

United Nations Development Programme

## Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean

Terms of Reference

MID TERM Evaluation of the Regional Project on Democratic Dialogue

1. **PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION**

Since April 2008, the second phase of the regional project on Democratic Dialogue has been executed and implemented by a project team based in Guatemala under DEX modality with the support of the CO Guatemala. Following criteria to maximize administrative and managerial effectiveness, the CPR LAC team leader has made a decision to move the venue of the project from Guatemala to the Regional Service Centre in Panama. In the same vein, a new Project Manager has been recently recruited in order to raise the project´s visibility as well as its capacity to deliver timely and high quality responses.

Both circumstances present a unique opportunity to conduct a comprehensive midterm evaluation allowing to identify results achieved, lessons learned and main challenges to be addressed, as well as unforeseen circumstances and shortcomings that may have hindered the project implementation. The evaluation results will constitute a valuable input as well as provide analysis material to introduce changes and/or rearrangements to the project in order to guarantee its continuous success and impact.

Since the DGTTF funds allocated to the Democratic Dialogue Regional Project in 2009 have been completely executed, and an end of project evaluation is mandated to be undertaken and completed within three months of the end of project implementation, this evaluation will also serve as final evaluation to said particular funds as a result of which a specific final evaluation report to be submitted to DGTTF management will be produced.

1. **DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT**

Notwithstanding notable progress over the last decades in deepening democracy and sustaining economic growth, Latin America and the Caribbean remains the most unequal region in the world with almost 40% of its population (some 209 million people) living in poverty and more than 15% (81 million people) living in extreme poverty or indigence (ECLAC, 2005). Additionally, although democracy continues to be the preferred political regime, support for democracy has decreased 4% in 2007. As highlighted by UNDP’s Democracy Report (UNDP, 2004) the region’s development and the consolidation of democracy in the region will require strengthening the capacity of institutions and leaders to effectively promote, convene and facilitate dialogue to manage and transform conflicts without violence.

The capacity to promote and articulate dialogue processes and approaches is particularly important given the recent political and social polarization, the introduction of new actors in the political realm, and continued social fragmentation in many countries. Furthermore, part of the disaffection with democracy stems from the difficulty of democratic institutions to effectively tackle those challenges, improve livelihoods, process citizen’s needs and collectively articulate people’s aspirations. The key challenge is not so much to avoid institutional rupture, but to assure democracy’s credibility and legitimacy by enabling it to effectively tackle today’s complex societal challenges.

As the 2007 Democratic Dialogue Handbook demonstrates, dialogue, when used in the right context and with the appropriate methods, allows new realities and innovative solutions to unfold. Democratic dialogues are participatory and inclusive processes that foster understanding among participants and seeks to identify new options and develop shared visions while promoting a culture of participation and democracy. As an approach, dialogue can also promote the development of a culture of democracy by fostering citizen’s participation – especially of those that are most vulnerable – by providing processes that enable the peaceful resolution of conflict, the collaboration across party lines, and the promotion of strategic and constructive visions and agendas for action.

UNDP’s and other institutions’ experience in the region and globally has showed how democratic dialogues participate in the strengthening of democratic institutions and their capacity to deliver by providing spaces where stakeholders can share their vision and understanding of complex problems. By developing a comprehensive understanding of a problem, dialogue processes help foster deep deliberation processes and create sustainable and creative options that reflect the needs of all segments of society.

Since 2001, UNDP/RBLAC together with its Community of Practice has helped systematize and learn from experiences in the region and in the world. As the evaluation of the Regional Program 2003-2007 highlighted, the project effectively supported, through its support network, numerous dialogue processes in over 12 countries. It also structured a community of practice helping it to define the field, develop alliances and systematize experience and learn from them. Nonetheless, institutions and individuals remain ill equipped to effectively transfer and apply this experience and require sustained support to use dialogue to strengthen its democratic institutions and prevent violent conflict.

The first phase of the Regional Project on Democratic Dialogue in Latin America and the Caribbean was initiated in 2001 and finalized in March 2008. It accumulated 7 years of practice by participating in the design, facilitation and evaluation of dialogue processes throughout the region.  It has also systematized and disseminated knowledge on dialogue, thus expanding and defining the field of dialogue in the region, while contributing to its development globally. The publication, in March 2007, of “Democratic Dialogue: a Handbook for Practitioners” together with International IDEA, the OAS and CIDA has brought together this knowledge and allowed the project to identify new areas of support, notably in capacity building.

