UNOPS

Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE
(Individual Contractor Agreement)

Title: Project Management Support – Specialist
Project: FSP OP6 Kazakhstan
Duty station: Home Based (Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan) with travel to project sites in Kazakhstan
Section/Unit: NYSC SDC GMS
Contract/Level: UCA-10
Supervisor: Kristoffer Kappy

1. General Background

UNOPS supports partners to build a better future by providing services that increase the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of peace building, humanitarian and development projects. Mandated as a central resource of the United Nations, UNOPS provides sustainable project management, procurement and infrastructure services to a wide range of governments, donors and United Nations organizations.

New York Service Cluster (NYSC) supports the United Nations Secretariat, as well as other New York-based United Nations organizations, bilateral and multilateral partners in the delivery of UNOPS mandate in project management, infrastructure management, and procurement management.

Sustainable Development Cluster (SDC) supports diverse partners with their peacebuilding, humanitarian and development operations. It was formed by combining the following portfolios: Grants Management Services (GMS), UN Technology Support Services (UNTSS), Development and Special Initiatives Portfolio (DSIP). It provides services to partners’ programmes that are designed, structured, and managed with a global perspective and primarily serving partners that are headquartered in New York. The SDC has a footprint of approximately 125 countries.

UNOPS has signed an agreement with the UNDO CO of Kazakhstan to implement the project activities for the Small Grants Programme.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) is set for a National Consultant who will work together with an International Consultant in conducting the Terminal Evaluation (TE) (thereafter referred to as the “TE Team”) for the project “Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Kazakhstan”.

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In accordance with GEF-UNDP M&E policies and procedures, all full-sized projects supported by the GEF should undergo a final evaluation upon completion of implementation. The Final Evaluation is intended to assess the relevance, performance and success of the project. It looks at signs of potential impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global and national environmental goals. The Final Evaluation also identifies/documents lessons learned and makes recommendations that project partners and stakeholders might use to improve the design and implementation of other related projects and programs.

The evaluation is to be undertaken in accordance with the GEF Evaluation Policy.

This Final Evaluation is initiated by UNOPS as the GEF Implementing Agency for the “Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Kazakhstan” project according to the GEF standards and UNOPS operational procedures.

This Terms of Reference (ToRs) sets out the expectations for the TE of the full-sized project titled Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Kazakhstan (PIMSH5469) implemented through the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The project started on 17 July 2017 and is in its fourth year of implementation. The TE process must follow the guidance outlined in the document ‘Guidance for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects’.

The objective of the Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Kazakhstan (PIMSH5469) full-sized project is to support community-level organizations in steppe and desert landscapes in developing and implementing adaptive management projects that build social, economic, and ecological resilience based on, and reinforced, by global environmental and local sustainable development benefits. The Project has two main Components: (i) Resilient rural and peri-urban landscapes of steppe and desert ecosystems for sustainable development and global environmental protection; and (ii) Knowledge Generation and Management, Information-sharing and Dissemination of Lessons Learned.

Under Component 1, the project supports measures to improve community-based capacities and resources to promote and build ecosystem resilience through resource management planning at the landscape level and supporting measures to avoid GHG emissions by improving the adoption of energy efficient and renewable energy technologies and sequestering carbon through restoration of natural forests from cost-effective community-based efforts. Under this Component, the project also seeks to build synergies and linkages among various community-level interventions, so as to harmonize them, increase value-added of existing initiatives, promote social cohesion and generate greater impacts and results on the landscape through cumulative interventions. Under Component 2, the outcomes and components primarily address knowledge management. Items under this component seeks to harness that knowledge, apply it to different areas, replicate it and share it with relevant stakeholders.

Under Component 1, the work of the Project focused on supporting NGOs and CBOs locally-implemented projects and ensuring successful implementation of the entire grant portfolio. Of 49 projects for a total amount of $1,527,383 covering seven focus landscapes and three thematic areas: biodiversity conservation (10 projects), climate change (16 projects), and land degradation (19 projects), and also including capacity development, awareness raising & results analysis, policy dialogue and baseline assessment projects (4 projects).
The project portfolio has ensured that 1) new pilot sites have been created in each focus region and existing pilot sites have been strengthened using various approaches and technologies, which make it possible to clearly demonstrate to stakeholders the benefits of green technologies; 2) projects cover various focus groups: small and medium-sized farms, private households, schools, colleges, social facilities (centers for people with disabilities, crisis centers for women, centers for disabled children, etc.), the multi-apartment housing sector, dacha cooperatives, fishing associations, rural cooperatives, hunting islands, protected areas, etc.; which has made possible to demonstrate the efficiency of the implemented technologies at various sites for different focus groups; 3) each thematic project portfolio includes different approaches. For example, the projects on animal husbandry cover distant pasture grazing, sustainable pasture rotation schemes, various approaches in feed production, introduction of digital technologies in the livestock monitoring system, etc. 4) each project implements educational and informational work, which ensures more widely covering the experience and achievements of the project, and raising awareness of the interested stakeholders. In general, this complex strategy has approached a variety of technologies and methods applied for a certain problem in different conditions and facilities.

