

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.

This is the first ICPE for Eswatini and will be implemented towards the end of the current UNDP programme cycle of 2016-2020. The ICPE will be conducted in 2019 to feed into the development of the new country programme starting from 2021. The ICPE will be carried out in close collaboration with the Government of Eswatini, UNDP Eswatini country office and UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa.

2. National context

The Kingdom of Eswatini is a small landlocked country in Southern Africa, bordered by Mozambique and South Africa. According to the 2017 census, the country has a population of 1,093,238 people.¹

Eswatini, formerly known as Swaziland, is sub-Saharan Africa’s last remaining absolute monarchy, where the king is the chief executive authority. The current Head of State, King Mswati III, has been in power since 1986.² The electoral system is based on the *tinkhundla* concept of popular vote taking place at the local level. Since political parties are unable to participate in elections, all candidates run as independents. In April 2018, the King of Swaziland changed the country’s name to Eswatini, during celebrations that marked 50 years of independence from British rule.

Eswatini is a middle-income country and had a GDP per capita of \$3,610 between 2015-2017. The country faces several development and economic challenges, with high levels of poverty and income inequality.

¹ <http://sz.one.un.org/content/unct/swaziland/en/home/news-centre/news/swaziland-releases-population-count-from-2017-housing-and-popula.html>

² <http://www.gov.sz/index.php/about-us-sp-15933109/governance>

The country's economy is highly dependent on neighboring countries for its access to markets with 43.1% of Eswatini's GDP from trade, over 80% of which with South Africa between 2015-2017.³ Exports are concentrated on a few products including manufacturing and agricultural products. Following an initial recovery from a fiscal crisis in 2010, macroeconomic conditions have deteriorated again in 2016, leading to a decline in GDP growth.⁴ Poverty remains a significant issue, with 60.3% of the population living below the poverty line, and 38% of the total population in extreme poverty.⁵ Eswatini's Gini coefficient is 51.5 (2017) indicating very high-income inequality. In 2017, the Human Development Index was 0.588, ranking Eswatini 144 out of 189 countries. Eswatini's HDI is above the average for sub-Saharan African countries, but below the average of 0.645 for countries in the medium human development group.

The HIV/Aids prevalence rate in Eswatini is the highest in the world, with 27.2% of the population between ages 15-49 – close to one in three adults – being affected. The high prevalence of HIV/AIDS not only exacerbates the persistence of poverty but also disproportionately affects women, who have 31% prevalence compared to 20% for men.⁶

Eswatini's vulnerability to natural disasters and the effects of climate change contribute greatly to the inequalities within the country, with regions facing droughts, occasional flooding and destructive hail storms. As a majority of the population - particularly in rural areas - relies on subsistence farming, both natural disasters and climate change threaten their lives and livelihoods. In 2016, there was a prolonged drought that affected water availability and food security for the country overall. A quarter of the country's population required food assistance, while domestic production was affected by the decline in agricultural and hydro-power production.⁷ The effects of the drought continued to be felt long after, with 159,000 people being classified as food insecure in 2017.⁸

Eswatini's weak governance systems and structures affects its ability to offer efficient and equitable access to public services. The combination of modern and traditional governance structures complicates the implementation of the country's Constitution. The Mo Ibrahim African Governance Index scored Swaziland 27 out of 100 in terms of participation and human rights in 2017, a score which has been decreasing over the last 10-years.⁹ Eswatini has a comprehensive structure to deliver judicial services but the capacity of the institutions and law enforcement agencies, due to limited infrastructure and human resources, is weak.¹⁰

In terms of gender equality and equity, there are several policies in place to protect and promote women's rights, but the implementation of these remains slow. Eswatini has a strong patriarchal culture, norms and values in addition to poor access for women to education, health and economic opportunities. Violence against children and gender-based violence remains problematic.

