

**Terms of Reference**

**Post Title:** Project Evaluation Specialist

**Project Title:** Enhancing Human Security and building resilient societies in disadvantaged communities of Armenia

**Contract modality:** Individual Contract (IC)

**Starting Date:** February 27, 2020

**Duration:**  Up to () days

**Duty Station:** Yerevan, Armenia

1. **Background:**

United Nations in Armenia in partnership with 6 agencies (UNDP (lead agency), UNICEF, IOM, FAO and WFP) and in close cooperation with the Government of Armenia implements joint project “Enhancing Human Security and Building a Resilient Society in the Disadvantaged Communities of Armenia” funded by United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security.

The goal of the Project is to support Armenia’s efforts in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by addressing the root causes of human insecurity for vulnerable people of Amasia, Alaverdi, Tumanyan and Berd communities in Shirak, Lori and Tavush regions of Armenia, aiming to: 1. ensure early prevention and sustainability of interventions through identification of root causes of threats to human security and enhancing community resilience; 2. strengthen social protection and inclusion to improve human security in targeted communities; and 3. address the economic and food insecurity in the target communities through strengthened livelihoods, creation of sustainable economic opportunities and capacity building.

Human security approach (HSA) within the project addresses, in its relevant aspects, individual rights, good governance, access to safe and inclusive education and health care, ensuring that opportunities and choices are fulfilled at maximum potential, and are aimed at reducing poverty, achieving economic growth and community resilience, as well as promoting understanding of human security in terms of the risks and insecurities faced by individuals and groups at grass roots level.

By identifying the concrete needs of populations under stress, human security highlights the complexity of the challenges and promotes integrated solutions that ensure greater coherence and stronger impact. Through the project implementation, the participating UN Agencies, along with the national implementing partners are addressing the following types of insecurities: economic, food, health, personal and environmental in Berd, Tumanyan, Alaverdi and Amasia consolidated communities of Armenia.

The comprehensive community profiles formulated within the Project serves as a baseline for any further monitoring and evaluation activities within the project. Moreover, the indicators would be aligned to the best possible extent to SDG indicators to be able to measure and monitor progress, though in the context of three regions.

The project is subject to mid-term evaluation in accordance with the project agreement with the UNTFHS.

1. **Objectives and Scope of work:**

The overall objective of the mid-term evaluation assignment is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency as well as impact and sustainability of interventions under the “Enhancing Human Security and Building a Resilient Society in the Disadvantaged Communities of Armenia project.

Given that this is a mid-term evaluation, impact and sustainability are to be considered to the extent possible.

The geographical coverage of the evaluation includes Tumanyan, Alaverdi, Berd and Amasia consolidated communities together with their settlements, Considering the three-year duration of the project, the mid-term evaluation will be conducted for the period of October 2018- 31 March 2020 (18 months according to the Project Document)

The evaluation will focus on direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project interventions as will be spelled out in the inception report.

The evaluation will be carried out in close cooperation with the representatives from the above-mentioned six UN Agencies based on the results framework and joint work-plan, reviewing the project documents, conducting in-depth and key informant interviews, focus group discussions with main stakeholders, members of the beneficiary groups and selected communities. Findings of the mid-term evaluation will be communicated to the implementing partners and donor organization - UNTFHS.

**Evaluation Framework and Criteria**

All existing project documents containing result framework, joint work plan and others clearly setting objectives, results, activities, corresponding indicators on output and outcome levels, and means of verification, relevant to the object of the evaluation, should be thoroughly reviewed in the Inception phase by the Evaluator to finalize the evaluation design with a clear Evaluation Matrix.

Five core UN DAC evaluation criteria, namely the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability (to extent possible) and impact (to the extent possible) will be analyzed. Key evaluation questions will include, but are not limited to, the following:

***Relevance***

* Are the project activities/components relevant to the actual/defined needs of the beneficiaries? Were the objectives clear and feasible? How do the main components of the project contribute to the planned objectives and are logically interlinked?
* Is the project in line with the current priorities of the country? Is the Government committed (both in terms of timing and financially) to the project? How is the project aligned with and supports the national, regional and community strategies/plans?
* Has the project involved relevant stakeholders through consultative processes or information-sharing during its preparation phase? Was the human security needs assessment/analysis carried out at the beginning of the project reflecting the various needs of different stakeholders? Are these needs still relevant? Have there any new, more relevant needs emerged that the project should address?

***Effectiveness***

* How effective has the project been in establishing ownership by the stakeholders? Can the project management and implementation considered as participatory?
* Is the project making sufficient progress towards its planned objectives/outcomes/outputs? What are the key achievements, challenges and implementation lessons?
* How effectively are the beneficiary interventions in line with actual needs?

***Efficiency***

* To what extent the project made good use of the human, financial and technical resources, and have used an appropriate combination of tools and approaches to pursue the achievement of project results in a cost-effective manner?
* Was there a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities of key actors involved?
* To what extent did the project capitalize on other complementary initiatives to the project to reinforce the results of the project?
* Have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner? If not, what were the bottlenecks encountered?