For the period 2008-2011, the project proposes to work its second phase in three key areas: 1) an articulated capacity development strategy aimed at social and political leaders, facilitators and UNDP/UN personnel to strengthen facilitation skills and raise the capacity of leadership to promote and structure dialogic processes and approaches to face collective problems; 2) a demand-driven support to dialogue processes in the region with a strong emphasis on support to national strategies; and 3) the consolidation of a Community of Practice and Learning which will constantly work on creating and systematizing knowledge on dialogue and acts as a pool of expertise that will guide the support given at the national level. The project will also include a special result to promote consensus building in crucial border areas.  The overall strategy of the project aims at strengthening democratic institutions by making them more responsive to citizen’s needs and demands through the provision of innovative social methodologies and capacities to transform conflict, manage crisis and build consensus.

1. **DESCRIPTION OF THE SUBJECT OF THE EVALUATION**

*The following summarizes the framework of the Democratic Dialogue Regional Project within the Regional Programme Document for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2008-2011:*

*FOCUS AREA: Crisis prevention and recovery*

Key Result Area: Enhancing conflict and disaster reduction and risk management capabilities

OUTCOME 1: 3.1 Capacities of national institutions to manage crisis strengthened

Output: 3.1.1 National and local actors and institutions with capacities to design, convene and facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues consensus building

OUTCOME 2: 3.3 Joint Border area development initiatives are strengthened Outputs: 3.3.1 Strengthened bi-national border area planning processes

3.3.2 Trust and consensus-building initiatives set-up in bi-national settings

Executing Entity: UNDP

Implementing agency: UNDP Guatemala

Funding 2009-2010:

TRAC $ 398,380.82

DGTTF $ 70,000.00

SPTF $ 20,000.00

OTHERS $ 16,122.53

1. **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE**

The project evaluation is to be undertaken in accordance with UN evaluation norms and policies and should embody a strong results-based orientation.

The evaluation should assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, and sustainability of the initiative.

The evaluation should identify outputs produced by the project so far (based on the submitted work plan), elaborating on how the outputs have or have not contributed to progress towards outcomes, and identifying results and transformation changes produced along the way.

The evaluation pursues the following objectives:

1. Identify the main results of the initiative at a country and regional level as well as the visibility of the initiative within the UN system, regional partners and other hemispheric organizations working on dialogic approaches and conflict prevention.
2. Identify lessons learned and best practices from the implementation of the initiative, both at a country level as at a LAC regional level.
3. Identify main challenges and obstacles to the successful implementation of the initiative.
4. Consolidate products and results of the initiative that might enrich capacity building and knowledge management, dissemination and uptake.
5. Provide recommendations for future UNDP engagement in the thematic area concerned, as well as possible replication of DD tools and roster to other regions( e.g. feeding global practice)
6. Provide recommendations on potential partners and other organizations with which to interact and build synergies in the area of Democratic Dialogue.

**Evaluation questions:**

* To what extent were targets achieved?
* What progress toward the outcomes was made?
* What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended outcomes?
* What changes need to be made in order to achieve the outcomes?
* What is the level of recognition and visibility of the project among other UN agencies, regional partners and hemispheric organizations working on dialogue?
* Were the partnerships built along the project implementation appropriate and effective?
* What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?
* In what ways was the initiative innovative and catalytic?
* Identify relevant inputs for UNDP work produced by the initiative (e.g. cross-cutting issues, knowledge building, networks)
* Were the management arrangements appropriate such that they allow for effective and efficient project implementation?

1. **ELEMENTS OF THE APPROACH**

Methodology to be used by the evaluator should include:

* Desk Study: collection and review of documentation pertaining to the Democratic Dialogue project, its main conceptual documents, its periodic reports, financial reports, and materials produced following main project activities.
* Surveys with the main stakeholders.
* Interviews with main partners, former project leadership and potential regional or hemispheric partners (telephone and/or personal)

The Project will provide the evaluator with all documents, substantive and financial reports he/she may need, a list of the main partners/contacts, and the evaluation report template and quality standards.

