

UN-ACT Mid-Term Evaluation August 2016

Draft Terms of Reference

Background

The United Nations Action for Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons (UN-ACT) is a regional, UNDP-managed project on human trafficking in Southeast Asia, supporting a more coordinated response to trafficking in persons and prioritizing capacity building amongst key stakeholders. It builds on its predecessor, the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP), and will run for 5-years, from 2014 until 2018.

A key role of UN-ACT is to support the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking (the COMMIT Process), taking on this role from UNIAP. Established in 2004, COMMIT brings together the six Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) countries, i.e. Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam, in a concerted effort to combat human trafficking in the sub-region.

The project has been established to achieve the following long-term project outcome:

- Key anti-trafficking stakeholders in the region are working in a more cooperative and mutually supportive manner to effectively combat trafficking in persons.

To achieve this outcome, the following four outputs have been agreed:

- Output 1: The COMMIT Process is strengthened to become sustainable and self-reliant

UN-ACT functions as the COMMIT Secretariat supporting implementation of the COMMIT Sub-regional Plan of Action. The project also seeks to ensure that governments take increasing responsibility for the COMMIT Process, with a view to promoting sustainability and self-reliance. Parallel to the process of handing over responsibility to national and (sub-)regional entities, support will be provided to the implementation of regional and national anti-trafficking work plans.

- Output 2: COMMIT countries increase their cooperation with other countries and regional actors to effectively counter human trafficking

The project engages with a broader geographical area in order to strengthen anti-trafficking work in COMMIT countries, in recognition of the human trafficking flows and linkages that exist between COMMIT countries and many other countries in the broader region. There is engagement with regional institutional bodies such as ASEAN to bolster cooperation with other countries and promote cross-learning and stronger linkages.

- Output 3: Policy makers, academia, non-governmental actors and the public have increased access to evidence-based research and knowledge on human trafficking

Capacity building activities is promoted with research institutions from both within and outside the region, to enable key actors including governments to take the lead in effectively monitoring the trafficking situation in their countries; and to develop and use harmonized research tools with common indicators to monitor the effectiveness of anti-trafficking work and ensure high quality.

- Output 4: Civil society and other non-governmental actors are able to contribute more effectively to anti-trafficking efforts

In addition to the support for government-led processes, UN-ACT seeks to engage with non-governmental actors such as civil society, academic institutions, media and the private sector. These activities are aligned with (sub-)regional priorities with a focus on transfer of knowledge and skills through a combination of funding and mentoring. A special civil society small grants fund will be established to build the capacity of civil society. The small grants facility will also serve as a means for UN-ACT to gather information and real evidence to feed into the project's policy support activities.

Scope of Evaluation

After more than two years of implementation, the project seeks to evaluate its progress, learn what has worked and where adjustments should be made, in order to set the course for its further work in the second half of the project's term.

One of the major challenges for the UN-ACT project is the reliance of funding from only two donors; Sweden and Norway. This year Norway was unexpectedly forced to reduce its committed funds substantially, creating a very challenging funding situation for project. UN-ACT's funding situation has been vulnerable from the start, and the project has faced challenges in attracting funding from new donors to secure the project for the future. Funding is critical for the survival of the UN-ACT project. The evaluation is expected to review UN-ACT's funding strategy, and analyze possible reasons behind the difficulties in attracting funds and come up with recommendations on how the funding situation can be addressed.

The Evaluation is expected to use the OECD/DAC framework of: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability¹. If for any reason aspects of this framework cannot be assessed, this will be detailed in the evaluation planning and reporting. The evaluation is expected to cover the results framework of the project, its management and administration, as well as the partnerships and interventions.

The evaluation will consult with a range of stakeholders and work closely with the project to access all relevant materials.

Objectives

As the project is at the halfway point of implementation, the objectives of the UN-ACT Mid-Term Evaluation are to:

- Conduct a mid-term evaluation of the UN-ACT project based on its goal and output areas, its management and organizational set-up within the UN
- Assess the role of UN and the position of UN-ACT within the UN-system to counter-trafficking in persons and the internal UN coordination regarding trafficking in persons
- Assess the position of UN-ACT and the COMMIT process in relation to other regional initiatives to counter trafficking in persons in Asia; e.g; the Bali process and the recently adopted ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons in the region.

¹ <https://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/dcdndep/47069197.pdf>

- Review the funding situation of UN-ACT and analyze the fundraising reality and the strategy used to attract new sources of funding, and present possible reasons behind the challenges in attracting new funds to sustain the project.
- Provide recommendations on how UN-ACT can address the challenging funding situation.
- Provide forward-looking recommendations for UN-ACT in improving its approaches to supporting the counter-trafficking sector, and UN counter-trafficking coordination in the region

Activities

- Review of relevant project materials and develop evaluation strategy to be agreed with project and stakeholders, and data collection plan.
- Arrangement of data collection schedule in collaboration with UN-ACT regional and country offices.
- Conduct data collection through interviews with project staff, stakeholders and partners in three of the six countries, determined in discussion with project and donors.
- Review the funding situation, the fundraising strategy and map out the financial landscape for trafficking in persons in Asia and identify where funding could be available, interview potentially interested donors to find out their interest to support UN-ACT in the future.
- Analysis of data and drafting evaluation report
- Review of draft evaluation report by project and donors, and collating feedback
- Finalisation of evaluation report

Timeframe

The evaluation is expected to take approximately two months. It is proposed that this activity will be completed by October 2016, to allow sufficient time for the consideration of findings by the project and donors before the current funding for the project is scheduled to an end.

Deliverables

- Evaluation strategy, data collection plan and schedule
- Draft Mid-Term Evaluation Report
- Final Mid-Term Evaluation Report with recommendations

Schedule

Activity	Days	Schedule by week							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Review materials and develop/agree evaluation strategy and draft data collection plan	5								
Conduct data collection with interviews with	20								

partners in 3 of the 6 countries									
Data analysis and drafting report	10								
Finalise report	5								

Evaluation Ethics

Evaluations in the UN will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in both Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and by the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. These documents will be attached to the contract. Evaluators are required to read the Norms and Standards and the guidelines and ensure a strict adherence to it, including establishing protocols to safeguard confidentiality of information obtained during the evaluation.