## **Terms of Reference**

**Title: Evaluation Consultant (International)**

**Subject: Final Evaluation of the United Nations Partnership for Sustainable Development 2016-2020**

**Reporting to: United Nations Resident Coordinator in North Macedonia and**

**Data Management and M&E Development Coordination Officer**

**Duty Station: Skopje, North Macedonia**

**Duration: August - October 2019 (output-based consultancy**)

**Contract Type: Individual Contract (IC)**

**Application deadline: 7 August 2019**

The United Nations Country Team[[1]](#footnote-1) in the Republic of North Macedonia is inviting applications from qualified international consultants to perform the **Final Evaluation of the Partnership for Sustainable Development 2016-2020**.

### **Background**

Developed through joint efforts, the **Partnership for Sustainable Development (the Partnership) 2016-2020 encapsulates the strategic and legal framework for UN activities in the country for the 2016-2020 period**. Stemming from an analysis of the local context, and taking into consideration the national priorities, the Partnership strives to align UN activities with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), globally, with the EU accession, regionally, and with the National Sustainable Development Sectoral Strategies.

The evaluation of the Partnership represents an external, independent exercise with an overarching goal to generate an independent and comprehensive assessment of the achievements, challenges and lessons learned to both inform relevant stakeholders of the Partnership and serve as input in the preparation of the next programming cycle, more specifically the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the period of 2021-2025.

It is expected that the evaluation of this strategic document will primarily generate information to the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, the United Nations Country Team and the entirety of the United Nations Development System in the country. However, beyond that, the evaluation will serve to inform the civil society, international institutions, donor organizations and the wider public in the country about the key accomplishments of the Partnership for Sustainable Development between the United Nations Country Team and the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for the period 2016-2020.

As stated in the Partnership for Sustainable Developments 2016-2020, “A **final evaluation** will be carried out to assess overall achievements. This will take place in the fourth year of the cycle, so the results can be reflected in the new program.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

### **Evaluation context**

North Macedonia is a land-locked middle-income country with **small and open economy** with a solid track record of macroeconomic stability, which the country has been able to preserve even during adverse external shocks, such as the 2008 international financial crisis, the 2012 crisis of the euro, as well as its internal political turmoil in the more recent years. Its growth rates, however, have not been able to accelerate convergence to the European Union (EU) standards. Since 2009, the country’s growth averaged 2.1 percent, exceeding the regional average of 1.5 percent, yet its GDP per capita remains at only one-third of the average level of EU-28 (World Bank, Policy Notes 2017).

Despite a **limited decline in poverty rates during the last ten years** and improvements in living conditions of the less well-off, **poverty and inequality are still high when compared with other countries in the region and most of the EU countries.** According to official statistics, the latest reported at-risk-of-poverty rate is 22.2 percent (Survey on Income and Living Conditions, SILC 2017). The State Statistical Office (SSO) reports a Gini coefficient of 32.5[[3]](#footnote-3), implying high inequality in wealth distribution.

**Jobs, the main route to prosperity for most of the population, are scarce: only 50 percent[[4]](#footnote-4) of working-age Macedonians are employed.** Youth unemployment is a serious constraint to growth with over half of the population aged 15 to 24 jobless. In addition, there is a strong disconnect between the skills developed by the education system and the private sector needs, and companies constantly complain about the quality and availability of skills despite high unemployment. There is gender imbalance in the labour market: In 2017 the employment rate was 39.2 percent for women and 60.8 percent for men. This mirrors overall persisting gender inequalities in the wider society. Moreover, low birth rates and emigration are shrinking the workforce.

While social exclusion can be measured across different dimensions, reports often cite that too many **women and girls, persons with disabilities and minorities (such as the Roma population) in the country are still economically marginalized or socially excluded.** The coverage of the poor and vulnerable population by the main social assistance programs has been shrinking since 2010, which results in the further exclusion of these vulnerable groups over time.

**The 2015–2017 political crisis** remains a stark reminder of the detrimental effects of political instability over prosperity and the need to ensure transparent and effective rule of law. Since the second half of 2017, the new reform-oriented government has taken steps to address state capture by gradually restoring checks and balances, strengthening democracy and the rule of law. Throughout 2018, the Parliament continued to function with opposition parties chairing key committees. While the inter-ethnic situation was fragile, the situation remained calm overall. The government has shown commitment to increase trust among communities.

