ranking on all the major global risk indices. The World Risk Index ranks it the fifth most vulnerable country in the world to natural hazards. It comes in at 21 on the Notre

⁶ [Human Development Reports \(2018\)](#)

⁷ [Bangladesh Country Programme Document](#). Accessed 14th January 2019

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Kugelman, M. & Ahmad, A. 2017) [Why Extremism Is on the Rise in Bangladesh](#), in *Foreign Affairs*, 27 July 2017. Accessed 11 January 2019.

¹⁰ "As noted in the final report for the Ministry of Environment and Forest (2005) of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, flooding in Bangladesh is a normal, frequently recurrent, phenomenon. Bangladesh experiences four types of floods: flash floods from the overflowing of hilly rivers; rain floods due to poor drainage; monsoon floods in the flood plains of major rivers; and coastal floods following storm surge. In a normal year, river spills and drainage congestions cause inundation of 20 to 25% of the country's area. Inundation areas for 10-, 50-, and 100-year floods constitute 37, 52, and 60% of the country's area, respectively. In 1987, 1988, and 1998, floods inundated more than 60% of the country. The 1998 flood alone led to 1,100 deaths, caused inundation of nearly 100,000 km², left 30 million people homeless, and substantially damaged infrastructure."

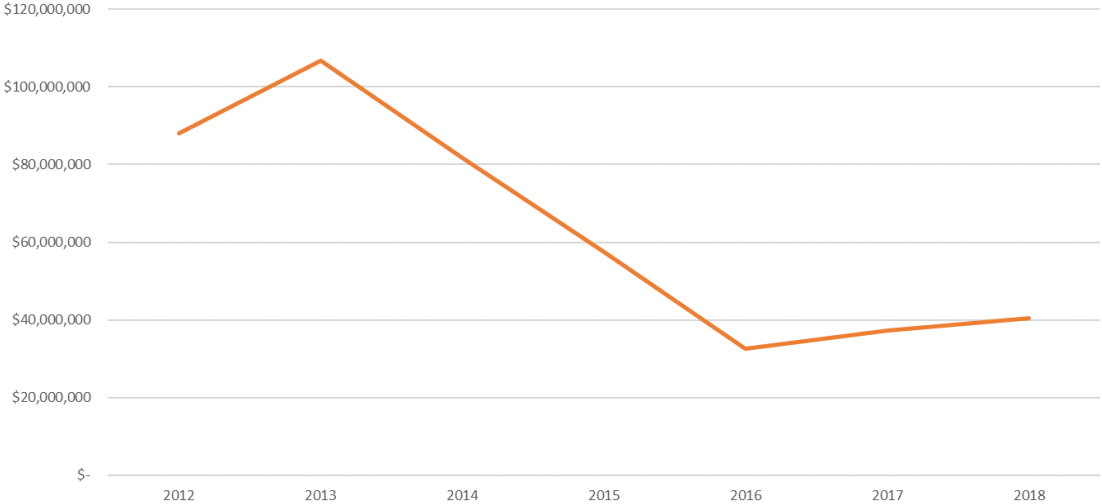
Dame Global Adaptation Initiative Index, which considers indicators that reflect vulnerability to climate change. The INFORM index, which considers humanitarian crises caused by conflict as well as natural hazards ranks Bangladesh at 22 in the world.

In the face of these large-scale threats, Bangladesh has been very successful in reducing mortality from natural hazards, demonstrated that poor countries can make significant inroads in minimizing the consequences of the hazards they have to contend with. Improved disaster preparedness and response and relatively higher levels of household adaptive capacity have dramatically decreased the number of deaths from flooding. Moreover, a cyclone shelter program has helped the country dramatically reduce tropical cyclone mortality since the 1970s. Bangladesh’s success in reducing mortality from tropical cyclones is supported not only by cyclone shelters but also by a slow but steady improvement in education, health and sanitation, and in the number of people living below the poverty line.

