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|  | **UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME** **DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE** |

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| 1. **Consultancy Information**
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| **Project Title:** Youth Empowerment and Employment through Agricultural and Value Chain development Project (YEEP)**Duty Station:** Juba, South Sudan with field travel to the project locations**Duration:** 25 working days (remotely)**Type of Consultancy**: Mid- Term Evaluation for the Youth Empowerment and Employment through Agricultural and Value Chain development Project (YEEP)  |
| 1. **Background and Context**
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| South Sudan is the newest state in the world, having attained independence in 2011. The renewed conflicts of December 2013 and July 2016 have undermined the development gains achieved since independence and worsened the humanitarian situation. The conflict in South Sudan has had a heavy cost on the population, livelihoods and the economy. Large portions of the country have suffered significantly, preventing the use of valuable resources that are critical to national development, and reducing the level and quality of already strained basic services. Large-scale destruction and displacement due to war has additionally eroded the people’s resilience mechanisms, such as engaging in economic activities, thus increasing their dependency on humanitarian assistance. As a result, by 2020, 7.5 million persons or more than half of the total population need emergency assistance[[1]](#footnote-1). South Sudan experiences massive displacement (3.7 million South Sudanese are either internally displaced or refugees), widespread insecurity, climate variability, macro-economic instability, poor access to services, high morbidity, inadequate nutrition, and poor sanitation and hygiene. Compounded by this situation, renewed efforts were embarked on to find new approaches to stop the trend of vulnerability and to build the capacity of people to withstand the impact of shocks and stressors.South Sudan is rich in terms of natural resources, and it has huge potential for sustainable growth through agriculture. About 75 percent of the land area is suitable for agriculture, while approximately 50 percent of the total 64.7 million hectares of land is suitable for cultivation. However, only four percent of this area is currently cultivated, mostly by smallholder subsistence farmers[[2]](#footnote-2). Sustainable agriculture in South Sudan has incredible yet [unrealized potential](https://blog.usaid.gov/2013/08/planting-the-seeds-of-sustainability-in-south-sudan/). Increasing the total land cultivated by only six percent would more than double the country’s value of total agriculture production from US[$808 million](https://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan-republic/agricultural-potential-rural-roads-and-farm-competitiveness-south-sudan) to US$2 billion[[3]](#footnote-3). Agriculture contributes 36 percent of South Sudan's non-oil gross domestic production[[4]](#footnote-4), but this has been hampered by conflict, inadequate research facilities, and poor infrastructure, among other factors. The agricultural sector plays an essential role in addressing both youth unemployment and food insecurity in South Sudan.Currently, more than 80% [[5]](#footnote-5) of South Sudanese live under the absolute poverty line. While relative peace and order has been restored in parts of the country, many of these areas are in various stages of recovery and some are transitioning from requiring humanitarian assistance to recovery interventions to strengthen the coping and adoptive capacities of the local populations. In this regard, among the most effective interventions is the empowerment of local populations by helping them meet their own needs. In many of these cases, recovery is slowly gained by increasing their ability to access socioeconomic services and insure their futures and livelihoods from shocks. Among these interventions are skills development, employment and livelihoods assistance. Furthermore, more than 60% of South Sudan’s population is under 25 years old. This so-called youth bulge may pose a threat to the volatile peace and security situation if they are not engaged and assisted to be economically productive members of the society as soon as possible so that they are able to meet their needs and that of their families and dependants without resorting to criminality.The Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) of September 2018 laid the foundation for ceasefire and negotiations for a transitional political roadmap that led to the formation of Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) in February 2020[[6]](#footnote-6) brought hope and renewed impetus towards stabilizing the fragile situation in the country. Even so, South Sudan continues to face immense political, institutional, social and economic challenges which include the exclusion of women, youth, minorities and other special interest groups in livelihood initiatives that enable nation-building. R-ARCSS provides the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (R-TGONU) with a mandate to implement the agreement with the promise of no return to war; to reintegrate refugees and IDPs; to undertake legal and institutional reforms; and to develop national security architecture. It also offers special consideration to conflict-affected persons (children, orphans, women, people with special needs, etc.), in the public services delivery, including access to education services.On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic. This declaration resulted on a quick and sudden global chain of events that did not spare South Sudan. By 16 March 2020, a presidential statement ordering the mandatory self-quarantine for travelers from countries with escalating confirmed cases, postponement of social gatherings as well as other preventive measures was issued. A national directive closing all schools, training centers, among other actions was decreed on 20 March. With the threat lurking at the South Sudanese borders, the country closed its borders to travelers particularly its international airport and major border crossings with enhanced border controls on 23 March 2020 and began easing from June 2020. A national curfew was imposed and remains in effect in the country. The COVID-19 pandemic represents “a crisis on top of crises” for South Sudan. COVID-19 will negatively impact the multiple transitions that are ongoing in South Sudan; from war to peace to stability, humanitarian to development, and from pre-transition to transition phase in the implementation of the peace agreement. The socio-economic impact of the pandemic is already evident. A palpable concern is shared by citizens with regards to COVID-19, cognizant of the limits of the health system that can be exacerbated by cultural practices on the sick and the deceased. Social distancing measures are not strictly observed despite the effort being made to raise awareness on preventive and mitigation measures. Food prices have escalated as movement restrictions make it more difficult for logistics in this landlocked country to flow and businesses have closed and many people who are daily wage earners have lost jobs and income. Moreover, basic protective materials like face masks which is a major factor in deterring the spread of the virus are in extremely short supply and with prices inflated by several folds.Youth Empowerment and Employment through Private Sector and Value Chain Development Project (YEEP) is a four-year (December 2018-December 2022) project implemented by UNDP and the Ministry of Labour, with the financial support from the Kingdom of the Netherlands and UNDP. The project seeks to empower youth in the five targeted locations of Bor, Jubek, Rumbek, Torit and Yambio through nurturing of their entrepreneurial culture and market-linked skills to enhance their employability and productive engagement in economic activities. The YEEP aims at contributing to the progressive transformation of South Sudan towards durable peace and sustainable development by supporting livelihoods trainings, infrastructure renovations and rehabilitations; re-establishing and improving institutions that can effectively serve the youth of South Sudan. The project implementation is guided by the United Nations Cooperation Framework (UNCF), the partnership for Recovery and Resilience (PfRR), the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) Strategic Plan of 2019-2021, and the UNDP Country Programme Document 2019-2021 (CPD) Outcome 2: 'Inclusive and risk-informed economic development'. The project is implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour; Ministry of Trade, Industry, and East African Community Affairs; Ministry of Youth and Sports; Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security; the Chamber of Commerce and Industry; UN Agencies; and Civil Society Organizations. |
| 1. **Purpose of the evaluation**
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| The Youth Empowerment and Employment through Agricultural and Value Chain development Project (YEEP) has been in implementation since December 2018 and is about to reach its mid- term mark. This evaluation therefore is being conducted to assess the project’s progress against set indicators as well as its contribution to the transformation of South Sudan towards durable peace and sustainable development. UNDP is commissioning the mid-term evaluation to provide UNDP, donors, national stakeholders and partners with an impartial assessment of the results generated by the project. The evaluation will assess, as per the OECD/DAC criteria; the project’s relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability contributions towards gender equality and women empowerment; identify and document lessons learned; and provide stakeholders with recommendations to inform the strategic direction and planning for the completion of the current and future projects. The evaluation serves as an important accountability function, providing national stakeholders (relevant ministries and institutions of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan), and partners (Government of the Royal Kingdom of the Netherlands, AfDB, UNDP and other UN agencies) in South Sudan with an impartial assessment of the results and impacts generated so far through implementation of the project, including gender equality results of this project. The evaluation should be formative in nature, forward looking and utilisation focused, and should elaborate lessons and best practices that will inform project implementation up to the end of the project.  |
| 1. **Evaluation scope and objectives**
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| * 1. **Scope**