***Sustainability (to the extent possible)***

* To what extent did the projectsupport the government and beneficiary communities in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure ownership and the durability of effects in line with Government reforms and strategies such as Community Consolidation, Disaster Risk Reduction, etc?
* Is there a need to adjust the project (e.g., extend duration due to COVID-19)?
* What are possible sustainability prerequisites already created on the ground?

***Impact (to the extent possible)***

* Has the project contributed or is likely to contribute to long-term social, economic, technical, environmental changes for individuals, communities, and institutions in achieving the SDG agenda?
* How does the project impact joint UN planning, implementation and programming?

Evaluation questions will be adjusted and refined by the Evaluator during the desk review phase.

In addition to five main evaluation criteria, the evaluation will review also how project incorporated principles of the human rights-based approach, gender equality aspect and other relevant cross-cutting issues. Gender equality concerns should be integrated in the evaluation scope of analysis and methods and tools for data collection, as well as, should be reflected in evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations wherever possible.

**Gender equality and inclusion of the most vulnerable groups (principle of Leaving No One Behind):**

* + - Assess steps, undertaken to ensure the active and equal participation of women, men, boys, and girls within the programme and advise the steps, required to be taken in the future to improve women participation;
    - Did the programme meet specific gender indicators and targets outlined within the project document?
    - How were vulnerable groups (including children and youth) involved in the project? What impact has the programme had on reducing vulnerabilities of these age groups?

**Evaluation methodology**

The evaluation methodology will be guided by the Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). The evaluation will be conducted in a participatory manner: key stakeholders, including communities, line ministries, NGOs, businesses etc. will be involved in all phases of the evaluation, including the planning, inception, fact-finding and reporting phases.

In this evaluation mixed method approach will be applied by combining qualitative and quantitative components to ensure complementarity. The independent evaluator will collect data from desk review and verify them with soft data from field, interviews and focus groups. The analysis will be built on triangulating information collected from different stakeholders (project staff, project partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries) through different methods including secondary data and documentation review and primary data. It should critically examine the information gathered from the various sources, and synthesize the information in an objective manner. If contradictory information is obtained from different stakeholders, an effort should be made to understand the reasons for such information, including any gender-based differences.

The evaluator will review the following documents before conducting any interviews or field trips: project documentation, progress reports, work plans, mission reports, monitoring data, workshop reports, minutes, country data, policies, legal documents, etc.

Preliminary suggestions for data collection methods to be envisaged include:

* Desk review including review of analysis of existing documents, legal and policy framework; review of monitoring and evaluation reports, available reports and analysis generated through the project;
* Key informant interviews with duty-bearers and policymakers, community focal points, partners organizations;
* Expert interviews with project implementing agencies;
* Focus group discussions with beneficiaries.

Because of COVID-19, interviews and focus group discussions may be conducted online to ensure no risk for evaluator and interviewees.

The independent evaluator will identify key stakeholders/informants (including but not limited to project implementers, decision makers, direct and indirect beneficiaries, etc.), and appropriate data collection methods for each informant category (such as semi-structured or in-depth interviews, expert interviews, focus groups), in close coordination with the project team.

A combination of these methods should be proposed by the independent evaluator in the detailed evaluation methodology.

In close cooperation with the project team, the independent evaluator will also be responsible for the development of appropriate instruments, including questionnaires, interview and focus group guides, for each of the methods selected. The materials should possibly be gender-sensitive in language and presentation, as well as take into consideration human rights and equity angles.

The evaluation will follow the principles of the UN Evaluation Group’s norms and standards in particular with regard to independence, objectiveness, impartiality and inclusiveness and will be guided by the UN ethics guidance as guiding principle to ensure quality of evaluation process, especially apropos conflict of interest, confidentiality of individual informants, sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs, discrimination and gender equality, to address issues of vulnerable population.

A major limitation to the evaluation will be the impossibility of face-to-face interviews due to COVID-19 restricting measures, thus data will be obtained through online means, though following all strict guidelines to the extent possible.

**Field based data collection**

[Because of COVID-19, interviews and focus group discussions may be conducted online to ensure no risk for evaluator and interviewees.]

* + - Interviews with or desk review of documents from national, and local government representatives, Heads of Amasia, Alaverdi, Berd and Tumanyan consolidated communities;
    - Interviews with other actors, such as partner organizations and contracted organizations;
    - Focus group discussions with beneficiaries;
    - Interviews with Community focal points.

1. **Duties and responsibilities:**

Under the direct supervision of UNDP Project Coordinator and in coordination with the project team, the incumbent will evaluate the following~~:~~

* + - Midterm Progress made by the Project towards the achievement of outcome and outputs;
    - Relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of outputs vis-à-vis the Project Results and Resources Framework.