**In early 2019, the country also took decisive steps to resolve a long-standing dispute with Greece about its official name**, when the two countries finally reached an agreement. Resolution of the name issue—which has been inflicting political and economic damage since 1991—is essential to consolidate the country’s European Union (EU) and NATO accession process and enable it to become more deeply integrated with regional and global markets.

**Partnership for Sustainable Development 2016-2020 - background and main characteristics**

Drawing on the UN’s comparative advantage, as well as the challenges and opportunities identified by national partners, the UN Partnership for Sustainable Development has been focusing on five priority areas of cooperation: **employment, good governance, social inclusion, environmental sustainability** and **gender equality**. Working with Government and other partners, under the Partnership, the UN agencies agreed to pursue five outcomes:

* By 2020, more women and men are able to improve their livelihoods by securing decent and sustainable employment in an increasingly competitive and job-rich economy;
* By 2020, national and local institutions are better able to design and deliver high-quality services for all users, in a transparent, cost-effective, non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive manner;
* By 2020, more members of socially excluded and vulnerable groups are empowered to exercise their rights and enjoy a better quality of life and equitable access to basic services;
* By 2020, individuals, the private sector and state institutions base their actions on the principles of sustainable development, and communities are more resilient to disasters and environmental risks; and
* By 2020, state institutions are fully accountable to gender equality and anti-discrimination commitments, and more women and girls lead lives free from discrimination and violence.

Given the challenges faced during 2015 with the transit of hundreds of thousands of **refugees and migrants**, a sixth priority area was added:

* Over the course of the program period, refugees and migrants receive protection and humanitarian aid, in full respect of their human rights; host communities receive adequate assistance to build the resilience they need to deliver public services; and by 2020 robust asylum and migration management systems are fully functional.

At the time of defining the strategy, close alignment with national goals was a priority. Here, preparatory work sought to align the strategy with national, regional and global goals. Accordingly, the planning process considered the five priorities stated in the Government program for 2014-2018:

1. Increased economic growth and employment, as a precondition for improved standards of living and quality of life for citizens;
2. Integration into the EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO);
3. An uncompromising fight against corruption and crime and efficient law enforcement through deep reforms in the judiciary and public administration;
4. Maintenance of good inter-ethnic relations based on the principles of mutual tolerance and respect and implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement; and
5. Investment in education, science and information technology as elements of a knowledge-based society.

With the start of the programme cycle in 2016, the UN agencies in the country embraced the “Delivering as One” approach, with the vision to facilitate greater coherence and reduced transaction costs in planning, project implementation, results reporting and monitoring and evaluation. Moreover, the approach foresaw applying a joint project implementation modality, wherever feasible, to promote efficiency and leverage their experience, expertise and resources.

**Results Groups** were established astechnical working groups with roles and responsibilities directly related to the achievement of specific outcomes through coordinated and collaborative planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In line with the Delivering as One guidelines, each Results Group is led by a member of the UN Country Team and is responsible and accountable for leading joint approaches for results as well as monitoring and reporting within a harmonized and coordinated framework. The Results Groups develop work plans that indicate short-term outputs, budgetary requirements and the roles and responsibilities of UN and national partners.UNCT members leading results groups are accountable to the UNCT and Resident Coordinator for producing results jointly and they also remain accountable to their respective agencies for their contribution to the work of the UN at the country level. All results groups are guided by common terms of reference.

A **Results Framework** was prepared to define the outcomes of the Partnership, with the decision that the UNCT would agree on a joint work plan for each outcome, initially on an annual basis (for 2016) and subsequently on a bi-annual basis (2017/18 and 2019/20). The joint work plans specify short-term outputs, indicators, targets and performance benchmarks, roles and responsibilities, and budget.

### **Evaluation purpose, objectives and scope**

**Purpose**

The final evaluation of the Partnership for Sustainable Development is an external, independent, stand-alone exercise, whose broad purpose is to support greater learning about what works, what doesn’t and why in the context of the Partnership for Sustainable Development 2016-2020. The evaluation will produce an independent assessment of the achievements, the challenges and the lessons learned of the implementation of the Partnership, in order to inform the key stakeholders and to provide purposeful input into the next programming cycle.