The mid-term evaluation will cover the period from December 2018 to date, covering all the project locations; Bor, Juba, Rumbek, Torit and Yambio. The evaluation will cover programme conceptualisation, design, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of results and will engage all project stakeholders. The evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency of the project; explore the key factors that are contributing to the achieving or not achieving of the intended results; and determine the extent to which the project is contributing towards progressive transformation of South Sudan towards durable peace and sustainable development; addressing crosscutting issues of gender equality and women’s empowerment and human rights; and forging partnership at different levels, including with government, donors, UN agencies, and communities. **Objectives**Specific evaluation objectives are:1. To assess the relevance and strategic positioning of the project to South Sudan’s progressive transformation towards durable peace and sustainable development needs mainly with a focus on youth, young women and private sector development;
2. Assess a) the progress made towards project results and whether there were any unintended results and b) what can be captured in terms of lessons learned for ongoing and future UNDP’s progressive transformation of South Sudan emphasising on durable peace and sustainable development enhancement initiatives in South Sudan (focus on youth, young women and private sector development).
3. Assess whether the project management arrangements, approaches and strategies are well-conceived and efficient in delivering the project.
4. Analyse the extent to which the project is enhancing application of a rights-based approach, gender equality and women’s empowerment, social and environmental standards and participation of other socially vulnerable groups such as children and the disabled.
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| 1. **Evaluation Questions**
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| The mid-term evaluation seeks to answer the following questions, focused around the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. **Relevance** 1. To what extent is the project in line with the national development priorities, the country programme’s outputs and outcomes, the UNDP Strategic Plan and the SDGs?
2. To what extent does the project contribute to the theory of change for the relevant country programme outcome?
3. To what extent are lessons learned from other relevant projects considered in the project’s design?
4. To what extent is the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach?