3. UNDP PROGRAMME STRATEGY IN BANGLADESH

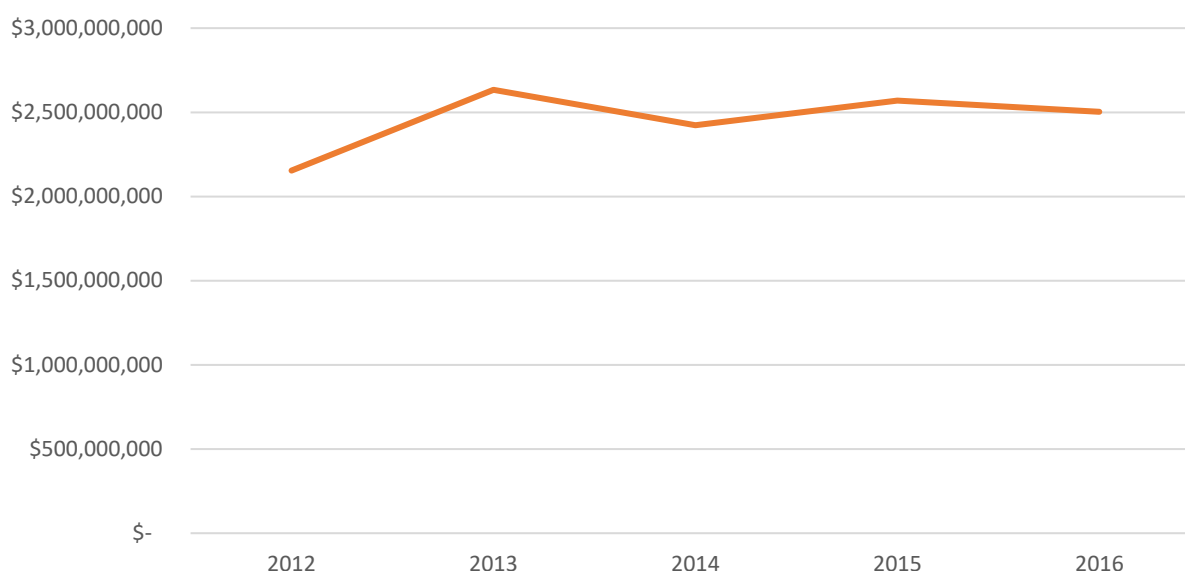
UNDP’s program in Bangladesh has halved in size over the last seven years, from over \$80 million in 2012 and 2013, to less than \$40 million in 2016 and 2017 and slightly over \$40 million in 2018 (Figure 2).

Figure 2. UNDP expenditure, 2012-18, current prices, US\$



This trend reflects declines in both core and non-core funding, which are now roughly less than half what they were in 2013. This trend has occurred despite increases in Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Bangladesh over the same period, although the composition of ODA has changed due to the increasing importance of concessional loans as a component of ODA (Figure 3).

Figure 3. ODA to Bangladesh, 2012–16, Current prices, \$US



UNDP is a small donor to Bangladesh, providing less than one per cent of the country's ODA receipts in recent years. UNDP's aid contribution is even smaller as a proportion of Bangladesh Government resources, at less than one tenth of one per cent of the Bangladesh Government's budget.

Not reflected in the Figure above showing ODA to Bangladesh, China has become an important source of external finance. According to data compiled by the independent think-tank AidData, Chinese financial flows to Bangladesh amounted to close to \$2 billion UDS in 2014, in current prices, although ODA like flows were only a small (<5 per cent) component.

UNDP's country program document for Bangladesh identified three priorities for the period (2017–2020) covered by the plan:

- (a) Ensuring economic growth is inclusive and supports economic opportunities, particularly for women;
- (b) Improving social policies and programmes, with a focus on good governance and structural inequalities; and
- (c) Building resilience and improving environmental sustainability.

The CPD identified an indicative budget of just over \$300 million. Spending as at mid-October 2018, almost half way through the CPD period, suggests actual resourcing will fall well short of this estimate, and roughly half of what was expected in the CPD.

