

ANNEX 1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is conducting an evaluation of UNDP's work on energy between 2018-2021, which constitutes one of UNDP's six signature solutions and dovetails with Sustainable Development Goal #7. The evaluation will be carried out in 2021 and presented to the UNDP Executive Board in February 2022. This Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation sets out an initial context, scope, planned methods and management arrangements, and will be used to guide the design of the evaluation. A draft version of the ToR was reviewed by internal stakeholders in April 2021 and this final version incorporates feedback received.

THE EVALUATION

OBJECTIVE

The evaluation aims to provide UNDP Management and programme stakeholders with an impartial assessment of performance, and lessons learned from, UNDP's work on energy between 2018-2021.

It will support accountability to UNDP's stakeholders by assessing to what extent the organisation's energy objectives have been met and whether its interventions remain relevant to the global efforts to meet SDG7. The evaluation will support learning by identifying the major lessons relevant to UNDP's current energy portfolio and by providing recommendations to inform the strategic direction of UNDP in its next strategy cycle (2022-25).

FOCUS AND SCOPE

The evaluation will focus on the design and performance of UNDP's work on energy between 2018-2021, and the strategic position of the energy portfolio for 2022-2030.

It will cover all three objectives described in the Signature Solution: 1) Increasing energy access; 2) Transition to renewable energy and energy efficiency; and 3) Restoring access in post-crisis contexts. As there is significant overlap in the portfolio's activities, the evaluation will use these objectives/contexts to form clear lines of inquiry.

Not all of UNDP's energy related work between 2018-2020 is defined in the Signature Solution. The following table captures other services in the portfolio, and the nine listed below will form the core focus areas.

TABLE 1: UNDP’S ENERGY RELATED SERVICES TO BE COVERED IN THE EVALUATION

Objective	Services included:
Access to energy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support for meeting the electrical, thermal and mechanical energy needs for households, businesses and communities 2. Promoting access to clean cooking 3. Support in the energy-health nexus (where the primary objective is to improve the health service, rather than the efficiency of existing supply)
Transition to Renewables and Efficiency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Replacing high GHG emitting forms of energy with renewable sources 5. Replacing inefficient energy technology and practices with lower-consuming versions in cooling, infrastructure, transport, and other sectors
Restoring access in post-crisis contexts.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Support to restore grid technologies 7. Provision of alternative energy solutions for affected populations 8. Incorporation of energy into crisis responses 9. Support to recovery via zero-carbon development

The scope will cover all forms of UNDP’s support directed towards these services, to the extent that relevant data is available. This includes downstream activities - projects that provide a source of energy or efficiency measures – and upstream activities, covering the array of interventions designed to improve the enabling environment for increasing or improving access – such as policy support, de-risking, the provision of technical expertise, capacity building, private sector engagement, and knowledge contributions. The evaluation will also explore to what extent UNDP’s upstream and downstream activities work together towards shared objectives.

In line with the Leave No One Behind principle, the evaluation will explore *who* is, and *who* is not, able to access clean and efficient energy via UNDP’s support, and which groups are less able to convert energy access into development benefits. It will consider differences in the way men, women, boy and girls are engaged by UNDP’s initiatives, as well as the groups that may face challenges because of their geographic location, age, social, economic and political position, disability, or other factors.

As UNDP is not expected, in any context, to achieve universal energy access or transition alone, the evaluation will consider how the organisation uses and contributes to partnerships in pursuit of SDG7. It will also highlight, wherever possible, how UNDP’s support for energy access and transition contributes to other development initiatives, from governments, the UN agencies, civil society, communities’ groups and others.

In seeking to understand the factors that influenced UNDP’s results in this area, the evaluation will consider how UNDP’s internal processes enable or hinder the organisation’s ability to contribute to universal access and transition. It will also capture the contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of UNDP’s contribution. Across both sets of factors, the evaluation will identify generalisable themes that can be addressed in recommendations.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation will assess UNDP's energy portfolio according to standard UNEG and OECD-DAC evaluation criteria. The following overarching questions frame the evaluation:

1. To what extent is UNDP's energy support aligned with global, regional, national energy policies, programmes and investments?
2. To what extent is UNDP's service offering appropriate to the renewed efforts to accomplish SDG7 by 2030, considering COVID recovery and the global GHG emission trajectories outlined by the IPCC?
3. To what extent are the three components of UNDP's energy portfolio aligned towards shared objectives? Are there synergies, trade-offs, conflicts or gaps in the various service offers and activities within the portfolio? What effect do these have?
4. To what extent does UNDP's support for energy connect to other development sectors and initiatives in order to ensure it acts as the golden thread to the SDGs?
5. To what extent has UNDP's energy portfolio succeeded in achieving its stated output and outcome objectives?
 - a. Intermediary outcomes: strengthened capacities, improved policies, increased investments, technology adoption and associated usage
 - b. Outcomes: [As relevant]: Number of people with new access; Total kWh savings; kW produced by renewable sources / renewables as % of national production
6. Which groups are most / least able to access and benefit from UNDP's energy access and transition support, and why? How do these results relate to UNDP's commitments to Leave No One Behind and Endeavour to reach the furthest behind first, and current energy access levels?
7. What internal and external factors have influenced UNDP's ability to increase energy access and support transition?