**Effectiveness**1. To what extent is the project contributing to the country programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan and national development priorities?
2. To what extent are the project outputs being achieved?
3. What factors are contributing to achieving or not achieving intended country programme outputs and outcomes?
4. To what extent the project is appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents and changing partner priorities?
5. To what extent the project is contributing to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the realization of human rights?

**Efficiency** 1. To what extent is the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?
2. To what extent is the UNDP project implementation strategy and execution being efficient and cost-effective?
3. To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Are resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) being allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
4. To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP ensure effective and efficient project management?

**Sustainability** 1. Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs?
2. To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?
3. Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project’s contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?
4. To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the project team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the project?
5. To what extent do UNDP interventions have well-designed and well-planned exit strategies?

**Human rights**1. To what extent have poor, indigenous and physically challenged, women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the work of UNDP in the country?

**Gender equality**1. To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?
2. Is the gender marker data assigned to this project representative of reality?
3. To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?

**Covid- 19**1. To what extent has the project and its beneficiaries been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic?

Guiding evaluation questions will be further refined by the evaluation team and agreed with UNDP evaluation stakeholders. |
| 1. **Methodology**
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| The evaluation will be carried out in accordance with UNDP evaluation guidelines and policies, United Nations Group Evaluation Norms and Ethical Standards; OECD/DAC evaluation principles and guidelines and DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. The evaluation should employ a combination of both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods including: 1. Document review of all relevant documentation. This would include a review of inter alia; project document (contribution agreement); theory of change and results framework; programme and project quality assurance reports; annual workplans; consolidated quarterly and annual reports; results-oriented monitoring report; highlights of project board meetings; and technical/financial monitoring reports.
2. Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders including key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, UNCT members and implementing partners:
* Development of evaluation questions around relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability and designed for different stakeholders to be interviewed.
* Key informant and focus group discussions with men and women, beneficiaries and stakeholders.
* All interviews should be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity. The final evaluation report will not assign specific comments to individuals.
1. Surveys and questionnaires including participants in development programmes, UNCT members and/or surveys and questionnaires involving other stakeholders at strategic and programmatic levels.
2. Field visits and on-site validation of key tangible outputs and interventions. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the evaluation managers, implementing partners and direct beneficiaries.
3. Other methods such as outcome mapping, observational visits, group discussions, etc.
4. Data review and analysis of monitoring and other data sources and methods.

The final methodological approach including interview schedules, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation will be clearly outlined in the inception report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the evaluators |
| 1. **Evaluation Products/Deliverables**
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| The evaluators will be expected to deliver the following: 1. Evaluation inception report (10-15 pages). The inception report will be drafted following and based on preliminary discussions with after the desk review and should be produced before the evaluation starts (before any formal evaluation interviews, survey distribution or field visits) and prior to the country visit in the case of international evaluators.
2. Evaluation debriefings. Immediately following an evaluation, UNDP may ask for a preliminary debriefing
3. Draft evaluation report (up to 35 pages including executive summary). The programme unit and key stakeholders will review the draft evaluation report and provide an amalgamated set of comments to the evaluators within an agreed period, addressing the content required (as agreed in the TOR and inception report) and agreed quality criteria.
4. Evaluation report audit trail. Comments and changes by the evaluator in response to the draft report should be retained by the evaluator to show how they have addressed comments.
5. Final evaluation report.
6. Presentations to stakeholders (inception report and draft evaluation report etc)
7. Evaluation brief and other knowledge products or participation in knowledge-sharing events.
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| 1. **Evaluation team composition and required Competencies**
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| The mid-term evaluation will be conducted by an independent consultant (an international evaluation expert) with support from a national evaluation associate. The international consultant must have extensive experience in strategic programming of development assistance in post-conflict countries within the broader areas of sustainable livelihoods, private sector and value chain development and vocational skills training (TVET) in post conflict settings. Preferably, the consultant should also have substantial knowledge of and experience with the monitoring and evaluation of similar initiatives in volatile environments. The required qualifications and technical competencies are listed below:**Qualifications** 1. Minimum Advanced/ Masters’ degree in International Development, Agricultural Economics, Socio-Economic Development or other related fields. (20 points)
2. Qualification in monitoring and evaluation (certificate/ diploma) (10 points)