1. As any other evaluation, it is expected that it assesses the relevance of the Partnership outcomes, the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation by partners, and their sustainability and contribution to country priorities. The evaluation will also gauge the performance of the Results Groups and their accomplishments under each of the five outcomes.
2. By capturing what has worked, what has not and why, it is expected that the findings of the evaluation will serve the purpose of improved accountability, as well as learning by providing essential information for strengthening programming and results at the country level.
3. Lastly, as the new Common Country Assessment (CCA) is planned to be completed by October 2019 and the preparation of the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework is planned to begin in September 2019, the evaluation report will be a vital document to inform and guide both the CCA and the new cycle of the UN Programme.

**Objectives**

The evaluation will answer to the following key results-oriented questions:

1. What difference did the Partnership intervention make in North Macedonia’s development?
2. How did it make this difference, and what other factors and partners were relevant?

To provide these answers, the objective of the final evaluation of the Partnership will be to assess the contribution made by the UNCT in the framework of the Partnership to national development results using evaluation criteria based on available evidence (accountability). This implies:

* Providing information on the overall relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the programming and results of the current Partnership 2016-2020, across its five outcomes;
* Identifying the factors and partners that have affected the UNCT's implementation and contribution, assessing the performance and explaining the enabling factors and bottlenecks;
* Assessing the extent to which the Partnership for Sustainable Development and coordination mechanisms have contributed to advance and streamline Results-based Management, Gender Equality and Human Rights Based Approach in UN agencies’ programming;
* Advise on the suitability of indicators and other verification tools used to measure progress towards outcomes and outputs;
* Reach conclusions concerning the UN’s contribution across the Results Framework of the Partnership for Sustainable Development. To the extent possible also provide conclusions which results could be attributable to the UN interventions in cooperation with the national counterparts;
* Providing actionable recommendations for improving the UNCT's contribution, especially for incorporation into the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

**Scope**

The scope covered by the evaluation will include the overall results framework of the Partnership for Sustainable Development 2016-2020 and its implementation instruments, specifically the Joint Work Plans and reports of the PSD Results Groups. The evaluation will pay special attention to the mainstreaming and application of the programming principles in the Partnership design and implementation: human rights-based approach, gender equality, environmental sustainability, results-based management, capacity development. The Partnership will be evaluated against its contribution to the national development results defined in the results framework.

### **Evaluation questions and methodology**

These Terms of Reference recognize that attribution of development change to the UNCT—as in causal linkage between the development interventions and observed results—is extremely complex, difficult and in many cases unfeasible, since the outcomes are, by definition, the work of a number of partners and are set at a very high level. Hence, the evaluation will consider contribution of the UNCT to the change in the stated outcomes, with the expectation that the evaluator explains how the UNCT contributed to the observed results. Making this assessment will require of the evaluator to:

* 1. examine the stated outcome;
  2. identify the change over the period being evaluated on the basis of available baseline information; and
  3. observe the national strategy/strategies and actions in support of that change.

**Evaluation Questions**

The evaluation of the Partnership for Sustainable Development, including the main evaluation criteria and questions, must comply with the United Nations Evaluation Group “Norms and Standards for Evaluation”[[5]](#footnote-5). The standard set of criteria will guide the assessment of the contribution of the UNCT to the development outcomes:

**Relevance**

* What is the extent to which the objectives of the Partnership are consistent with the interests and needs of the Macedonian people, the country’s set priorities, as well as its international and regional commitments, including on human rights and the recommendations of Human Rights mechanisms?
  + Are the main development challenges, with their respective causes, clearly identified in the PSD?
  + Does the PSD address key development issues, their underlying causes and challenges identified by the stakeholders?
  + What has been the relevance of the PSD in contributing to the national development priorities (e.g., EU Accession strategies)?

**Effectiveness**

* What is the extent to which the UNCT contributed to, or is likely to contribute to, the outcomes defined in the Partnership, including the extent to which the Partnership has contributed to strengthening the national capacities and the progress achieved in the planned areas of agreed interventions?

