

Terms of Reference for Mid Term Review of UNOSSC Strategic Framework (2018-2021)

1. Background

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) is the focal point for promoting and facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation for development on a global and United Nations system-wide basis. The framework further responds to the needs expressed by Member States to enhance South-South and triangular cooperation partnerships as a means of implementing the 2030 Agenda.

In the outcome document of the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (Buenos Aires, Argentina 20-22 March 2019), known as the BAPA+40 Conference, the international community recognized the contribution of South-South cooperation to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieving the overarching goal of eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, as it shares the comprehensive vision of development contained in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, that balance the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

2020 marks an important year for South-South and triangular cooperation to better respond to a Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic, the global context for development has fundamentally changed. This pandemic is more than a health crisis. It is severely affecting everyone's life and the world economy. "It is a human crisis... is attacking societies at their core. The IMF has just reassessed the prospect for growth for 2020 and 2021, declaring that we have entered a recession – as bad as or worse than in 2009."¹ UN Secretary-General has said that the COVID-19 pandemic is the greatest test that we have faced together since the formation of the United Nations, and called for stronger and more effective responses in solidarity. The countries from the Global South are likely to be more affected from this crisis and will require more coordinated support through South-South and triangular cooperation to effectively respond and recover.

UNOSSC work is carried out in accordance with policy guidance provided mainly by United Nations General Assembly resolutions and decisions and its Strategic Framework (2018-2021) to support Member States in implementing the and achieving development results through South-South and triangular cooperation. The overarching goal of UNOSSC under the current Strategic Framework is to support Member States' efforts to achieve the eradication of poverty in all its forms and to promote gender equality and women's empowerment so as to achieve the 2030 Agenda through enhanced South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation.

UNOSSC has focused its work under the Strategic Framework, on three strategic outcomes and seven outputs. Outcome 1: Strengthened multilateral policymaking processes to advance Southern interests and development agenda, and enhanced coherence and coordination of United Nations support. Outcome 2: Capacities of Member States, the United Nations system and other partners in South-South and triangular cooperation strengthened through enhanced generation and sharing of knowledge and access to high-quality advisory services. Outcome 3: South-South and triangular cooperation partnership initiatives and demand driven programmes facilitated to address sustainable development needs of developing countries. (Please see Annex 1 for specific outputs).

In order to better deliver planned results and services, UNOSSC has designed and operationalized an Umbrella Project which contributes across the three outcomes of the strategic framework. UNOSSC serves as the Secretariat of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, which is the main policy-making body of the United Nations on South-South cooperation. UNOSSC also acts as a Fund Manager and provides support to implementation across four South-South cooperation trust funds, namely the UN Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation, the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation (PGTF), the India, Brazil and South

¹ PAGE 1, https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_report_socio-economic_impact_of_covid19.pdf

Africa (IBSA) Fund, and the India-UN Development Partnership Fund. It also manages the demand driven programmes/projects such as World Green Economy Organization (WEGO), SSTC among Maritime-Continental Silk Road Cities for Sustainable Development, Global South-South Development Center (GSSD), RoK-UNOSSC Facility, etc.

UNOSSC supports policy dialogues, programmes, and capacity-building, and provides support to Member States to build South-South and triangular cooperation partnerships, as well as enabling the sharing of good practices and experiences. It also catalyzes greater research and analysis and knowledge management to inform South-South policies and programmes of both Member States and the United Nations system while forging partnerships and mobilizing resources. The year 2019-2020 represents the beginning of implementation of the Outcome Document of the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. The BAPA+40 Outcome Document reassured commitment of the international community in supporting South-South and triangular cooperation for the achievement of the SDGs, as a complement to North-South cooperation that cannot replace the official development assistance provided by developed countries. Furthermore, triangular cooperation has been recognized in the BAPA+40 Outcome Document in terms of its increasingly relevant role in the implementation of the SDGs.

Working together with Member States, UN Agencies and partners, UNOSSC performs its mandate and delivers services through its Headquarters in New York and 3 Regional Offices in Addis Abba (Africa), Istanbul (Arab States, Europe and the CIS) and Bangkok (Asia and the Pacific).

