**Project Final Evaluation**

**Terms of Reference**

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| **I. General Information** |
| **Project:** Electoral Support Project in Armenia (ESPA)  **Project and Output numbers:** 00102091-00104274  **Project budget:** USD 4,012,126.47  **Project duration:** 25 July 2018 – 31 December 2019  **Reports to:** DG Portfolio Analyst  **UN Agency:** UNDP  **Duty Station:** Armenia  **Duration of Assignment:** 20 working days after signing the contract |

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| **II. Background Information** |
| In response to a formal request from the Government of the Republic of Armenia to provide electoral assistance and based on recommendations of the UN Needs Assessment Mission deployed in July 2018, UNDP has developed “Electoral Support Project in Armenia” project document to assist the Armenian stakeholders in holding of early elections and strengthening capacity in post-Election period. The project envisaged to last 18 months and consisted of three components aiming to increase the credibility, inclusiveness and participation in the electoral process. The project’s overall strategy was to assist the Armenian authorities in, first of all, holding credible and inclusive early elections, and secondly, sustaining those achievements and building solid foundations for credible, inclusive and transparent elections in the future. More specifically, the project supported introduction of new technology to increase credibility of electoral process, increase inclusiveness and participation in elections, voter education, as well as strengthen capacity of electoral management bodies in Armenia.  The Project was structured in a manner to provide targeted, coordinated assistance broadly around four key areas: ensuring the continued use of the new technology introduced in 2017 elections; assisting authorities in implementing new aspects of the electoral laws and procedures, including improving voter registration; improving voter education, particularly regarding the novelties in the electoral procedures and laws; and increasing political participation of women and young voters.  These four areas were grouped in two outputs aiming to improve the credibility and inclusiveness of the electoral process overall, with a third output focusing on the post-electoral period and capacity-building of the electoral authorities.  The European Union, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Kingdom of Sweden and the Government of Armenia are the donors of the project. The budget of the project amounts to $4,201,281.80 USD.  The extreme efforts and preparations in three main components (voter authentication, training, and voter education) have resulted in successful conduct of the Pre-term Parliamentary Elections that took place on 09 December 2018. According to the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) the voters’ turnout stood for 1,261,660 corresponding to 48.6 % of voters. The total number of registered voters is 2,593,140.  The Elections were generally observed as peaceful, technically sound and well organized.  International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) mission’s statement of preliminary findings and conclusions was out already on 10 December, stating that “The 9 December early parliamentary elections were held with respect for fundamental freedoms… The Central Election Commission (CEC) conducted its work professionally and transparently and met all legal deadlines, despite the shortened timeframe…”. The statement is available at: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/armenia/404591>  The number of invalid ballots in 2018 Pre-term Elections was 4,706, which is an exceptionally low figure as opposed to 2017 Parliamentary Elections, when it was ~7500, and moreover - in 2012 it was 50000.  For the first time ever after 1996 (when the Constitutional Court of Armenia was established) the results of the parliamentary elections have not been disputed at the Constitutional Court. |
| **III. Objectives of Assignment** |
| This final evaluation of the Project has been designed to measure impact, if already available at this early stage, and to assess achievements and provide recommendations upon the completion of the project. In particular, this external evaluation will focus on evaluating and learning from the project results and lessons throughout the project implementation. The findings and recommendations of the evaluation will inform the future initiatives by UNDP Armenia, the Government of Armenia and the main stakeholders. In this context, the evaluation will assess how the project has contributed towards its expected outcome of ‘reinforcing democratic principles and institutions through the introduction of new voter authentication technology aimed at increasing the inclusivity and transparency of the electoral processes’ and, overall, towards strengthening the capacity in the country to hold free and fair elections.  The results and recommendations will be used by UNDP broadly and by UNDP in Armenia in particular as a basis for developing future elections programmes and interventions at the national and local levels, in view of the continued cooperation with the Government of Armenia and the main stakeholders.  The independent external evaluation will be conducted by an independent company. The evaluation will assess the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the project and will provide recommendations regarding the impact of the project. As stipulated in the project document the main stakeholders and, partners of the project are CEC of Armenia, EU, Governments of Armenia, Germany, Sweden and UK. |