**Efficiency**

* What is the extent to which the Partnership had established and implemented clear procedures to ensure achievement of the defined outcomes with the adequate amount of resources (funds, expertise, time, administrative costs, etc.)? The evaluation will assess the relationship of the inputs, both financial and human resources, to the achieved results.

**Sustainability**

* What is the extent to which the results and the benefits achieved from the implemented development interventions have continued, or are likely to continue, upon their completion?

The evaluation will explore whether the implemented activities and the achieved results have developed, or strengthened, mechanisms that promote scaling up and replication of the achievements.

* What are the main development changes achieved by PSD that are likely to last?
* Which outcomes can be permanently sustained without further interventions?
* What capacities did the beneficiaries gain that enable them to pursue the national development objectives?
* What are the key risks to the sustainability of the PSD initiatives and does it include strategies to ensure sustainability?

**Impact**

While recognizing the complexity and difficulty to assess impact-level results and establish a causal linkage with the Partnership’s interventions, the evaluation will provide an assessment of the overall Partnership stakeholder contributions to the more disadvantaged groups, individuals, households and communities, that could be credited to the Partnership implementation. In doing so, the evaluation will attempt to determine what the most notable changes in the wellbeing of the citizens of the country were that could be linked to the implementation of the Partnership, identifying the significant changes that have occurred and providing an assessment of the UN contribution. The evaluation should also identify any unintended results—be it positive or negative—that have been a result of the implementation of the interventions and actions defined in the Partnership.

In addition, the evaluation will focus on the interventions and results achieved in areas where UN agencies in the country have joined efforts to tackle specific issues:

1. UN-wide actions that have addressed inclusion and fulfilment of the rights of women, men and children with disabilities, their achievements and shortcomings;
2. UN interventions towards improvement of the national capacities for environmental protection, sustainable management of natural resources and climate change resilience in compliance with EU and international environmental standards;
3. UN interventions towards achieving gender equality and girls’ and women’s empowerment, eliminating violence and gender-based discrimination against women and girls.

The evaluation team shall elaborate on and translate these questions into methodological sub-questions in the inception report.

### **Evaluation methodology**

Overall, the TOR foresees some degree of flexibility in the design and implementation of the evaluation approach, ensuring stakeholder participation and ownership, and facilitating learning and feedback. The evaluation of the Partnership for Sustainable Development will use methodologies and techniques as determined by the specific needs for information, the questions put forth in the TOR, the availability of resources and the priorities of stakeholders.

During the inception phase, the evaluation team will propose a detailed methodology designed to provide evidence around the result areas of the UNPSD 2016-2020.

The evaluation is expected to use mixed-method analysis, employing the most appropriate qualitative and quantitative approaches, data types and methods of data analysis. To ensure maximum validity, reliability of data (quality) and promote use, the evaluation team will ensure triangulation of the various data sources.

The evaluation methodology should take into consideration using country programme evaluations of agencies that have recently completed them, or are about to complete them, as this represents an opportunity to avoid duplication of efforts and reduce costs. In addition, other comprehensive evaluations, either thematic or of larger programmes, and/or assessments, undertaken by other UN agencies, should be used in the evaluation of the Partnership. By and large, the evaluator is expected to use all available information sources that will provide evidence on which to base evaluation conclusions and recommendations. Some of the anticipated approaches to be used for data collection and analysis include—but are not limited to—desk review, interviews with key stakeholders and field visits.

**Data collection methods** must be linked to the evaluation criteria and evaluation questions listed above. The precise data collection methods should be identified following the gap analysis of existing evaluative evidence and administrative data and presented in the inception report. Structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews and consultations should be considered for collection of additional data. In some cases, focus group discussions may be held to capture the dynamic of information sharing and debate, and to enrich the findings. The consultations will involve a range of development stakeholders (including government officials, UNCT members, the RCO, donors, civil society organizations, etc.) required to answer the evaluation questions.

The methodology of the final evaluation of the Partnership must meet the gender-related UNEG Norms and Standards to demonstrate integration of human rights and gender equality during all phases of the evaluation.