The grant projects allowed reaching more than 30,000 people through direct participation in the project activities and educational events, information campaigns, actions, etc. A wide range of participants in all regions (81 organizations in total), such as NGOs, LLPs, rural cooperatives, social facilities, schools, colleges, and farms have strengthened their potential and gained practical knowledge in sustainable development, and also how to apply green technologies to improve local communities livelihoods.

Given the importance of the gender aspect, it should be noted that several important indicators of strengthening the role of women have been achieved: 1) out of 59 members of the multistakeholder groups 51% are women; 2) out of 49 grant projects 26 CBOs (or 53%) are led by women.

Quarantine measures implemented in the country starting mid-March 2020 till now have impacted the grant projects’ activities. In particular, agricultural projects, some renewable energy and energy efficiency projects, ecotourism projects, beekeeping, etc. have to re-plan, and even postpone project activities to a later time. This did not make it possible to implement the planned activities and conduct a full analysis of the results achieved in 2020. Thanks to adaptive management plans timely developed for each grant project and regularly monitored by the Project team, most of the projects were able to quickly respond to changing situation and adapt the project activities accordingly to ensure achieving the project tasks and goals.

Within Component 2, 17 grant project results have been analyzed and lessons learned documents have been developed. The analysis includes the projects on EE lighting, waste collection, energy-efficient furnaces, solar installations, solar water heating system, adaptation water and land-saving practices, sustainable livestock grazing schemes, medicine plants gardens, sustainable agroforestry approaches, and others. To strengthen coordination and experience sharing between projects and landscapes, a number of project exchange visits were carried out. To broadly share grant projects’ results were widely covered in social networks (55 posts were prepared and posted on the activities of the SGP and projects on the SGP website and SGP FB and Instagram), articles about projects were published etc.
According to the project document, the project should be completed by August 2020. Based on the GEF Mid-Term Review conducted in 2019 and its recommendations, in order to enable the project to meet its commitments in relation to completion of the community-based grant projects, analyzing achievements to generate knowledge products containing lessons learned and results, replication of successful measures and technologies, a 10-months no-cost extension was requested in February 2020 and approved by the GEF within the project originally approved budget. To mitigate the risks associated with Covid-19 additional four months no-cost extension till October 2021 was initiated and approved by the GEF. This gives the Project enough time to successfully complete all the project activities, to ensure evaluation of the results achieved, generate and disseminate knowledge products and to replicate technologies and approaches in the aftermath of the pandemic. Due to the Project extension for 14 months, the Terminal Evaluation is re-scheduled for July 2021.

The project initially addressed UNDP CPD 2016-2020 Outcome 1.3: Ecosystems and natural resources are protected and sustainably used, and human settlements are resilient to natural and human-induced disasters and climate change. Due to approval of the UNDP CPD 2021-2025 the project contributes to Outcome 4: By 2025, all people in Kazakhstan, in particular most vulnerable, benefit from increased climate resilience, sustainable management of environment and clean energy, and sustainable rural and urban development, and related strategic plan// Outcome 2. Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development// Output 4.1: Solutions developed, and resources mobilized for more sustainable use of ecosystems for the improvement of the well-being of local communities and nature.

The project is implemented by UNDP and executed by UNOPS through the existing mechanism of the GEF Small Grants Program, including the approval of each initiative by the SGP National Steering Committee and proper follow-up and monitoring to be provided under the leadership of the SGP Upgrading Country Program Coordinator. Total project budget is US$ 7,352,126, US$2,649,726 of which is a contribution from GEF.

The incumbent of this position will be a personnel of UNOPS under its full responsibility.

2. Purpose and Scope of Assignment
The objective of the Evaluation is to assess the achievement of project objective, the affecting factors, the broader project impact and the contribution to the general goal/strategy, and the project partnership strategy.
The Project Management Support – Specialist based in Kazakhstan will provide necessary substantive and operational support to International Consultant in carrying out this TE of the Project. Internationally recruited Consultant will work remotely due to Covid-19 travel restrictions. Field visits to the project sites and stakeholder interviews will be conducted with support of the Project Management Support – Specialist.
Project success will be measured based on the Project Logical Framework (see Annex 1), which provides clear performance and impact indicators for project implementation along with their corresponding means of verification. The evaluation will assess the aspects as listed in evaluation report outline attached in Annex 2.