| **IV. Scope of Work, Expected Results/Deliverables/Final Products** |
| In accordance with UNDP evaluation guidelines[[1]](#footnote-1), the evaluation will assess the project’s implementation in terms of its effectiveness, efficiency, appropriateness, relevance, impact and sustainability. The specific objectives are:   1. To assess the achievement of stated project outcomes and outputs, taking into account the strengths and weakness of the project, and unexpected results. 2. To determine the overall efficiency in the utilization of resources in achieving results. 3. To assess the appropriateness of the design of the project and the implementation arrangements, including but not limited to the project modality, organizational structure, and coordination mechanisms set up to support the project. 4. To assess the extent to which the project has contributed to the creation of an enabling environment, and the extent to which this has helped shape effective government policies and programming on disaster management and risk reduction. 5. To assess the sustainability of results and provide recommendations for sustaining the benefits of the project and how to improve sustainability in future initiatives. 6. To assess the approach to capacity development and whether initiatives have contributed to sustainability. 7. To review the effectiveness of the gender mainstreaming strategy and partnership strategy. 8. To gain insights into the level of client satisfaction with the project. The clients include community and local government beneficiaries; national government partners and donors. 9. To identify best practices and lessons learned which can be replicated.   The core criteria to be considered in this evaluation are as follows:   * **Relevance:** the extent to which intended outputs and outcomes of the project are consistent with national and local policies and priorities and the needs of intended beneficiaries. * **Appropriateness:** feasibility of the delivery method. * **Effectiveness:** the extent to which the intended results have been achieved and whether opportunities created by the project were equally accessible for women and men. * **Efficiency:** how economically resources or inputs (e.g., funds, expertise and time) were converted to results. * **Sustainability:** the extent to which benefits of the project continue after external development assistance has withdrawn. This includes evaluating the extent to which relevant social, economic, political, institutional, and other conditions are present and, based on that assessment making projection about the national capacity to maintain, manage and ensure the development results in future. * **Impact:** changes in human development and people’s well being that are brought about by development initiatives, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.   **EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS**  In accordance with UNDP evaluation guidelines, specific questions related to each of criteria can include the following:    **Relevance:** evaluate the pertinence of project objectives and purposes in relation to the project expected results (impact), target groups, direct and indirect beneficiaries.   1. What is the present level of relevance of the project? 2. Are the project overall objectives consistent with, and supportive of Partner Government policies? 3. Does the project still respond to the needs of the key partners? 4. Are the project objectives and results clear and logical, and do they address clearly identified needs? 5. Are there suitable and informative targets, e.g. are they Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART)? 6. Are the activities planned appropriately to achieve output(s) and whether the output(s) lead to the expected project outcome? 7. Is the current design sufficiently supported by all stakeholders? 8. Have key stakeholders been involved in the design process? 9. Are coordination, management and financing arrangements clearly defined and do they support institutional strengthening and local ownership? 10. Are the objectives clearly understood by the project partners? 11. If applicable: How well has the project design been adapted to make it more relevant? Was it straightforward to do contractually? 12. Have the relevant cross-cutting issues (environment, gender, human rights and governance, donor coordination or others) been adequately mainstreamed in the project design? 13. Was the project aligned with government and UNDP priorities? 14. Was the project appropriate to the local context?   **Effectiveness:** evaluate project effectiveness and to what extent has the project produced its desired objectives.   1. How well is the project achieving its planned results? 2. Have the planned results to date been achieved? 3. Are the targets for the project appropriate and are they being reported against? 4. What is the quality of the results/services available? 