If data availability allows, the evaluation will answer the following question in specific case studies:

8. To what extent have UNDP's energy results led to higher order change, in the following areas:
 - a. GHG avoidance – evidence that UNDP's support for renewables and efficiency is leading to, or projected, lower emissions than what would have occurred otherwise.
 - b. Selected Human Development and Environmental benefits – evidence that increased energy access is leading to one or more of the following: food and nutrition security, increased income generation, reduced indoor smoke, livelihood diversification, reduced environmental degradation, and improved health, education and information services.

If assessing contribution to higher-order change is not possible because of data constraints, the evaluation will stop at the Outcomes described above in 5b and explore higher order change thematically, with greater attention to who is and is not benefiting from UNDP's support.

9. How well has UNDP's support accounted for factors known to influence the sustainability of energy interventions, such as natural resource variability, local ownership, financing and maintenance supplies? What other factors are likely to influence the sustainability of UNDP's portfolio?

IMPLEMENTATION & METHODS

Portfolio desk review and analysis of available documentation and data:

- UNDP strategic and programmatic documents, including at country level
- UNDP Result-Based Management system, ATLAS and PIMS+ data
- Sample of planning and monitoring reports of projects that are exclusively/partially focused on energy access and transition. Sample to ensure coverage of geographic regions, the three components of Signature Solution, technology forms / energy source, downstream / upstream support

Meta-synthesis of evidence from: Previous corporate evaluations, Independent Country Programme Evaluations (ICPE's), and project evaluations. The evaluation will conduct a review of ICPEs evaluations conducted between 2018 and 2020, as these countries will be a key source of information about the effectiveness of UNDP's energy work in different contexts, and of implementation challenges. Review of Power B.I. for results and constraints.

Stakeholder interviewing, with:

- UNDP Energy and Environment and Focal Points in Headquarters and Regional Bureaux/Hubs.
- UNDP Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development programme officers in Headquarters, regional, and country level, and UNDP Governance colleagues as relevant.
- Representatives of United Nations programmes, funds and agencies as well as other bilateral and international development partners/banks (headquarters, regional and country-level)
- National Ministries - including Ministries of Energy, Finance, Industry, Environment) that UNDP supported through its programmes and projects
- Private sector organizations with whom UNDP has worked
- International and national civil society organisations working on energy access and transition

Deep dives: Evidence will be collected to better understand the focus and results of UNDP's work on access and transition in key countries. The collection of evidence on specific country cases will be done virtually unless, or until, travel is again possible prior to the completion of this evaluation. Virtual data collection is likely to be more feasible for UNDP's support to energy transition because most support is directed to institutional stakeholders. The selection of deep dives shall be done based on relevance to the evaluation questions and availability of data. The evaluation will use national consultants to obtain data and evidence specifically for energy access support, which requires conversations with energy users and those still lacking access.

Expert sectoral review, to capture the current thinking and projections for energy access and transition, considering geographic and financial implications. Evidence will be gathered from available documentation, and through virtual interviews with a wide array of UNDP peers, partners and stakeholders.

EVALUATION THEORY OF CHANGE

The diagram in Annex 4 depicts the main pathways suggested in UNDP’s Signature Solution 5 and its Energy Strategic Note. It will be refined in discussion with UNDP’s programme team during the inception phase. Once validated, the Theory of Change will be used to direct evaluative inquiry toward the portfolio’s results, to analyze and synthesize findings.

The blue lines represent the change pathways. The evaluation will assess whether the steps on the path have been achieved, whether they led to the subsequent change as expected (or to other changes), and whether the assumptions underpinning the change were correct.

Under assumptions, the evaluation will consider internal factors within UNDP’s control (eg. Did staff have the necessary capacity to deliver) and external factors, which are largely outside of UNDP’s control (eg. Did the political context remain stable; Did natural resources supply remain consistent).