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

| Country Programme Outcome | | Indicative resources (US\$ million) | Expenditures to date (US\$ million) |
|---------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| | Inclusive and sustainable growth and development (also outcome 4, gender equality and women's empowerment) | Regular: 6.0 million Other: 79.3 million | 7.4 |
| | Stronger democratic governance to meet citizen expectations (secondary strategic plan outcome 3, institutions enabled to deliver universal access to basic services) | Regular: 6.3 million Other: 58.46 million | 25.4 |
| | Disaster prevention and risk reduction (also outcome 1, Inclusive and sustainable growth and development) | Regular: 10.8 million Other: 144.74 million | 19.1 |
| | | | 6.5 |
| Total | | \$305.6 | \$58.4 |

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 IEO previously conducted an evaluation of the Bangladesh country programme in 2011. The ICPE will consider the recommendations of this evaluations to the extent that they remain relevant given the length of time that has elapsed since it was completed.

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 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, 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 several 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, especially 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 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 table 1 in 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.

The Bangladesh program consists of around 45 active projects, although many of these are very small and some have not been established. The evaluation will focus on the top 25 largest active projects in the country program¹¹. Together, these account for around 93 per cent of UNDP's program expenditure over the past two years, and 96 per cent of its expenditure in the CPD period.

5. METHODOLOGY

The ICPE will address the three evaluation questions.¹² 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 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 program'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 analyzed 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 Plan, as well as the 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.

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 marker and assess the extent to which the gender marker provides a reasonable indication of the effectiveness of the program in promoting gender equality.

¹¹ A large project is a project whose expenditures exceed \$ 300 000 between 2017 and 15 November 2018, the date at which expenditure data were extracted from PowerBi/Atlas.

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.

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 rigor 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 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.

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 ICPE in consultation with the UNDP Bangladesh country office, the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific and the Bangladesh 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 Bangladesh: 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) and will manage the procurement and administration of the evaluation support officer contract. To ensure the anonymity of interviewees, the

country office staff will not participate in the stakeholder interviews. The CO 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 CO will prepare a management response in consultation with RB and will support the use and dissemination of the final outputs of the ICPE process.

UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific: The UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific 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 seek to 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 debriefing, as appropriate, with the country office.
- **International Consultant:** An international specialist will be recruited to support the lead evaluator and will be responsible for completing a substantive component of the evaluation, with areas to be determined based on the specialists particular skills and experience (see ToR at Annex 2).
- **National Consultant:** A national consultant will be recruited to support the evaluation mission, and depending on skills and experience, to collect data and help assess the programme and/or the specific outcome areas (see ToR at Annex 3).
- **Research Assistant (RA):** A research assistant based in the IEO will provide background research and analysis of data and documentation.

8. EVALUATION PROCESS

The ICPE will be conducted according to the approved IEO process¹³. The following represents a summary of the four key phases of the process, which constitute the framework for conducting the evaluation.

Phase 1: Preparatory work. The IEO prepares the TOR and evaluation design and recruits evaluation team members. 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 a one to two-week missions to Bangladesh. 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, 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 report. The first draft (“zero draft”) of the ICPE 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 Asia and the

¹³ The evaluation will be conducted according to the [ICPE Process Manual](#) and the [ICPE Methodology Manual](#)

Pacific for factual corrections. The second draft, which incorporates any factual corrections, will be shared with national stakeholders for further comments. Any necessary additional corrections will be made and the UNDP Bangladesh country office will prepare a management response, under the oversight of the regional bureau. The report 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 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 report and the evaluation brief 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 the 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 Bangladesh country office and the Government of Bangladesh will disseminate the report to stakeholders in the country. The report and the management response will be published on the UNDP website¹⁴ 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.¹⁵

9. TIMEFRAME FOR THE ICPE

The timeframe and responsibilities for the evaluation process are tentatively¹⁶ as follows:

¹⁴ web.undp.org/evaluation

¹⁵ erc.undp.org

¹⁶ The timeframe, indicative of process and deadlines, does not imply full-time engagement of evaluation team during the period.