**Validation**

The Partnership evaluation will use a variety of validation methods to ensure that the data and information used, and conclusions made carry the necessary depth. Triangulation of information sources and findings improved validity, quality and use of evaluation.

**Key Evaluation outputs:**

An Inception Report (between 10 and 15 pages, excluding annexes), which would—at minimum—clearly outline the purpose and scope of the evaluation, the main issues to be examined, the evaluation criteria and the questions used to assess performance, and evaluation methodology, including sources, tools and methods for data collection.

An evaluation report (draft and final version) (between 35 and 40 pages excluding the Executive Summary and Annexes), covering the issues outlined in the terms of reference and inception report including evaluation findings and conclusions, lessons and recommendations. The structure of the final evaluation report will be defined and agreed with the evaluator, but it will include, at minimum, the following components:

* Executive summary
* Introduction
* Description of the evaluation methodology
* Analysis of the situation with regard to outcome, outputs, resources, partnerships, management and working methods and/or implementation strategy
* Key findings
* Conclusions and practical, actionable recommendations
* Annexes including:
  + Evaluation TOR
  + The evaluation matrix
  + Inception report (including gap and stakeholder analysis)
  + List of persons interviewed
  + Summary of field interviews
  + List of documents reviewed
  + Online survey and/or questionnaire (if any) used and summary of results
  + Any other relevant material that supports evaluation findings and recommendations

A Power Point presentation of key findings, lessons and recommendations for the government counterparts and other stakeholders.

### **Evaluation Process and Indicative timeframe**

The process of evaluating the Partnership for Sustainable Development should include the following:

* Preparatory phase – including a review of the TOR, preliminary desk review of existing relevant documents (including, but not limited to, recent country programme evaluations, thematic evaluations and assessments, etc.) meetings with the UNCT and a gap analysis, meetings with evaluators of recent UN agencies’ evaluations; the phase should conclude in the production of an Inception Report.
* Implementation phase – conducting the evaluation, which would include meetings with relevant stakeholders.
* Follow-up phase – development of the final evaluation report and coordination with the UNCT for its finalization.

The final plan for conducting the evaluation will be outlined in the inception report, but it is expected that the final Evaluation Report should be delivered by end of October 2019 and the findings and recommendations presented to the key counterparts by mid-November 2019.

Tentative Evaluation schedule

| **Deliverables** | **Timeframe** | **Place** | **Responsible Party** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Initial Desk review | August 2019 | Home-based | Evaluation team Leader |
| Initial meeting and discussions with UNCT | End-August - First week of September 2019 | Skype | Evaluation team members, with UNCT support |
| Full desk review including Country Programmes Evaluation results and gap analysis | September 2019 | Home-based | Evaluation team leader |
| Drafting/ finalizing Inception Report, outlining evaluation design, initial synthesis and detailed additional data collection plan | September 2019 | Home-based | Evaluation team leader and members |
| Final Inception Report | By end-September 2019 | Skopje or Skype | Evaluation team leader |
| In-country field mission for interviews with stakeholders and additional data collection | Early October 2019 | Skopje | Evaluation team members with Evaluation management group support |
| Finalization of First draft of full evaluation report (35-40 pages excluding the Executive summary and annexes) | By first week of November 2019 | Home-based | Evaluation team leader |
| Finalization of second draft, following feedback from UNCT | By November 20, 2019 | Home-based | Evaluation team Leader |
| In-country field mission for Presentation of the Final Evaluation findings and recommendations | By end-November 2019 | Skopje | Evaluation team members |

### **Evaluation limitations and challenges**

The suggested use of the individual agencies’ Country Programme Evaluations (CPEs) inevitably implies that their quality and timely delivery would affect the overall success of the Partnership evaluation, as they represent critical inputs. Furthermore, while the methodology envisions incorporating CPE findings to the best possible extent, it is expected that the Partnership evaluation would face the challenge of overcoming the individual agency perspectives and extracting a broader view necessary for this assessment. In that respect the evaluation team may face obstacles in distinguishing the data relevant for the overall Partnership assessment from the individual CPE datasets focusing on agency results and supplementing them with the additional relevant sources of information.