³ <http://stat.wto.org/CountryProfile/WSDBCountryPFView.aspx?Language=F&Country=sz>

⁴ International Monetary Fund, Country Report: Kingdom of Swaziland. September 2017. <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2017/09/11/Kingdom-of-Swaziland-2017-Article-IV-Consultation-Press-Release-Staff-Report-and-Statement-45240>

⁵ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/eswatini/overview>

⁶ <http://sz.one.un.org/content/unct/swaziland/en/home/about-the-country/challenges.html>

⁷ <http://sz.one.un.org/content/dam/unct/swaziland/docs/ORCSituationReport3.pdf>

⁸ <https://www1.wfp.org/countries/eswatini>

⁹ <http://iiag.online/>

¹⁰ <http://sz.one.un.org/content/unct/swaziland/en/home/about-the-country/governance.html>

3. UNDP programme strategy in Eswatini

UNDP’s country programme document for the period 2016-2020 established that the programme would support the following outcomes: **(a)** inclusive economic growth and sustainable development; **(b)** resilience and risk reduction, incorporating sustainable natural resource management; and **(c)** good governance, equity and citizen participation. These are in line with the country’s National Development Strategy 2013-2022, Vision 2022, the UNDP Strategic Plan and the three United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) outcomes.

UNDP’s support to inclusive growth are based on a 2011 project that providing advisory and technical services to support evidence-based policy development and improved capacity for data generation (Strengthening National Capacities for Poverty Reduction, \$1.17m expenditures for 2016-2018). A more recent project (Participatory Poverty Assessment, started in 2018) was designed to inform national strategies as well as local actions for sustainable income generation to benefit local communities.

UNDP’s work in resilience and risk reduction and natural resource management, currently includes two GEF-funded projects: one focusing on strengthening the national protected areas system (\$3.1m for 2016-18) and one project strengthening national and transboundary water resource management against the expected impacts of climate change (\$130k). Other projects include a 2014 initiative piloting climate-smart agriculture in Eswatini (conservation, irrigation and marketing techniques), as well as a 2016 project supporting coordination and monitoring efforts for El Nino drought response and recovery (\$141k).

UNDP’s work in good governance, equity and citizen participation includes two projects: the 2011 “Strengthening good governance” project which, supports the building of the capacity of key national institutions for the implementation of the Constitution, management of public resources, access to justice, as well as the national response to gender-based violence (\$450k for 2016-18); a second project started in 2016 the “Facility for upstream engagement” provides advisory and technical services for policy reform and policy impact (\$495k).

Table 1: UNDAF outcomes, UNDP programme outputs and indicative resources (2016-2020)			
UNDAF outcomes and UNDP country programme outputs		2016-2020 Indicative resources	2016-2018 Expenditure
UNDAF Outcome 1.1 - Youth, Women and vulnerable groups opportunities for employment and sustainable livelihoods increased by 2020	Output 1: Knowledge products on diversification and competitiveness of the economy developed	2.4m	1.2m
	Output 2: Strengthened national capacity for evidence-based planning, implementation, coordination and monitoring of programmes that create jobs and livelihood opportunities, especially for excluded groups		
UNDAF Outcome 1.2 - National institutions and communities have improved	Output 1: National systems (including legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks) in place for sustainable use of natural resources,	11.6m	3.7m

their management of natural resources by 2020	waste, chemicals and renewable energy for green/economic growth		
	Output 2: Communities' capacity to participate in, and share the benefits of conservation strengthened		
	Output 3: Multisectoral climate and risk preparedness and management measures being implemented at national and regional levels disaggregated by urban and rural areas and with gender considerations		
UNDAF Outcome 3.1 - Public institutions deliver efficient and quality services by 2020	Output 1: Improved accountability and participation in key institutions and systems that deliver public services at national and local levels	1.6m	0.94m
	Output 2: Parliament and related institutions have capacity to develop legislation and policies in line with the national Constitution and international conventions		
	Output 3: Civil society strengthened to engage in constructive dialogue and advocacy for promotion of human rights, transparency, public accountability and other international agreements		
Total		15.7m	5.8m

Source: UNDP Swaziland Country Programme Document 2016-2020 and Atlas Executive Snapshot extraction (January 2019).

4. Scope of the evaluation

ICPEs are conducted in the penultimate year of the ongoing UNDP country programme to feed into the process of developing the new country programme. The ICPE will focus on the present programme cycle (2016-2020) while considering interventions which may have started in the previous programme cycle (2012-2015) but continued into the period under review.

As a country-level evaluation of UNDP, the ICPE will focus on the formal UNDP country programme approved by the Executive Board but will also consider any changes from the initial CPD during the period under review. The ICPE covers interventions funded by all sources of finance, core UNDP resources, donor funds, government funds and others. It is important to note that a UNDP country office may be involved in some activities that are not included in a specific project. Some of these “non-project” activities may be crucial for advancing the political and social agenda of a country.