The Project Management Support – Specialist will help to review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e. PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP) the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, lesson learned reports, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the International consultant considers useful for this evidence-based evaluation. The TE Team will review the baseline and midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at the CEO endorsement and midterm stages and the terminal Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the TE field mission begins.

The Project Management Support – Specialist will travel to seven target landscapes of Kazakhstan in order to interview the local stakeholders and beneficiaries and evaluate the grant project results. The remote/virtual meetings will be applied if travel to project site is restricted.

An updated stakeholder list with contact details (phone and email) will be provided by the Project Team to the TE Team before the TE field missions start.

The TE Team is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point or her/his designated staff), Implementing Partners, the UNDP Country Office, the Regional Technical Advisor, National Steering Committee members, project beneficiaries, NGOs, grantees, direct beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

The specific design and methodology for the TE should emerge from consultations between the TE Team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the TE purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The TE Team must use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women’s empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the TE report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits (for Project Management Support – Specialist) and data to be used in the evaluation must be clearly outlined in the TE Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between the Consultant and Project team, RTA and UNOPS.
The final report must describe the full TE approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the evaluation.

The TE Team will assess project performance against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework (see ToR Annex A). The TE Team will assess results according to the criteria outlined in the Guidance for TEs of UNDP-supported GEF-financed Projects.

3. Monitoring and Progress Controls

The TE is a mandatory evaluation of the GEF and must be performed by an external Consultant prior to the conclusion or effective closure of the Project. The TE for SGP Kazakhstan is scheduled to take place in June-July 2021.

The TE report will assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and draw lessons that can improve the sustainability of the benefits of this project and assist in the overall improvement of UNDP programming. The TE report promotes accountability and transparency and assesses the scope of project achievements.

The TE will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures established by UNDP and GEF as reflected in the UNDP Evaluation Guidance for GEF Financed Projects. The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of project results, and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The TE report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful.

The direct responsibilities of the Project Management Support – Specialist are the following:

- Documentation review and data gathering;
- Contributing to the development of the review plan and methodology;
- Conducting those elements of the evaluation determined jointly with the international consultant and UNDP;
- Contributing to presentation of the review findings and recommendations at the wrap-up meeting;
- Contributing to the drafting and finalization of the review report.

The Project Management Support – Specialist will support in the assessment of the following four categories of project progress. See the Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects for extended descriptions.

1. Project Design/Formulation:
Terms of Reference

- National priorities and country driven-ness
- Theory of Change
- Gender equality and women’s empowerment
- Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)
- Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators
- Assumptions and Risks
- Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design
- Planned stakeholder participation
- Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
- Management arrangements

ii. Project Implementation

- Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
- Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements
- Project Finance and Co-finance
- Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), and overall assessment of M&E (*)
- Implementing Agency (UNDP) (*) and Executing Agency (*), overall project oversight/implementation and execution (*)
- Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

iii. Project Results

- Assess the achievement of outcomes against indicators by reporting on the level of progress for each objective and outcome indicator at the time of the TE and noting final achievements
- Relevance (*), Effectiveness (*), Efficiency (*) and overall project outcome (*)
- Sustainability: financial (*), socio-political (*), institutional framework and governance (*), environmental (*), overall likelihood of sustainability (*)
- Country ownership
- Gender equality and women’s empowerment
- Cross-cutting issues (poverty alleviation, improved governance, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster prevention and recovery, human rights, capacity development, South-South cooperation, knowledge management, volunteerism, etc., as relevant)
- GEF Addiitionality
- Catalytic Role / Replication Effect
- Progress to impact

iv. Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned
• The section on conclusions will be written in light of the findings. Conclusions should be comprehensive and balanced statements that are well substantiated by evidence and logically connected to the TE findings. They should highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project, respond to key evaluation questions and provide insights into the identification of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to project beneficiaries, UNDP and the GEF, including issues in relation to gender equality and women’s empowerment.

• Recommendations should provide concrete, practical, feasible and targeted recommendations directed to the intended users of the evaluation about what actions to take and decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation.

• The TE report should also include lessons that can be taken from the evaluation, including best practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success that can provide knowledge gained from the particular circumstance (programmatic and evaluation methods used, partnerships, financial leveraging, etc.) that are applicable to other GEF and UNDP interventions.

• It is important for the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned of the TE report to incorporate gender equality and empowerment of women.