UNOSSC has an operational office-wide evaluation plan, which includes a mid-term review (MTR) of its strategic framework to be commissioned in the first half of 2020, and a Final Evaluation of its strategic framework to be commissioned at the end of 2021.

After the implementation of the first 2 years, the UNOSSC has planned to conduct an MTR of its Strategic Framework (2018-2021). UNOSSC is seeking an experienced and qualified consultant to conduct an overall assessment on the implementation of the first two years and develop an MTR report.

2. Duties and responsibilities

SCOPE OF WORK, RESPONSIBILITIES AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ANALYTICAL WORK

MTR purpose, scope and objectives

Purpose:

The MTR will take stock of progress made towards delivering results and resources, collate and analyze lessons learned, challenges faced, and best practices obtained during implementation since its adoption in 2018. This will inform both the second phase of implementation of the Framework (June 2020 - December 2021) and provide an early strategic way forward toward the next UNOSSC Strategic Framework.

The MTR is also expected to review and improve the result matrix of the current strategic framework making more result-oriented focusing on both outcomes and outputs. The MTR will inform the Member States, UNDP and stakeholders on its progress and results achieved as well as its strategy to improve its contribution to the implementation of SDGs.

Scope: The MTR will assess the effective and efficient organizational management (Financial performance and sustainability, streamlined business processes), organizational agility, policy and programmatic results delivered through UNOSSC which have been made toward the three outcomes and seven outputs of the Strategic Framework. This will cover review of the implementation arrangements adopted, including policy support, financing, coordination, knowledge sharing, generation of research, partnership arrangements, institutional

strengthening, and participation, replication and sustainability of the programmes implemented by UNOSSC. It will assess whether the Strategic Framework results are on track, capacities built, and cross cutting issues such as gender have been addressed, through demand driven modalities. It will also assess whether the implementation of the Framework has been effective and recommend areas for improvement and learning. The MTR will also assess the synergy between the streams of work and suggest ways of creating more synergy, in need be, for the achievement of better results.

The MTR will assess works performed by UNOSSC headquarters and three regional offices together with the Member States, UN System Agencies and relevant partners mainly since adoption of current strategic framework in 2018 to till the date.

Objectives:

- assess progress made towards the outcomes and outputs of the current strategic framework in delivering both results and resources and provide credible evidence for the same.
- receive recommendations for improvement in the remaining period of the current strategic framework and early strategic way forwards for the next phase of the UNOSSC Strategic Framework - also assessing the context of COVID-19 pandemic and similar types of crisis in the future.
- document lessons learned while implementing the Strategic Framework.
- assess risks, challenges and opportunities for UNOSSC in achieving the results of its Strategic Framework.
- Review and improve result matrix of the strategic framework along with indicators that allow to monitor and evaluate outcome and output level results in a systematic and credible manner.

MTR key questions

1. To what extent have the outcomes and outputs of the strategic framework have been progressed so far? What factors contributed to progress or non-progress toward outcomes and outputs? To what extent have the results achieved by UNOSSC contributed to the implementation of its mandate and the SDGs?
2. To what extent has UNOSSC been successful in advocating for issues of critical importance to the South consistent with established principles of South-South cooperation? What extent the results achieved by UNOSSC helped to promote the principles of South-South cooperation?
3. To what extent did UNOSSC progress in achieving institutional effectiveness through building capacity, and mobilising and managing resources as well as improving systems and business practices and processes?
4. What are the key lessons learned up to this point in the implementation of the Strategic Framework?
5. What are the risks, challenges and opportunities for UNOSSC in achieving the results of its Strategic Framework?
6. What recommendations as ways of improvement can be drawn, if any, for the remaining period of the current strategic framework and the early strategic directions for the next UNOSSC Strategic Framework – also assessing the context of COVID-19 pandemic and similar types of crisis in the future?

Methodology

The MTR consultant is expected to propose and determine a sound MTR design and methodology (including detailed data collection methods to answer each MTR question) and submit it to UNOSSC in the inception report following a review of all key relevant documents and meetings with UNOSSC. However, it is suggested that the MTR consultant should use a mixed-method approach – collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data using multiple sources in order to draw valid and evidence-based findings and conclusions and practical recommendations. The MTR consultant is not expected to conduct any specific surveys to collect quantitative data. However, the MTR consultant will review all relevant reports providing secondary quantitative data collected by UNOSSC, UN System Agencies, and relevant organizations.