5. Are there any factors which prevent target groups accessing the results/services? 6. To what extent has the project adapted or is able to adapt to changing external conditions (risks and assumptions) in order to ensure benefits for the target groups? 7. Are the risks and assumptions holding true? Are risk management arrangements in place? 8. To what extent are unplanned positive effects contributing to results produced/ services provided?   **Efficiency:** evaluate to what degree have resources been optimally used during project implementation, and has the project achieved satisfactory level of cost effectiveness.   1. How well are inputs/resources being managed? 2. To what degree are inputs provided/ available on time to implement activities from all parties involved? 3. To what degree are inputs provided/ available at planned cost (or lower than planned), from all parties involved? 4. Are project resources managed in a transparent and accountable manner? 5. Are all contractual procedures clearly understood and do they facilitate the implementation of the project? 6. How well is the implementation of activities managed? 7. Is an activity schedule (or work plan) and resource schedule available and used by the project management and other relevant parties? 8. To what extent are activities implemented as scheduled? If there are delays how can they be rectified? 9. Are funds committed and spent in line with the implementation timescale? If not, why not? 10. How well are activities monitored by the project and are corrective measures taken if required? 11. If appropriate, how flexible is the project in adapting to changing needs? 12. If appropriate how does the project co-ordinate with other similar interventions to encourage synergy and avoid overlaps? 13. How well are outputs achieved? 14. Have all planned outputs been delivered to date? And in a logical sequence? 15. What is the quality of outputs to date? 16. Are the outputs achieved likely to contribute to the intended results? 17. Are they correctly reflected through the targets? 18. Do the inter-institutional structures e.g. steering committees, technical team meeting and monitoring systems, allow efficient project implementation? 19. Have all partners been able to provide their financial and/or other contributions?   **Sustainability:** evaluate the contribution to sustainability of benefit streams (to what extent benefits will continue after the life of the project).   1. Is sustainability an integral part of the design i.e. is there a phase out/hand over strategy? 2. Is the sustainability strategy fully understood by the partners? 3. If the services/results have to be supported institutionally, are funds likely to be made available? If so, by whom? 4. Are the services/results affordable for the key partners at the completion of project? 5. What is the level of ownership of the project by key partners and will it continue after the end of external support? 6. How far the project is embedded in local structures? 7. To what extent are relevant key partners actively involved in decision-making concerning project orientation and implementation? 8. What is the likelihood that key partners will continue to make use of relevant results? 9. Do the key partners have any plans to continue delivering the stream of benefits and if so, are they likely to materialise? 10. What is the level of policy support provided and the degree of interaction between project and policy level? 11. What support has been provided from the relevant national, sectoral and budgetary policies? 12. Do changes in government policies and priorities affect the project and how well is it adapting in terms of long-term needs for support? 13. Are the material, services and equipment support likely to continue after the project has finished? 14. How well is the project contributing to institutional and management capacity? 15. What lessons can be drawn from the coordination efforts and working arrangements between the project team, its counterparts/beneficiaries, and partner organizations?   **Impact:** evaluate the project impact, if available at this early stage.   1. What are the direct impact prospects of the project at overall objective level? 2. What, if any impacts are already apparent? 3. What impacts appear likely? 4. Are the targets realistic and are they likely to be met? 5. Are any external factors likely to jeopardize the project’s direct impact? 6. To what extent does/will the project have any indirect positive and/or negative impacts? (e.g., social, cultural, gender, economic) 7. Have there been/will there be any unplanned positive impacts on the planned key partners or other non-targeted communities arising from the project? How did this affect the impact? 8. Did the project take timely measures for mitigating the unplanned negative impacts? What was the result?   **Recommendations, lessons learned and best practices.**     1. Provide key recommendations related to the project design; project implementation; project management and management of resource; programmatic response. 2. What lessons can be learned from the project implementation in order to improve performance, result and effectiveness in the future.   **EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**  The evaluation will be conducted through a qualitative assessment method. The evaluation phases shall include, but not be limited to:   1. A desk review of relevant reports and data that will mainly address qualitative issues. 2. Submission to and discussion of the proposed methodology with UNDP 3. Field-research and visit to partners and beneficiaries, where more qualitative issues can be addressed. 4. Preparation of the evaluation report, findings and recommendations. 5. Review findings with stakeholders/partners and preparing a follow-up action plan to implement accepted recommendations   **1. Desk Review**  During the desk review, the written material that should be examined may include but may not be limited to:   * The original Project Document and any subsequent costed work-plans. * The main project reports which will include key budgetary information. * Minutes and conclusions of steering committee meetings, technical team meetings, strategic planning meeting. * Progress reports. * Summaries of the participatory processes, if any. * Information on the activities of project implementation team * Any other material that would be relevant.   **2. Submission/discussion of Evaluation Methodology**  Evaluation methodology should be submitted and discussed with UNDP Team for review and approval.  **3. Field Visit**   * Face-to-face discussions with the stakeholders, including members of the project implementation team. The evaluation team should provide, some days in advance of their visit, a note summarizing those issues that they would particularly look to explore further and a proposed schedule. * Discussions with the key partners, target audience, and relevant stakeholders  1. **Presentation of Results, Reporting and Final Submission**   The final output of the evaluation will be a comprehensive report in UNDP format outlining the methodology pursued and main findings of the evaluation, including lessons learned and recommendations. The findings of the evaluation will be presented by the evaluator to UNDP, CEC, Government of Armenia and the main stakeholders for their review and inputs. Inputs will be integrated final evaluation report will be submitted to UNDP on the date agreed.  **TIMEFRAME AND DELIVERABLES**   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | **Number of days worked** | **Task** | |  |  | Submission of proposed methodology to UNDP | |  |  | Finalizing the evaluation design and methods | |  |  | Round of in-country interviews conducted | |  |  | Preparation of evaluation draft report and shared with UNDP for comments | |  |  | Finalization evaluation report based on comments and inputs | |  |  | Presentation of final evaluation Report (optional) | | **Total working days** | 20 |  |   **EXPECTED RESULT**  Submit the expected written outputs above in printed and soft versions; MS Word (.doc) format including power point presentation when necessary. |
| **V. Required Competencies** |
| * Demonstrated experience with project/programme assessments, evaluations; * Proficiency in monitoring and evaluation techniques including in-depth interviews; focus group discussion and participatory information collection techniques; * Strong analytical capacity; * Advanced experience in working with government agencies (central and local), civil society organizations and international organizations. * Understanding of country context, electoral management, and electoral process in Armenia, * Advanced communication capacity * Ability to work efficiently and provide high quality outputs under time pressure; * Advanced IT and Microsoft office operating capacities |
| **VI. Recruitment Qualifications** |
| Evaluation team should be composed of evaluation team lead /coordinator and evaluation experts.   * Coordinator   + Advanced Education in relevant fields e.g., Social Science and Humanity, Public Policy, International Development, Development Economics/Planning, Economic.   + More than 5 years of experience in design, monitoring, management and evaluation of similar projects,   + At least 5 years of experience in working with international organizations and donors;   + Knowledge and understanding of international and country-level implementation of aid effectiveness agenda;   + Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English and Armenian.   + Understanding of cultural, socio-economic and political context in Armenia * Evaluation experts:   + 5 years of experience in monitoring and evaluation of similar projects   + University degree in in relevant fields e.g., Social Science and Humanity, Economics, Audit.   + Experience in working with international organizations and donors;   + Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English and Armenian.   + Proficiency in writing reports, effective communication.   + Understanding of cultural, socio-economic and political context in Armenia. |

**Annex 1: The Report should include but not be limited to the following headings**

Title and opening pages

Table of contents

Introduction

Description of the intervention

Evaluation Scope and objectives

Evaluation approach and methodology

Data analysis

Findings and conclusion

Recommendations

Lessons learned

Report Annex

1. For detailed information refer to the UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results (pages 168-170): <http://www.undp.org/evaluation/handbook>.); [↑](#footnote-ref-1)