As stated earlier, additional challenges will mostly be reflected in providing an overall assessment of UNCT’s contribution versus the attribution of development results, especially in terms of Partnership’s sustainability and impact assessment. These issues may be partially overcome by a careful analysis of the UNCT Joint Work Plan achievements (containing detailed output results directly linked to the UN and partner interventions) in comparison to the overall structure of the Partnership’s outcome results.

### **Management and conduct of the evaluation**

Per UNEG norms and standards, conducting the final evaluation of the Partnership for Sustainable Development should involve all key stakeholders since its onset, to fortify both the ownership and, consequently, the use of the evaluation findings and recommendations.

The Evaluation of the Partnership for Sustainable Development (2016-2020) will be commissioned and overseen by the UNCT. Day-to-day evaluation management will be ensured through the UN Coordination Office and bodies established upon agreement between the UN agencies and the relevant counterparts.

The **Evaluation Steering Committee** will provide oversight of the evaluation process, exercising quality assurance and approve the final deliverables of the assignment.

The **Evaluation Management Group** will provide direct supervision and function as the guardian of the independence of the evaluation. The EMG will review the key outputs including the main report. Meetings of the EMG will be specified in the evaluation work plan.

### **Composition of the Evaluation Team**

### The evaluation team will consist of one international expert (to serve also as team leader) and one or two team member(s) (national experts), which would be agreed later.

### The evaluation team leader will lead the entire evaluation process, working closely with UNCT. He/she will conduct the evaluation process in a timely manner and communicate with the EMG on a regular basis and highlight progress made/challenges encountered. The team leader will be responsible for producing high quality inception report and the draft and final evaluation reports in standard English (both the Evaluation Brief and Executive Summary of the Evaluation Report will need to be translated in Macedonian at the cost of UNCT). The national consultant will contribute to the evaluation process substantively through data collection and analysis. Team members will share responsibilities for conducting the initial desk review and the field phases of the evaluation.

The local expert or experts will be engaged as soon as the selection of the international expert is concluded. The profiles of the local experts will be agreed upon with the international expert.

### **Responsibilities and Required Qualifications**

**Team Leader (International Expert)**

Spearheading the evaluation and coordinating the work of other team members, the team leader will be responsible for ensuring the quality of the evaluation process, the methodology and the timely delivery of all products. In close collaboration with the UNCT and the Evaluation Management Group, the team leader will guide the conceptualization and design of the evaluation, shape the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the report. **The specific tasks include**:

* Developing an inception report and details the design, methodology (including the methods for data collection and analysis criteria for selection of projects, required resources), and work plan of the evaluation team.
* Directing and conducting the research and analysis of all relevant documentation;
* Deciding on the division of labour within the evaluation team and coordinating the team tasks within the framework of the TORs;
* Overseeing the preparation of the report, ensuring its quality, and leading the analysis of the evaluative evidence;
* Overseeing the administration and analysis of the results of the data collection exercise;
* Drafting the evaluation report and coordinating the inputs from team members;
* Preparation for meetings with the UNCT and other stakeholder to review findings, conclusions and recommendations.
* Leading the stakeholder feedback sessions, briefing the UNCT on the evaluation through informal sessions and finalizing the report based on feedback from the quality assurance process;
* Delivering the final evaluation report.

**Required skills and experience:**

* At least a master’s degree in a relevant field (international development, economics, social sciences or a related field)
* At least 10 years of working experience in evaluation of UN’s strategic documents and UN agency country programmes
* Previous experience with regional organizations and the UN system
* Experience with participatory approaches, organizational assessments partnership strategies and capacity development
* Knowledge of relevant human rights issues and ability to identify related problems in their political, ethnic, racial, gender equality and socio-economic dimensions
* In-depth understanding of at least one area of work from the UNPSD
* Ability to evaluate and integrate information from a variety of sources and assess impact on the human rights and gender equality. Ability to incorporate gender perspectives in all aspects of the evaluation report
* Regional expertise in the region of the Western Balkans
* Proven experience as an evaluation team leader with ability to lead and work with other evaluation experts.
* Facilitation skills and ability to manage diversity of views in different development contexts
* Ability to produce well written reports demonstrating analytical ability and communication skills
* Fluent in English

### **Evaluation Ethics**

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’. Critical issues that evaluator must safeguard include the rights and confidentiality of information provided in the design and implementation of the evaluation.