Methods to be used by the MTR consultant to collect and analyze the required data shall include but not be limited to:

- **Desk review** of relevant UNOSSC documents, including Strategic Framework (2018-2021), UNOSSC ROARs, UN Secretary-General Reports on SSC, UNDP Administrator Reports on SSC, High-Level Committee (HLC) Reports on SSC, BAPA+40 Conference report, Final Evaluation Report of UNOSSC Strategic Framework (2014-2017), Documents related to BAPA+40, Trust Fund reports, online platforms, outcomes and conclusions/recommendations of key meetings, COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan, UNDP and UNOSSC offers, and other relevant documents, reports and researches.
- **Semi-structured interviews** with relevant UNOSSC Staff, and relevant stakeholders that may include members of UN Interagency Group on South-South cooperation, UNDP, representatives of HLC on SSC, Member States, UNOSSC Trust Fund partners, representatives of the multilateral agencies and regional commissions, selected UN Resident Coordinators, etc. The emphasis will be given to conducting the interviews via teleconferences or skype to best utilize time and reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19. While selecting the respondents for interviews, consideration will be given to ensure gender and regional representations. All interviews shall be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity.
- **Financial Data Analysis** of UNOSSC including multi-year resource allocation, Annual Work Plans and expenditure reports generated from Atlas.
- To ensure maximum validity, reliability of data (quality) and promote use, the MTR consultant shall ensure triangulation of the various data sources where possible.
- The MTR consultant is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the MTR Manager, UNOSSC staff, key stakeholders and beneficiaries.
- One day workshop can be conducted with UNOSSC staff to receive inputs to revise/improve the result matrix of the UNOSSC Strategic Framework.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule and data to be used in the MTR should be clearly outlined in the inception report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNOSSC and the MTR consultant.

Expected outputs and deliverables:

The MTR consultant is expected to produce the following deliverables:

- MTR inception report (5-7 pages): It will elaborate on how each MTR question will be answered through the proposed methodology along with sources of data, and data collection and analysis procedures. The inception report should be produced and agreed before the MTR starts.
- MTR debriefing: a meeting will be organized with UNOSSC staff and key stakeholders to present preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations.
- Draft MTR report (25 pages approx. without annexes): the MTR report will contain the same sections as the final report and shall be guided by the structure outlined in annex 4. (8,500 to 10,000 words approx.)
- Final MTR report (25 pages approx. without annexes): the final report will incorporate comments and feedbacks from UNOSSC and the stakeholders including the feedback provided during the debriefing meeting. The final MTR report will include annexes covering data sources, a list of documents reviewed, a list of people interviewed and all the relevant information to the final report. (8,500 to 10,000 words approx.)
- MTR Brief 1: a shorter version of the MTR Report (10 pages) reflecting highlights of findings and results, which could be presented to the annual session of the UNDP Executive Board if available. Please see annex 5 for the outline of brief 1. (as an annex)
- MTR Brief 2: a concise summary of the MTR report will include findings, conclusions and recommendations using plain language targeting a wider audience. This concise summary will be no more than 3 pages.
- UNOSSC Strategic Framework Results Matrix: a revised result matrix that includes SMART outcome and output level indicators along with baselines, milestones, targets, specific data sources, data collection methodology and indicators progress to the date. (as an annex)

MTR Ethics

This MTR will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the MTR process must also be solely used for the MTR and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP/UNOSSC and partners.

3. Competencies

Core values:

- Demonstrates integrity and fairness by modelling UN values and ethical standards;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

Core competencies

- Demonstrates professional competence to meet responsibilities and post requirements and is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results;
- Results-Oriented: Plans and produces quality results to meet established goals, generates innovative, practical solutions to challenging situations;
- Communication: Excellent communication skills, including the ability to convey complex concepts and recommendations, both orally and in writing, in a clear and persuasive style tailored to match different audiences;
- Teamwork: Ability to interact, establish and maintain effective working relations with a culturally diverse team;
- Client orientation: Ability to establish and maintain productive partnerships with national partners and stakeholders and pro-activeness in identifying of beneficiaries and partners' needs and matching them to appropriate solutions.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.