1. **Timeline and expected deliverables:**

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| --- | --- |
| **Description of deliverables** | **Delivery time** |
| **Deliverable 1 – Design phase**   * Desk review of the project materials, international and national frameworks and documents, etc.;   - UNDP Project Coordinator and project team will support the evaluator to compile the list of most important background materials, documents, and reports for review.  - The project result framework will be reviewed by the evaluator along with other key documents.   * Stakeholder mapping   - The evaluator will prepare a mapping of stakeholders relevant to the evaluation. The mapping will include ministries, regional and local authorities, implementing partners, service providers, direct and indirect beneficiaries, development partners. The project team will assist the evaluator in preparing the stakeholder matrix.   * Implementation plan and methodology   - Evaluation methodology, including evaluation matrix will be developed based on mixed method design.  - Data collection tools, including questionnaires (qualitative and quantitative) will be developed.  - The set of evaluation questions will be finalized.  - Field work schedule and approach will be drafted.   * Inception Report   - Inception report will be developed and presented to UNDP Project Coordinator and project team with all the document/tasks listed above for this phase embedded. | **30 May 2020** |
| **Deliverable 2 – Data collection phase/ field phase**  - Collection of evaluation data (primary and secondary) will be carried out through different techniques, including [online] in-depth, informal and semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and expert interviews.  - The analysis will be based on protocols/transcripts of interviews, focus groups and comparative analysis.  Debriefing  - Debriefing meeting will be organized for the Project team on the preliminary findings, testing elements of conclusions and tentative recommendations. | **15 June 2020** |
| ***Deliverable 3 - Report development and validation phase:***   * 1st draft Evaluation Report submitted to UN participating agencies for review and feedback; * Comments provided by UN participating agencies and other key stakeholders (government, donor) will be addressed. * Validation meeting will be organized with partners and stakeholders to present evaluation findings. * The refined draft report is presented to/validated by UN implementing Agencies * The Evaluation Report is finalized based on the feedback of the above-mentioned parties. | **June 30th, 2020** |

**Key outputs**

1. Evaluation methodology, including data collection tools/questionnaires, list of beneficiaries and stakeholders to be interviewed. Field mission plans and reports – outlined in an evaluation inception report.
2. Data collection and analysis and draft outline of the Evaluation Report.
3. Evaluation report in English including key recommendations (max 21 pages plus annexes). Evaluation report shall be in line with the UN Evaluation Group standard 4.9. It shall be evidence-based, presenting the project’s progress vis-à-vis the Results Framework, based on triangulated data. The report shall present findings and recommendations on project planning, programming, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of interventions.

**Key Documents to review**

Joint Project and Agency Project Document(s)

Results and resources Frameworks

1st Annual Progress Reports

Project Budgets and Expenditure Reports

Detailed Workplans and Revisions

CCA, UNDAF Evaluation, Agency and relevant other evaluations

UNDAF Results Groups Monitoring and reporting documents

Monitoring files with analysis of disaggregated data (women, men, boys, girls), data from the field

Other relevant documents requested by the Evaluator

**Suggested contents page**

**Opening pages (acknowledgments, list of acronyms)**

**Executive Summary (5-6 pages)**

**Chapter I Background, Object and Methodology**

* 1. Introduction
  2. Background and context of the project
  3. Object of the Evaluation
  4. Purpose, Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation
  5. Evaluation Methodology (short)
  6. Major Limitations
  7. Ethical considerations, Human Rights and Gender

**Chapter II Analysis and Findings**

* 1. Relevance
  2. Effectiveness
  3. Efficiency
  4. Sustainability
  5. Impact
  6. Cross-cutting topics

**Chapter III Conclusions and Recommendations**

3.1 Conclusions and Lessons Learned

3.2. Recommendations

**ANNEXES**

1. Terms of Reference
2. Desk Review and Background Documents
3. List of Stakeholders Interviewed
4. Detailed Methodology
5. Interview Guides and Survey Instruments, not new, Deliverable 1
6. Output tables
7. **Required qualifications:**

***Education:***

* Advanced university degree (MA and equivalent or higher) in development studies, economics, social science or related field.
* Knowledge and proven experience in managing and leading evaluation assignments for a range of major aid agencies or NGOs in particular evaluating community based, country wide or large donor programmes e.g. EC, ECHO, etc.;
* Strong data collection, analysis and **writing skills;**
* Broad knowledge of development issues and national policy and practice in community consolidation process, disaster risk reduction, social/child protection, etc.;
* Familiar with the human security local economic development, and resilience concepts;
* Understanding of gender equality issues;
* Proven experience of working in community development projects/programmes
* Fluency in Armenian and English

**Experience:**

* **Eight years of professional experience** in programme/project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation for the international organizations in the above-mentioned areas; experience in development and application of methodologies for evaluation and assessment, including tools and techniques.

***Competencies/Skills:***

* + - Substantive knowledge of concept and principles of local development and governance processes, as well as subject-matter international instruments;
    - Strong analytical capacity and creative thinking;
    - Proven capacity to write analytical reports;
    - Strong planning skills and ability to respect deadlines;
    - **Excellent writing skills in English;**
    - Excellent teamwork skills; ability to consult, involve and work with stakeholders of different backgrounds, points of view and interests;
    - Demonstrated initiative, high sense of responsibility and discretion;
    - High level of integrity, **professionalism and respect for diversity.**
    - Availability to travel as required.

1. **Payment mode:**

100% of the payment will be made upon effective conclusion of the Deliverablesand submission for approval by DRR Programme Manager.