A major assumption in the pathway from immediate to longer-term benefits is that other forms of development support are provided. For this, the evaluation will attempt to assess how well the energy portfolio connects to other UNDP support and that of the government and other development partners. The evaluation will not seek to capture all Immediate or Longer-term benefits, but in specific contexts will select those that are most applicable to the funded interventions and data availability, and will attempt to model contribution to national commitments where data allows

The ToC is not based on UNDP’s portfolio of funded projects. A formative activity of the evaluation will be to match the pathways, activities, and target groups with resource spend.

TIMING AND DELIVERABLES

Based on the analysis of evidence collected and triangulated, the IEO Evaluation Team will prepare a **comprehensive evaluation report** covering the issues outlined in this Term of Reference; and an **Executive Board Paper** comprising key findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations.

The evaluation report is planned for presentation at the UNDP Executive Board in February 2022.

TABLE 2: EVALUATION TIMELINE

Activity	Responsible party	Proposed timeframe
Phase 1: Preparatory work		
TOR completed and approved by IEO management	IEO	May 2021
Selection of consultants	IEO	May 2021
Set-up of peer review panel	IEO	May 2021
Phase 2: Desk analysis		
Design of data collection instruments	IEO/Consultants	May 2021
Preliminary desk review of reference material	IEO/Consultants	May 2021
Phase 3: Data collection		
Interviews, focus groups, survey	IEO/Consultants	June 2021

Phase 5: Analysis, report writing, quality review and debrief		
Draft analysis papers	IEO/Consultants	July 2021
Zero draft report for internal IEO peer review	IEO/Consultants	August 2021
First draft for UNDP management comments	IEO/Management	September 2021
Preparation of Executive Board report	IEO/Management	September 2021
Draft report submitted to the Secretariat of the Executive Board	IEO	October 2021
Phase 6: Publication and dissemination		
Editing and formatting	IEO/Secretariat of the Board	November 2021
Informal debriefing to the Board	IEO/Secretariat of the Board	November/December 2021
Final report	IEO/Secretariat of the Board	December 2021
Executive Board formal presentation	IEO	February 2022
Knowledge management and dissemination activities	IEO	March 2022 onwards

EVALUATION MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Team Composition:

The evaluation will be led and managed by a team within the IEO:

- a. The Lead Evaluator will ensure the timely conduct of the evaluation, coordinating the work of all team members and the communication with UNDP Headquarters, regional hubs, and country offices. The Lead Evaluator has responsibility for all phases of the evaluation, from design to drafting the synthesis report.
- b. The Associate Evaluator will support the Lead Evaluator throughout the exercise, including data collection, analysis, and report drafting.
- c. A Research Consultant will support the evaluation team in conducting background research and collecting documentation, as necessary. This person will lead the preparation of UNDP's non-vertical fund energy portfolio
- d. The office will provide administrative and substantive backstopping support, as well as quality assurance at key moments in the process, including report finalization.

The IEO team will also use the services of an external Lead Consultant to guide the evaluation design, and to define and execute specific analysis relating to energy policy, programming, and advise on the quantification of energy results. In addition, the team will be supported by an energy access consultant and energy transition consultant. Local consultant support will be sought for building data on specific 'deep dives' as they are identified during the inception phase. The IEO will recruit all external team members, who must possess educational qualifications, relevant work expertise, and language skills.



An expert advisory panel will provide guidance on the terms of reference, key data collection instruments, and the draft report. The panel will include academic experts and practitioners on issues of energy access and transition to ensure that the development of tools and data collection methods represent best practice and global norms for energy evaluation.

The evaluation team will work through the UNDP Energy and Environment team and focal points to collect data and identify relevant contacts. UNDP Management – including at regional and country level – will have the responsibility of supporting the evaluation, through the timely provision of programme and financial information. UNDP management will review the draft Terms of Reference and draft evaluation report and will provide a management response.

Quality assurance: Quality assurance will be conducted in line with IEO principles and criteria, to ensure a sound and robust evaluation methodology and analysis of the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations. Internal management controls and peer review are included. An external advisory panel of experts will be convened to review and critique draft evaluation reports prior to completion.

DISSEMINATION STRATEGY AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

The IEO will ensure that the findings, recommendations, and lessons learned from the evaluation are disseminated and shared with a wide audience, including energy practitioners in a manner that is informative, engaging, and accessible. The stakeholder mapping will be used to guide the dissemination of the report, in collaboration with the IEO Communication, Data and Knowledge Management Division.

The Evaluation team will organize a virtual workshop at the end of the evaluation process, with relevant UNDP personnel as well as with other potential users of the evaluation results. Other presentations could be organized at regional level to share regional specific findings and conclusions, in collaboration with the UNDP Energy and Environment team.

ANNEX 2. PEOPLE CONSULTED

UNDP

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