4. Required Skills and Experience

Academic qualifications:

- A masters' degree or equivalent (Ph. D. an asset) in public policy, international relations, social sciences, political economy or any other relevant fields. (Required)

Experience:

- At least 10 years of professional working experience in international development along with 5 years of proven experience in conducting evaluations or reviews of strategic programmes and/or outcome levels with international organizations. (Required)
- Experience of results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies and developing or improving result matrix. (Highly desirable)
- Demonstrated strong track-record of conducting evaluations/reviews of the effectiveness of development cooperation. This includes knowledge of the UN Norms and Standards for Evaluation. (Highly desirable)

- Strong analytical and writing skills, with the ability to conceptualize, articulate, write and debate about the issues of the Global South. (Highly desirable)
- Experience in implementing a range of qualitative and quantitative data collection tools and methods. (Highly desirable)
- Very good knowledge of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation issues, policies, practices, and programmes. (Distinct advantage)

Language:

- Fluency in written and spoken English is required;
- Working knowledge of another UN language would be a Distinct advantage

Application Procedure

The application package containing the following (**to be uploaded as one file**):

- A cover letter with a brief description of why the Offer considers her/himself the most suitable for the assignment;
- Personal CV or P11, indicating all past experience from similar projects and specifying the relevant assignment period (from/to), as well as the email and telephone contacts of at least three (3) professional references; and
- Brief outline of proposed MTR methodology (Required)
- An example/sample of previous similar work (Required)

Note: The above documents need to be sent together putting into a single email or a zip folder

Shortlisted candidates (**ONLY**) will be requested to submit a **Financial Proposal**.

- The financial proposal should specify an all-inclusive daily fee (based on a 7-hour working day - lunch time is not included) - and estimated 21.75 days per month).
- The financial proposal must be all-inclusive and take into account various expenses that will be incurred during the contract, including: the daily professional fee; (excluding mission travel); living allowances at the duty station; communications, utilities and consumables; life, health and any other insurance; risks and inconveniences related to work under hardship and hazardous conditions (e.g., personal security needs, etc.), when applicable; and any other relevant expenses related to the performance of services under the contract.
- This consultancy is a home-based assignment, therefore, there is no envisaged travel cost to join duty station/repatriation travel. Any official mission travel expenses will be duly paid for by UNDP and should not be included in the price proposal.
- In the case of unforeseeable travel requested by UNDP, payment of travel costs including tickets, lodging and terminal expenses should be agreed upon, between UNDP and Individual Consultant, prior to travel and will be reimbursed. In general, UNDP should not accept travel costs exceeding those of an economy class ticket. Should the IC wish to travel on a higher class he/she should do so using their own resources.
- If the Offeror is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under a Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the Offeror must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

The Financial Proposal is to be emailed as per the instruction in the separate email that will be sent to shortlisted candidates.

Evaluation process

Applicants are reviewed based on Required Skills and Experience stated above and based on the technical evaluation criteria outlined below. Applicants will be evaluated based on cumulative scoring. When using this

weighted scoring method, the award of the contract will be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

- Being responsive/compliant/acceptable; and
- Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation where technical criteria weighs 70% and Financial criteria/ Proposal weighs 30%.

Technical evaluation - Total 70% (70 points):

- **Criteria 1.** Demonstrated strong track-record of conducting evaluations/reviews of the strategic programmes and projects implemented by international organizations including United Nations. This includes knowledge of the UN Norms and Standards for Evaluation. points **Weight = 15%; Maximum Points: 15;**
- **Criteria 2.** Quality and relevance of the proposed MTR methodology in the application package.) **Weight = 15 %; Maximum Points: 15;**
- **Criteria 3.** Quality of submitted sample of previous works and details in the CV that show strong analytical and writing skills, with the ability to conceptualize, articulate, write and debate about the development issues. **Weight = 15 %; Maximum Points: 15**
- **Criteria 4.** Experience in results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies and developing or improving result matrix. **Weight = 8 %; Maximum Points: 8**
- **Criteria 5.** Experience in implementing a range of qualitative and quantitative data collection tools and methods. **Weight = 9 %; Maximum Points: 9,** and
- **Criteria 6.** Very good knowledge of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation issues, policies, practices, and programmes; **Weight = 8 %; Maximum Points: 8**

Candidates obtaining a minimum of 70% (49 points) of the maximum obtainable points for the technical criteria (70 points) shall be considered for the financial evaluation.