Special efforts will be made to capture the role and contribution of UNV and UNCDF through undertaking joint work with UNDP. This information will be used for synthesis to provide corporate level evaluative evidence of performance of the associated fund and programme.

5. Methodology

The evaluation methodology will adhere to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms & Standards.¹¹ The ICPE will address the following 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, to the sustainability of results?

To address question 1, a Theory of Change (ToC) approach will be used in consultation with stakeholders, as appropriate, to better understand how and under what conditions UNDP's interventions are expected to lead to good governance and sustainable development in the country. 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.

As part of this analysis, the progression of the programme over the review period will also be examined. In assessing the CPD's progression, UNDP's capacity to adapt to the changing context in Eswatini and respond to national development needs and priorities will also be looked at.

The effectiveness of UNDP's country programme will be analyzed in response to evaluation question 2. This will include an assessment of the achieved results and the extent to which these results have contributed to the intended CPD objectives. In this process, both positive and negative, direct and indirect as well as unintended results will be identified.

To better understand UNDP's performance, the specific factors that influenced - positively or negatively - UNDP's performance and eventually, the sustainability of results in the country will be examined in response to evaluation question 3. In addition to country-specific factors that may explain UNDP's performance, the utilization of resources to deliver results (including managerial practices), the extent to which the CO fostered partnerships and synergies with other actors (including through south-south and triangular cooperation), and the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment in design and implementation of the CPD are some of the aspects that will be assessed under this question.

6. Data collection

Assessment of existing data and data collection constraints. An assessment was carried out for each outcome area to ascertain the available information, identify data constraints, to determine the data collection needs and methods. The assessment outlined the level of valuable data that is available. The

¹¹ <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/21>

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.

assessment indicated that there were 9 decentralized evaluations undertaken during the period from 2016 to present, including 6 project evaluations and 3 outcome evaluations (conducted in 2019). All these evaluations will serve as valuable inputs into the ICPE.

Concerning indicators, the CPD lists 6 indicators for the 3 outcome results, and 19 indicators to measure the 8 outputs. There is a baseline and target for all indicators except for one output indicator. To the extent possible, the ICPE will seek to use these indicators to understand the intention of the UNDP programme better and to measure or assess progress towards the outcomes. All indicators for CPD outcomes included sources of data, while others indicated national statistics and/or project annual reports as data sources. The evaluation's ability to measure progress against these indicators will, therefore, depend in part on the country office's monitoring and national statistical capacities.

It is also important to note that UNDP projects that contributed to the programme's outcomes are at different stages of implementation, and therefore it may not always be possible to determine the projects' contribution to results. In cases where the projects/initiatives are still in their initial stages, the evaluation will document observable progress and seek to ascertain the possibility of achieving the outcome given the programme design and measures already put in place.

Data collection methods: The evaluation will use data from primary and secondary sources, including desk review of documentation and information and interviews with key informants, including beneficiaries, partners and managers. An advance questionnaire will be administered to the country office before the data collection mission in the country. A multi-stakeholder approach will be followed, and interviews will include government representatives, civil-society organizations, private-sector representatives, UN agencies, multilateral organizations, bilateral donors, and beneficiaries of the programme. Focus group discussions will be used to consult some groups of beneficiaries as appropriate.

The evaluation team will also undertake field visits to selected project sites to observe the projects first-hand. It is expected that regions where UNDP has a concentration of field projects (in more than one outcome area), as well as those where critical projects are being implemented, will be considered. There should be coverage of all outcome areas. The coverage should include a sample, as relevant, of both successful projects and projects reporting difficulties where lessons can be learned, both larger and smaller pilot projects, as well as both completed and active projects.

The IEO and the country office have identified an initial list of background and programme-related documents which is posted on an ICPE SharePoint website. The following secondary data will be reviewed, among others: background documents on the national context, documents prepared by international partners during the period under review and documents prepared by UN system agencies; programme plans and frameworks; progress reports; monitoring self-assessments such as the yearly UNDP Results Oriented Annual Reports; and evaluations conducted by the country office and partners.