4. Duration of Work
The total duration of the TE will be approximately 35 working days over a time period of 12 weeks starting on 5 July 2021. The tentative TE timeframe is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 June 2021</td>
<td>Application closes</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 July 2021</td>
<td>Selection of Project Management Support - Advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-11 July 2021</td>
<td>Preparation period for Project Management Support - Advisor (handover of documentation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-11 July 2021</td>
<td>Document review and preparation of TE Inception Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 July 2021</td>
<td>Validation of TE Inception Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-29 July 2021</td>
<td>Stakeholder meetings, interviews, etc.</td>
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<td>2 August 2021</td>
<td>Wrap-up meeting &amp; presentation of initial findings;</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-23 August 2021</td>
<td>Preparation of draft TE report</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 August 2021</td>
<td>Circulation of draft TE report for comments</td>
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<tr>
<td>31 August 2021</td>
<td>Incorporation of comments on draft TE report into Audit Trail &amp; finalization of TE report</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 September 2021</td>
<td>Preparation and Issuance of Management Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 September 2021</td>
<td>Expected date of full TE completion</td>
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## TE DELIVERABLES

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Presentation of the TE preliminary findings</td>
<td>Initial Findings</td>
<td>2 August</td>
<td>Project Management Support - Advisor presents to RTA, UNOPS and Project Team.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Draft TE Report</td>
<td>Full draft report (using guidelines on report content in ToR Annex C) with annexes</td>
<td>23 August</td>
<td>Project Management Support - Advisor submits to Commissioning Unit; reviewed by RTA, UNOPS, UNDP CO and Project Team.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Final TE Report* + Audit Trail</td>
<td>Revised final report and TE Audit trail in which the TE details how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final TE report (See template in ToR Annex H)</td>
<td>Within 5 days of receiving comments on draft report (31 August)</td>
<td>Project Management Support - Advisor submits both documents to UNDP CO and RTA</td>
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*All final TE reports will be quality assessed by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). Details of the IEO’s quality assessment of decentralized evaluations can be found in Section 6 of the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines.1

### 6. Duty Station

Home-based.
The Project Management Support – Specialist is expected to undertake up to 7 mission trips to Almaty, Akmola, East Kazakhstan, Karaganda, Kyzylorda and Turkestan oblasts during the Contract period to assess SGP grant projects.
The trips may take place only in case of COVID-19 quarantine measures absence.
All the costs related to the TE field missions will be paid to the Project Management Support – Specialist separately based on UNDP travel procedures.

*Travel:
BSAFE security course must be successfully completed prior to commencement of travel;* 

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Consultants are required to comply with the UN security directives set forth under https://dss.un.org/dssweb/.

8. Qualifications and Experience

The consultant cannot participate in the project preparation, formulation and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document and should not have a conflict of interest with project’s related activities.

a. Education
Advanced university degree (master or equivalent) with five years or relevant experience. A Bachelor's degree in combination with two additional years' experience is acceptable.

b. Work Experience
- Minimum of five (5) years of experience in environmental management, sustainable development or a related field;
- Knowledge of and experience with UNDP and/or GEF projects is highly desirable;
- Experience with the GEF Small Grants Programme is an advantage;
- Experience with results-based monitoring and evaluation methodologies is desirable;
- Experience with issues related to Gender, Biodiversity, Conservation, Climate Change and Land Degradation is desirable.

d. Language
- Fluency in English and Russian, spoken and written is required;
- Fluency in Kazakh is an advantage

e. Key Competencies
Develops and implements sustainable business strategies, thinks long term and externally in order to positively shape the organization. Anticipates and perceives the impact and implications of future decisions and activities on other parts of the organization.

Treats all individuals with respect; responds sensitively to differences and encourages others to do the same. Upholds organizational and ethical norms. Maintains high standards of trustworthiness. Role model for diversity and inclusion.
Acts as a positive role model contributing to the team spirit. Collaborates and supports the development of others. **For people managers only:** Acts as positive leadership role model, motivates, directs and inspires others to succeed, utilising appropriate leadership styles.

Demonstrates understanding of the impact of own role on all partners and always puts the end beneficiary first. Builds and maintains strong external relationships and is a competent partner for others (if relevant to the role).

Efficiently establishes an appropriate course of action for self and/or others to accomplish a goal. Actions lead to total task accomplishment through concern for quality in all areas. Sees opportunities and takes the initiative to act on them. Understands that responsible use of resources maximizes our impact on our beneficiaries.

Open to change and flexible in a fast paced environment. Effectively adapts own approach to suit changing circumstances or requirements. Reflects on experiences and modifies own behaviour. Performance is consistent, even under pressure. Always pursues continuous improvements.

Evaluates data and courses of action to reach logical, pragmatic decisions. Takes an unbiased, rational approach with calculated risks. Applies innovation and creativity to problem-solving.

Expresses ideas or facts in a clear, concise and open manner. Communication indicates a consideration for the feelings and needs of others. Actively listens and proactively shares knowledge. Handles conflict effectively, by overcoming differences of opinion and finding common ground.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Authority (Name/Title):</th>
<th>Contract holder (Name/Title):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Date 09/04/2023</td>
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