Financial evaluation - Total 30% (30 points)

The following formula will be used to evaluate financial proposal:

$p = y (\mu/z)$, where

p = points for the financial proposal being evaluated

y = maximum number of points for the financial proposal

μ = price of the lowest priced proposal

z = price of the proposal being evaluated

Contract Award

Candidate obtaining the highest combined scores in the combined score of Technical and Financial evaluation will be considered technically qualified and will be offered to enter into contract with UNDP.

Institutional arrangement

The consultant will work under the guidance and direct supervision of the Director of the UNOSSC who will serve as MTR Manager and will be responsible for the fulfilment of the deliverables as specified above.

The Consultant will be responsible for providing her/his own laptop.

This MTR is commissioned by UNOSSC. The Director of the UNOSSC will serve as MTR Manager, who will be supported by a taskforce including the two UNOSSC Deputy Directors, a Result Management Specialist, and designated colleagues from the Directorate and relevant teams. UNOSSC will be responsible for initiating, coordinating and managing the entire MTR process, and make available key relevant documents to the consultant

for review. UNOSSC shall also provide support to the consultant in organizing key interviews and meetings related to the MTR.

Technical guidance and supports are foreseen from the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS) and the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of UNDP to ensure quality of the MTR process and products as per UNDP corporate requirements.

Time frame for the MTR process

The MTR is expected to start on 7 May 2020 and is foreseen to be completed by 7 July 2020. The consultant shall start the task as soon as possible after the signature of the contract. The consultant is expected submit the first draft MTR Report by 20th June 2020 for UNOSSC review. The following activities are expected to be commenced as per the suggested timeline. Detail timeline for deliverables to be agreed during the finalization of MTR Inception Report. Draft MTR Inception Report should be submitted to UNOSSC by the consultant within first 10 days of starting the assignment.

Sn	Key activities	Duty station	Working days	Indicative Timeline
1.	Initial briefing to the MTR consultant and share documents by UNOSSC (remotely), and comprehensive desk review of relevant documents by the MTR consultant.	Home Based	5	
2.	Kick-off meeting with UNOSSC	Home Based	0.5	
3.	Finalize the MTR design and methods, and prepare and submit the detailed inception report	Home Based	2	
4.	Data collection including consultations, key informant interviews, meetings, etc. <i>(Teleconference/skype call will be emphasized for the interviews to save travel time and reduce risk of COVID-19)</i> <i>Note: the consultant shall utilize time to continue drafting sections of the report or improving results matrix)</i>	Remotely using ICT	14	
5.	Workshop to review and improve the Strategic Framework result matrix with UNOSSC staff	Remotely using ICT	1	
6.	Preparation and submission of draft report	Home Based	5	
7.	Debriefing meeting to present findings, conclusions and recommendations, and receive feedbacks	Remotely using ICT	0.5	
9.	Improvement of SF result that includes SMART outcome and output level indicators along with baselines, milestones, targets, specific data sources, data collection methodology and current indicator progress.	Home Based	3	
10.	Finalization of the MTR report incorporating additions and comments provided by UNOSSC	Home Based	3.5	
11.	Submission of the final MTR report along with 2 briefs and revised result matrix	Home Based	-	
12.	Final debriefing meeting with UNOSSC to share the findings of the MTR	Remotely using ICT	0.5	
Total working days			35	

Note: Considering the COVID-19 situation, the whole MTR is planned to be commissioned remotely. If the situation improves, the data collection, briefings and one day workshop on result matrix can be done New York based.

Payment modality

- Payment to the Individual Contractor will be made based on the actual number of days worked, deliverables accepted and upon certification of satisfactory completion by the manager.
- Any official mission travel expenses will be duly paid for directly by UNDP and should not be included in the price proposal.

Annexes for MTR TOR:

Annex 1: UNOSSC Strategic Framework (2018-2021) including result matrix

Annex 2: Key stakeholders and partners

Annex 3: Documents to be reviewed and consulted

Annex 4: Outline of the MTR report format

Annex 5: Outline of MTR brief 1

Annex 6: Code of conduct forms