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, and should describe critical issues the evaluator must address in the design and implementation of the evaluation. This includes evaluation ethics and procedures to safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers.

The Coordinator of the Democratic Dialogue Project will be the main contact for the evaluator as well as the main provider of the initiative´s institutional memory. Upon completion of the final report, the coordinator of the project will submit the document to the new Project Manager who will share its results with the CPR Team Leader in Panama.

Substantive and financial information will be provided by the Administrative-Financial Assistant and the Information Processes Consultant of the Project. The Information Processes Consultant will be in charge of reviewing the Draft Evaluation Report and uploading the Final Report specific to the DGTTF funding 2009-2010 to the DGTTF online site.

The costs of this midterm evaluation should come from both the funds generated by the project through the provision of technical assistance and other services as well as the DGTTF budget assigned to the Project for 2009-2011.

The evaluation above detailed will be carried out from September 15 through October 15, 2010. The evaluator will be hired through a Long Term Agreement.

Based on the recommendations in the final evaluation report, the CPR team will prepare a Management Response including key actions, time frame and responsible units.

1. **EXPECTED PRODUCTS**

The key evaluation products the evaluator will be accountable for producing are:

* Evaluation inception report: this should be prepared before going into the full fledged data collection exercise. It should detail the evaluators’ understanding of what is being evaluated and why, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by way of: methods, sources of data and data collection procedures. This report should include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables. This inception report provides the Project team and the evaluator with an opportunity to verify that they share the same understanding about the evaluation scope and clarify any misunderstanding at the outset.
* Draft evaluation report
* Final evaluation report structured according to the template provided for in the UNDP handbook .
* A separate evaluation report for the specific outputs and targets financed by the DGTTF for 2009-2011. This report can be a partial version of the Final evaluation report.

1. **EVALUATION CONSULTANT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCES**

* Professional degree or 5 years of experience in evaluation processes
* Relevant professional experience in the area of democratic governance and/or conflict transformation
* Knowledge and/or experience with UNDP or any international donor
* Relevant experience in project evaluation
* Excellent analytical skills
* Excellent writing skills in English and Spanish

**Documentation references for the evaluator:**

1. Memoria Encuentro Estratégico (evaluación 2007)
2. Lessons Learned Report – close phase I
3. PRODOC 2008-2011 Democratic Dialogue Award 49728
4. Annual Work Plan 2009
5. Annual Work Plan 2010
6. Informe Diálogo Democrático 2009
7. Síntesis del Proyecto Fase 1 y Fase 2
8. Expression of Interest for DGTTF funding
9. DGTTF Midterm Report Democratic Dialogue 2009
10. Evaluation Report Template and Quality Standards
11. Ethical Code of Conduct for Evaluation in UNDP
12. Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators
13. Handbook on planning monitoring and evaluation for development results

14. Standards for evaluation in the UN system.

15. Norms for evaluation in the UN system.**Appendix for DGTTF Final Evaluation**

The Project has received vital support from the DGTTF since 2005 as shown:

2005: $100,000

2006: $120,000

2007: $100,000

2008: $100,000

2009-2011: $ 70,000

The following table summarizes the components/outputs and targets of the initiative financed by DGTTF for 2009-2011.

|  |
| --- |
| Output 1 Project ID: 60874 CAPACITY BUILDING |
| 1. The capacity building program to support strategic actors in the region is implemented in at least two countries. |
| 2. On demand capacity building activities are designed and implemented in several countries. |
| 3. One learning journey on intercultural dimensions of conflict resolution is designed and implemented. |
| Output 2 Project ID: 61060 TECHNICAL SUPPORT |
| 1. Demands through COs for support to dialogue and conflict resolution initiatives receive a high-quality and timely response. |
| Output 3 Project ID: 61061 COMMUNITY of PRACTICE and LEARNING & COMMUNICATIONS |
| 1. The Note on Dialogue is finished and disseminated to the CPL and other strategic actors in the region. |
| 2. Three issues of the e-bulletin InfoDiálogo are prepared and disseminated in Spanish and English with relevant information about the support provided by the Project, links to the main publications and documents produced by the CPL and other subjects of interest for practitioners and beneficiaries of the Project. |
| 3. The website provides an availability of 99%, increasing the number of visitors by 10% and incorporating new relevant material to the Library. |