**Technical competencies** 1. At least 10 years’ professional experience in the fields of vocational and sustainable livelihoods trainings, agricultural value chain and private sector development, institutional capacity building, economic governance, gender mainstreaming and human rights promotion. (20 points)
2. At least 7 years (and recent – latest should have been conducted within the past 2 years) in conducting studies/ evaluations in value chain development, sub-sector analysis, private sector and trade policies, including market dynamics, local economic development, strategic planning, gender analysis, etc.) and (in business and labour marker development, good understanding of private sector and policies including market dynamics, local economic development, strategic planning, gender analysis etc.) (15 points);
3. At least five years in planning, implementing, and monitoring livelihoods, business, and labour programmes (15 points);
4. Excellent writing skills with a strong background in report drafting (to provide sample or similar reports (10 points).
5. Demonstrated ability and willingness to work with people of different cultural, ethnic and religious background, different gender, and diverse political views (10 points).
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| 1. **Evaluation ethics**
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| This evaluation 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 evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluationand not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partners.” |
| 1. **Implementation Arrangements**
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| The UNDP South Sudan Country Office will select a qualified and experienced evaluation consultant through UNDP procurement processes in consultation with the partners. UNDP will be responsible for the management of the consultant and will in this regard designate an evaluation manager and focal point. Project staff will assist in facilitating the process (e.g. providing relevant documentation, arranging visits/interviews with key informants). The project manager and evaluation manager will convene an evaluation reference group comprising of technical experts from partners and UNDP to enhance the quality of the review. This reference group will review the inception report and the draft evaluation report to provide detailed comments related to the quality of methodology, evidence collected, analysis and articulation of findings and approve the final report. The reference group will also advise on the conformity of processes to UNDP and UNEG standards.The consultant will take responsibility, with assistance from the project team, for setting up meetings and conducting the review, subject to advanced approval of the methodology submitted in the inception report. The consultant will report directly to the designated evaluation manager and focal point and work closely with the project team. The consultant will work full time, based in UNDP South Sudan and will be required to travel to the project locations as part of the evaluation. Office space and limited administrative and logistical support will be provided. The consultant will use her/his own laptop and cell phone. UNDP will develop a management response to the evaluation within 2 weeks of report finalization. |
| 1. **Timeframe for the Evaluation Process**
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| The evaluation will be carried out over a period of 25 working days (**remotely for international consultan**t guiding the **national consultant who will be in-country**) broken down as follows:

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| **Activity** | **Deliverable** | **Time allocated** |
| Evaluation design, methodology and detailed work plan | **Inception report**  | **5 days** |
| Initial briefing- virtually |
| Documents review and stakeholder consultations | **Draft report**  | **15 days** |
| Field Visits by national consultant |
| Data analysis, debriefing and presentation of draft evaluation report |
| Validation workshop- virtually |
| Finalization of evaluation report incorporating additions and comments provided by all stakeholders and submission to UNDP South Sudan.* Provide final report
* Evaluation report audit trail
* Powerpoint presentation for stakeholders
 | **Final end-line evaluation report**  | **5 days** |
| Total number of working days |  | **25 days**  |

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| 1. **TOR annexes**
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| The Mid Term evaluation should follow the following guidelines:* + - 1. <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guidance.shtml#handbook>
			2. Ethical guidelines <http://www.unevaluation.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=102>
			3. OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>
			4. Code of conduct. <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>
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| 1. **Application and payment modalities**
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| Interested consultants should provide their technical (80% score) and financial proposals in USD (20% score). Fee payments will be made upon acceptance and approval by UNDP planned deliverables, based on the following payment schedule:

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| Inception report  | 30% |
| Draft Evaluation and Lesson Learned Report  | 40% |
| Final Evaluation and lesson learned Report  | 30% |

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1. UN South Sudan Resident Coordinator’s Office data. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. FAO Country Programming Framework for South Sudan (2016-2017). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Sustainable Agriculture in South Sudan [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. UNOCHA, 2019 Humanitarian Response Plan [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The R-TGoNU was formed on 22 February 2020 after missing two deadlines, June and November 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)