| Table 3: Timeframe for the ICPE process | | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Activity | Responsible party | Proposed timeframe |
| Phase 1: Preparatory work | | |
| TOR – approval by the Independent Evaluation Office | LE | November 2018 |
| Selection of other evaluation team members | LE | December 2018 |
| Preliminary analysis of available data and context analysis | Evaluation team | Nov 2018 - Feb 2019 |
| Phase 2: Data Collection | | |
| Data collection and preliminary findings - Mission to Bangladesh | Evaluation team | 18 – 28 March 2019 |
| Phase 3: Analysis, report writing, quality review and debrief | | |
| Analysis and Synthesis and report writing | Evaluation team | April – July 2019 |
| Zero draft ICPE for clearance by IEO | LE | August 2019 |
| First draft ICPE for CO/RB review | CO/RB | August 2019 |
| Second draft ICPE shared with GOV | CO/GOV | September 2019 |
| Draft management response | CO/RB | September 2019 |
| Final debriefing with national stakeholders | CO/LE | October 2019 |
| Phase 4: Production and Follow-up | | |
| Editing and formatting | IEO | October 2019 |
| Final report and Evaluation Brief | IEO | October 2019 |

Portfolio analysis

UNDP has seven major focus areas:

1. Address the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable, including projects targeting communities in the Chittagong Hill tracts and urban poverty, and working to improve the Bangladesh Government's social welfare policies, including the targeting of women;
2. Support for improved access to justice by working to strengthen the village courts system, and with human rights bodies;
3. Support for local government;
4. Support for disaster risk reduction, including by strengthening policies and procedures for responding to emergencies and coordinating external assistance
5. Climate change, including working with local governments to support community level adaptation, and supporting renewable energy generation
6. Environmental management, focusing on protected area management, and capacity development of the Ministry of the Environment; and
7. Innovation, with a focus on promoting the use of information technology in service delivery.

There are overlaps the work undertaken in these different areas. A detailed description of the projects is as follow.

Poverty reduction

UNDP has four projects that have a focus on addressing the needs of the poor. Firstly, UNDP has had a long-term program of work in the Chittagong Hill tracts. "Strengthening Inclusive Development in the Chittagong Hill tracts" (\$7 million from 2016 to 2018), is a continuation of a program titled "Development and Confidence Building in the Chittagong Hill tracts" (\$59m 2012–2015).

Secondly, UNDP has also had a long-term focus on reducing urban poverty. The current vehicle for UNDP's work on urban poverty is the "IP-National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme" (\$4.6m 2016–2018). This is an attempt to scale up a large urban poverty project "Urban Poverty Alleviation" (\$64.9m from 2008 to 2015).

Thirdly, the \$7m "Social Protection Policy Support" project, financed by the United Kingdom (DFID—3.3m), and Australia (DFAT—\$1m) addresses problems with targeting of payments and resources, duplication of programs, and corruption in the Bangladesh's social welfare system.

Finally, [Strengthening Women's Ability for Productive New Opportunities](#) (\$4.7m 2014–ongoing) aims to develop the capacity of local government to manage social safety net projects. Envisaged as a \$104 million program, the project has a \$73.5m unfunded component and close to 70% of its funding has come from UNDP regular resources, with most of the remaining resources coming from the [multi-partner trust fund office's SDG fund](#). It is not clear from available documentation whether expected Government contributions (\$26m) have met original expectations.¹⁷

¹⁷ An impact evaluation using a randomized control trial method was completed in end 2017 and found that the project had made a tangible direct contribution to women participants economic empowerment. However, due to

Justice

Another area where UNDP's support is long running. There are currently two areas where UNDP is supporting access to justice.

The first is "Activating Village Court Phase II" (\$14m 2016–ongoing), which seeks with the support of the European Commission (\$15.5m) to support Village Courts in Bangladesh as an effective local dispute resolution mechanism.

The second is the National Human Rights Programme (\$3m 2015–). With support of Sweden (\$2.6m) Denmark (\$0.3m) and Switzerland (0.9m) the project aims to strengthen justice and human rights institutions to better serve and protect the rights of all citizens, including women and vulnerable groups.