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

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

Stakeholder involvement: A participatory and transparent process will be followed to engage with multiple stakeholders at all stages of the evaluation process. During the initial phase, a stakeholder analysis will be conducted to identify all relevant UNDP partners, including those that may not have 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 Eswatini Country Office, the Regional Bureau for Africa and the Government of Eswatini. The IEO Senior 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 Eswatini: 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 video-conference 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 (RBA): 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. The IEO will ensure gender balance in the team which will include the following members:

- **Richard Jones, Senior Evaluation Advisor (SEA):** Oversee the ICPE and guide the design, methodology, data collection, team selection and final synthesis and preparation of the draft and final evaluation reports.
- **Youri Bless, Evaluation Specialist (ES):** Implement the preparation and design of the ICPE, including background research and documentation, the selection of the evaluation team, and the synthesis process, data collection and report writing.

8. Evaluation process

The evaluation 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, including an overall evaluation matrix. Once the TOR is approved, additional evaluation team members, comprising international and/or national development professionals will be recruited. The IEO starts collecting data and documentation internally first and then filling data gaps with help from the UNDP country office.

Phase 2: Desk analysis. Evaluation team members will conduct desk review of reference material, and identify specific evaluation questions, and issues. Further in-depth data collection will be conducted, by administering an advance questionnaire and interviews with key stakeholders, including country office staff. Based on this, detailed evaluation questions, gaps, and issues that require validation during the field-based phase of the data collection will be identified.

Phase 3: Field-based data collection. During this phase, the evaluation team undertakes a mission to the country to engage in data collection activities. The estimated duration of the mission is 10 days. 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 will hold a debrief presentation of the key preliminary findings at the country office.

Phase 4: Analysis, report writing, quality review and debrief. Based on the analysis of data collected and triangulated, the SEA and ES will undertake a synthesis process to write the ICPE report. The draft will first be subject to peer review by IEO and its International Evaluation Advisory Panel. Once the draft is quality cleared, it will be circulated to the country office and the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa for 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 Eswatini 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. The way forward will be discussed to create greater ownership by national stakeholders concerning the recommendations as well as to strengthening accountability of UNDP to national stakeholders. Taking into account the discussion at the stakeholder event, the evaluation report will be finalized and published.

Phase 5: Publication and dissemination. The ICPE report will be written in English. It will follow the standard IEO publication guidelines. The ICPE report will be widely distributed in both hard and electronic versions. The evaluation report will be made available to UNDP Executive Board by the time of approving a new Country Programme Document. It will be widely distributed by the IEO within UNDP as well as to the evaluation units of other international organizations, evaluation societies/networks and research institutions in the region. The Eswatini country office and the Government of Eswatini will disseminate to stakeholders in the country. The report and the management response will be published on the UNDP

website¹³ as well as in the Evaluation Resource Centre. The Regional Bureau for Africa will be responsible for monitoring and overseeing the implementation of follow-up actions in the Evaluation Resource Centre.¹⁴

9. Timeframe for the ICPE process

The timeframe and responsibilities for the evaluation process are tentative¹⁵ as follows in Table 3:

Table 3: Tentative timeframe for the ICPE process going to the Board in June 2019		
Activity	Responsible party	Proposed timeframe
Phase 1: Preparatory work		
TOR completed and approved by IEO Director	SEA/ES	February 2019
Phase 2: Desk analysis		
Preliminary desk review of reference material	SEA/ES	March 2019
Advance questionnaires to the CO	SEA/ES	March 2019
Phase 3: Field-based data collection		
Mission to Eswatini	SEA/ES	8 – 16 April 2019
Phase 4: Analysis, report writing, quality review and debrief		
Analysis of data and submission of background papers	SEA/ES	April 2019
Synthesis and report writing	SEA/ES	May 2019
Zero drafts for internal IOE clearance/IEAP comments	SEA/ES	June 2019
First draft to CO/RBA for comments	SEA/ES/CO	July 2019
Second draft shared with the government and national stakeholders	SEA/ES/CO	August 2019
Draft management response	CO	September 2019
Stakeholder workshop via video-conference	IEO/CO/RBA	September 2019
Phase 5: Publication and dissemination		
Editing and formatting	IEO	Oct-November 2019
Final report and evaluation brief	IEO	Oct-November 2019
Dissemination of the final report	IEO	Oct-November 2019

¹³ web.undp.org/evaluation

¹⁴ erc.undp.org

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