At every stage of the evaluation process, the following principles should be observed:

Independence - the evaluation team should be independent from the operational management and decision-making functions of the UNCT.

Impartiality – the evaluation information should be free of political or other bias and deliberate distortions

Timeliness - evaluations must be designed and completed in a timely fashion.

Purpose - the scope, design and plan of the evaluation should generate relevant products that meet the needs of intended users.

Transparency - meaningful consultation with stakeholders should be undertaken to ensure the credibility and utility of the evaluation.

Competencies - evaluations should be conducted by well-qualified expert/team. The team should, wherever feasible, be gender-balanced, geographically diverse and include professionals from the countries or regions concerned.

Ethics - evaluators must have professional integrity and respect the rights of institutions and individuals to provide information in confidence and to verify statements attributed to them. Evaluations must be sensitive to the beliefs and customs of local social and cultural environments and must be conducted legally and with due regard to the welfare of those involved in the evaluation, as well as those affected by its findings.

Quality - All evaluations should meet the standards outlined in the Standards for Evaluation in the United Nations System. The key questions and areas for review should be clear, coherent and realistic. The evaluation plan should be practical and cost effective. To ensure that the information generated is accurate and reliable, evaluation design, data collection and analysis should reflect professional standards, with due regard for any special circumstances or limitations reflecting the context of the evaluation. Evaluation findings and recommendations should be presented in a manner that will be readily understood by target audiences and have regard for cost-effectiveness in implementing the recommendations proposed.

The selected consultants are required to clearly identify any potential ethical issues and approaches to the evaluation, as well as the processes for ethical review and oversight of the evaluation process in their proposal.

### **Selection process**

Individual consultants will be evaluated based on a cumulative analysis taking into consideration the combination of the applicants’ qualifications and financial proposal.

The award of the contract should be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

a) Responsive/compliant/acceptable, and

b) Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical (interviews) and financial criteria specific to the solicitation.

Technical Criteria - 70% of total evaluation – max. 35 points:

Criteria A: Previous relevant experience in conducting researches, studies, evaluations and analysis, demonstrating knowledge of data collection methodologies and data analysis. (max 20 points)

Criteria B: Previous experience in conducting UNDAF evaluations. (max 10 points)

Criteria C: Demonstrated familiarity with the region (Western Balkans) and its context; and/or experience in the region with similar tasks.

Financial Criteria - 30% of total evaluation – max. 15 points

### **Application procedures**

The invited candidates identified through the regional rosters of vetted consultants of the UN agencies will submit.

* Cover letter explaining why you are the most suitable candidate for the advertised position and a brief methodology on how you will approach and conduct the work.
* Filled P11 form including past experience in similar projects and contact details of referees   
  (blank form can be downloaded from

<http://europeandcis.undp.org/files/hrforms/P11_modified_for_SCs_and_ICs.doc>).

* Financial Proposal\* - specifying a total lump sum amount for the tasks/outputs specified in this announcement. The financial proposal shall include a breakdown of this lump sum amount (number of anticipated working days, travel, per diems and any other possible costs).

\*Please note that the financial proposal is all-inclusive and shall take into account various expenses incurred by the consultant/contractor during the contract period (e.g. fee, health insurance, vaccination, personal security needs and any other relevant expenses related to the performance of services...). All envisaged travel costs must be included in the financial proposal. This includes all travel to join duty station/repatriation travel.

Payments will be made only upon confirmation of UNRCO on delivering on the contract obligations in a satisfactory manner.

Individual Consultants are responsible for ensuring they have vaccinations/inoculations when travelling to certain countries, as designated by the UN Medical Director. Consultants are also required to comply with the UN security directives set forth under dss.un.org

General Terms and conditions as well as other related documents can be found under: http://on.undp.org/t7fJs.

1. The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) refers to the totality of UN development operations in North Macedonia by resident and non-resident agencies, funds and programmes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Partnership for Sustainable Development 2016-2020 and the new programme the UN SD Cooperation Framework 2021-2024 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.stat.gov.mk/Publikacii/2.4.18.13.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.stat.gov.mk/Publikacii/2.4.18.03.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)