Previous work in the justice system included "Police Reform Programme II" (\$17.2m 2012–2016), and "Promoting Access to Justice & Human Rights in Bangladesh" (\$25.9m 2012–2015).

Looking forward, growing concern about the threat of increasing radicalization has prompted UNDP to explore opportunities to work with the Bangladesh Government to better understand and prevent violence and extremism. This was not an area of work that was identified by the CPD when it was finalized in September 2016.

Local Governance

A \$7.3m "Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG)" project commenced in 2018 and will focus on strengthening decentralization in the country. Funded by the Danish and Swiss development agencies, it builds on the work of the much larger (\$22m from 2012–2017) Local Government Support Program (also known as the Upazila Governance Project/Union parishad Governance Programme). While it will be too early to assess outcomes, the evaluation can assess implementation progress, and the extent to which it builds on outcomes achieved through the previous local government program.

Disaster Risk Reduction

The Bangladesh program also has a long running history of work in disaster risk management. The main vehicle for this was the multi-donor Comprehensive Disaster Management program, which ran from 2010 (confirm) to 2016).

Support continues to be provided through the smaller but still substantial (\$18 million from 2012–2018) "Early Recovery Facility." A new and smaller (\$1.2m) "Disaster Response and Recovery Facility" (approved but not yet commenced) aims to strengthen response and recovery assistance including by providing a fund management facility for humanitarian and development agencies. It is financed by Germany, China, Sweden, and the International Organization for Migration.

There may be problems obtaining authoritative evidence about this work given that the last evaluations are dated. The Early Recovery Facility had a mid-term evaluation of it in 2014. There was a mid-term

the timing of the evaluation, it was unable to capture the sustainability of these impacts. Evaluative work does not appear to have captured key questions surrounding the value for money or scalability of the approach modelled by the project. Such work is important for understanding the feasibility of the model for the Government of Bangladesh, and if it is feasible, in promoting reforms required to adopt the model, or elements of it at scale.

review, but no final evaluation of the Comprehensive Disaster Management program. A mid-term review of work underpinning the country program's 2016–2020 climate change and disaster risk reduction outcome was completed in 2015.

Climate change

Local Government Initiatives on Climate change (2016–2020) is designed to promote local action on climate change adaptation at scale by providing support 200,000 most vulnerable households in 72 unions in seven districts. The project is financed by Sweden (\$9.1m) and the EU (\$10.2) implemented by UNDP and UNCDF and executed by the Local Government Division (LGD) of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C). Swedish funding is administered through the [multi-partner trust fund office](#), while the EU has separate funding arrangements with UNDP and UNCDF. This concept evolves around six strands: (i) building capacity, awareness and empowerment of the vulnerable people to generate plans; (ii) development of capacity of the local government to integrate climate change into their local development plans; (iii) building capacity and engagement of local actors and government extension workers at local level to work as driver for accountability of climate action; (iv) provide grants to local government as additional resource to climate-proof their investment on community based adaptation work; (v) provide direct support to the vulnerable households to meet their adaptation needs; (vi). promote a local climate financing mechanism through evidence-based advocacy for delivering climate finance at scale.

Sustainable Renewable Energy Power Generation (GEF) 2013–2018, aimed to reduce the annual growth rate of GHG emissions from fossil fuel-fired power generation through the exploitation of Bangladesh's renewable energy resources for electricity generation. Funded through a \$4m GEF grant, co-financing was initially targeted to be \$49.6m, but expectations as of mid-term review are that co-financing will be \$24.2m, the majority from the Bangladesh Government. The project has been challenging, assessed by the mid-term review as unsatisfactory on all criteria. The MTR observed that: *“While project expenditures as of Aug. 1, 2017 were only 15 percent of GEF funds, cost efficiency might still be ranked low as activities tend to veer off the main focus (solar boats and solar charging stations for vehicles) and there has been an overemphasis on study tours.”* As at mid-2018, the project had still spent less than half the GEF grant amount.

Integrating Community-based Adaptation into Afforestation and Reforestation Programmes (2015–2019) is another GEF funded project (grant value \$5.7m). It aims to reduce vulnerability of communities to the adverse impacts of climate change through participative design, community-based management and diversification of afforestation and reforestation programs. Approved in 2014, this project also had a slow start up, not recording significant expenditures until 2017. A mid-term review is currently planned for the project. While it is likely too early to assess outcomes, the context for this project can be presented in the form of the terminal evaluation of an earlier GEF project, which also focused on community based adaptation to climate change through afforestation of coastal areas. Completed in 2016, consideration of this project could help to shed light on likely sustainability of the current initiative, and could provide useful insights for the IEO's concurrent evaluation of the work UNDP does to address vulnerability to climate, and non-climate driven natural hazards.

Inclusive Budgeting and Financing for Climate Resilience is a small (\$1.5m) project implemented with the support of DFID (\$0.45m) and GiZ (\$0.35m). The project is designed to provide support for the Bangladesh

Government in developing a bankable project to access global climate funds, with a specific focus on addressing the vulnerability of remote offshore and riverine Islands (in Bengali “charland”) in Bangladesh.

[UN-REDD Bangladesh National Programme](#) is a local adaptation the forestry GHG emission mitigation mechanism adapted by the conference of the parties (COP) to the UNFCCC. With funding from UNDP (\$1.15m) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (\$1m) administered through the multi-partner trust fund office, the project is implemented by the Bangladesh Ministry of Environment and Forests to support the Government of Bangladesh in initiating the implementation of its REDD+ Readiness Roadmap (i.e., R-PP) by establishing necessary REDD+ management processes, identifying strategic readiness options for completing its National REDD+ strategy, and developing the capacities required to begin implementation of REDD+. It started on 2017 and was expected to be finalized by June 2019.

Looking forward, there continue to be significant resource mobilization opportunities in the climate change area through vertical funds, including the Green Climate Fund. There are a number of projects that are in this pipeline, including a \$25m grant from the Green Climate Fund, to be executed by the Bangladesh Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), focused [helping coastal communities, especially women, to cope with climate change induced salinity](#). UNDP is also overseeing the GCF financed project to formulate Bangladesh’s National Adaptation Plan (NAP) with a focus on long term adaptation investment and enhancing national capacity for integration of climate change.

Environment

[Expanding the protected area system to incorporate aquatic ecosystems](#) funded through a \$1.6m GEF grant, which was designed to build capacity of government staff and local stakeholders for managing the existing protected areas established for dolphin conservation and expanding their operational coverage by creating new protected areas and buffer areas whilst still meeting the livelihood aspirations of local communities. While this project was approved for implementation in 2014, no expenditures were recorded in UNDP’s systems until 2017.

Similarly, the [National Capacity Development for Implementing Rio Convention](#) funded by a \$0.7m GEF grant was approved for implementation in 2014, but did not record significant expenditure until 2017. The project supplies national and international technical assistance to enhance the capacity of relevant policy and institutional stakeholders to enable compliance with the three Rio Conventions and other multilateral environmental agreements.

Innovation

With a track record of experimental evaluation and efforts to improve service delivery using information technology, the Bangladesh program has a focus on innovation. UNDP’s assistance in the area of ICT for development extends as far back as 2001, with the current vehicle for this being the [Access to Information](#) project (14.6 million from 2012–2018), which has been part funded by USAID (\$4.5m to date) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (\$1.3m to date). The objective of the project has been to increase transparency, improve governance, and reduce the time, difficulty and costs of obtaining government services for underserved communities of Bangladesh. The Bangladesh program has also been an active participant in UNDP’s global support for innovation in development, the Innovation Facility, with several aspects of the work this has funded highlighted in the [review of the work funded by the facility in 2017–2018](#).

Other

While UNDP has had [a history of support for electoral systems in Bangladesh](#), its support for the 11th national parliamentary election in 2018 was relatively modest, at \$1.3 million, with half of this financed by the Swiss development agency. The project was jointly implemented with UN Women.