**ANNEX 6: TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**GENERAL TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR MDG-F MID-TERM EVALUATIONS**

**Background and Context: The MDG-F XX XXXX XXXX Window**

In December 2006, UNDP and the Government of Spain signed a major agreement of €528 million that will provide, through the UN development system, support to programmes oriented towards key MDG and related development goals. In addition, Spain committed $90 million directed to launch a new window on Children and Nutrition. The Millennium Development Achievement Fund (MDG-F) seeks to accelerate progress towards attainment of the MDGs in participating countries by supporting policies that promise high impact, scaling-up of successful models, and innovative development practices.

The Fund operates through the UN Country Teams and actively strives to strengthen inter-agency coherence and effectiveness with regards to development interventions. The MDG-F uses joint programming as the main form of development intervention in the field. Currently, 128 joint programmes in 50 countries on 8 different thematic windows that contribute to progress on the attainment of the MDGs.

**Description of the Window**

**Description of beneficiaries targeted by the window**

**The following section should be provided by the reference group of the evaluation (Programme Management Committee)**

* The description of the joint programme that is being evaluated by providing its name, its purpose and objectives, its duration and how it was initiated, who it is intended to benefit, what outcomes or outputs it is intended to achieve, its contribution to MDGs at local and national level, the duration of the intervention and its implementation status within that time frame.
* The description of the scale and complexity of the intervention, including, for example, the number of the Programme components, if more than one, and a description of the beneficiaries each component is intended to reach, both directly and indirectly. The geographic context and boundaries, such as the region, country, landscape and challenges must also be indicated where relevant.
* The total of resources required for the intervention, from human resources to budget estimation of funds coming from UNDP, donors and other contributions. Key partners involved in the intervention, including the implementing agencies and partners (UN, National and Local Governments, other key stakeholders) as well as their interest concerns and the relevance for the evaluation.
* The changes observed since the beginning of implementation and their contributing factors. How the programme fits into the partner government’s strategies and priorities; international, regional or country development goals.

**2. EVALUATION PURPOSE**

As one of the Secretariat functions the MDG-F has developed a Monitoring and Evaluation strategy for the Fund: the MGD-F Programme Implementation Guidelines and the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy “Learning to Improve”. Both documents prescribe mid-term evaluations for all joint programmes lasting more than 2 years.

Mid-term evaluations are formative by nature and seek to improve the implementation process of joint programmes in their second phase. The also generate knowledge, identify good practice and lessons learned that can be transferred to other programmes and contribute to higher level of information in the M&E system. Therefore, findings and recommendations from these evaluations are specifically directed to the Programme Management Committee, the National Steering Committee and the MDG-F Secretariat.

**3. EVALUATION SCOPE AND SPECIFIC OBJETIVES**

**The usual rapid mid-term evaluation** will consist on a systematic and swift analysis of the merit of a joint program based on the scope and criteria enclosed in this TOR through a reliable evidence-based yet abbreviated and light process. This will enable to obtain conclusions and recommendations in a period of approximately 3 months.

**The unit of analysis** of this mid-term evaluation **is the joint programme** defined as the group of its various components, outcomes, outputs and activities as reflected in the joint programme document as well as subsequent modification and alterations occurred during its implementation.

This mid-term evaluation has the following specific objectives:

1. To know about the quality of the design and the internal coherence of the joint programme (the needs it seeks to fulfil and the problems that intends to solve), the external coherence to the UNDAF and National development Strategies and up to what extent national ownership is present in the implementation of joint programmes according to the terms defined by the Paris Declaration and Accra Action Agenda.
2. To know about the implementation of the joint programme, the efficiency of the management system with regards to planning, coordination, and use of the designated resources for its implementation. The evaluator should start by analyzing the processes and institutional mechanisms that allow identifying success factors and limitations of inter-agency work within the frame of One UN.
3. To know about the degree of effectiveness of the programme in terms of; beneficiaries, contribution to the thematic window as well as to the Millennium Development Objectives at local level and/or in the country.
4. Preliminary assessment of the sustainability context including the JP outcomes as well as barriers and counter-measures in order to ensure sustainability
5. **EVALUATION QUESTIONS, EVALUATION CRITERIA AND LEVELS OR INFORMATION**

**The main users of the evaluation and specifically the management team and the management programme committee are responsible for contributing to this section. It is possible to add new criteria and evaluation questions within a reasonable extend, taking into account the feasibility and constraints (resources, time, etc) of a rapid and swift evaluation exercise.**

The evaluation questions define the information that the evaluation will generate. These questions are grouped under the different criteria the evaluator will use to respond to them (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, ownership, sustainability, etc). Consequently, these criteria are grouped into the 3 level of the joint programme (design, implementation and results)

**Design:**

* **Relevance**: The extent to how coherent the objectives of the development intervention are with regards to the beneficiaries’ problems, the needs of the country, the global priorities and the other partners and donors.

1. Were problems and their causes (environmental and human) clearly defined?
2. Is the joint programme the best answer to solve the most relevant environmental problems and socioeconomic needs of the targeted population? Does it cover and reach intended beneficiaries?
3. Is the intervention strategy well adapted to the socio-cultural context where it’s being implemented?
4. To what extent has the MDG-F Secretariat contributed to a better formulation of programmes

* **Ownership**: Social stakeholders in the country undertake effective leadership over development interventions

1. To what extent the objectives and intervention strategies of the joint programme are aligned to the National, Regional or local development strategies?
2. To what extent has the opinion and interests of national, local authorities, citizens and other stakeholders been taken into account in designing the development intervention?

**Process**

* **Efficiency:** The extent to what resources/inputs (financial, human, etc) have been transformed in outputs

1. To what extent does the management structure of the joint programme (organizational structure, information flows, decision making, etc) contribute to generate planned outputs and outcomes?
2. To what extent are participating agencies coordinating among them and with the national counterparts (government and civil society).
3. Are there effective and efficient coordination mechanisms in place to avoid overlaps and work overloads of partners and participants?
4. Are different implementation paces in the joint programmes a problem for delivering results?
5. Are different working methodologies, financial instruments, etc shared among United Nations agencies and joint programmes?
6. According to the context: Have the effective and best measures been adopted to solve the social/environmental problem?

* **Ownership:** Social stakeholders in the country undertake effective leadership on development interventions.

1. To what extent the targeted population and participants have taken ownership of the joint programme by playing a leadership role?
2. To what extent national and counterpart resources (public and private) have been mobilized to contribute to the objective of generating results and impacts?

**Results**

* **Effectiveness:** the extent to what planned objectives of the development intervention have been achieved

1. Is the programme progressing towards the attainment of the established outcomes?
   1. To what extent and in what ways is the joint programme contributing to the Millennium Development Objectives at local a national level?
   2. To what extent and in what ways is the joint programme contributing to the objectives established in the Environment and Climate Change Window?
2. Is the programme on track according to the calendars of delivery?
3. Are outputs of the needed quality?
4. Is the joint programme covering the number of beneficiaries planned?
5. What are the elements that contribute to progress or delay in the implementation process and the attainment of results?
6. To what extent has the programme contributed by innovative solutions to solve problems?
7. Have good practices or lessons learn been identified?
8. To what extent have behaviours and/or root causes of the environmental problems been changed?
9. To what extent has the joint programme contributed to provide visibility and prioritized in the public policy of the country?
10. To what extent and what type of effects is the joint programme producing in men, women and other differential categories of beneficiaries? (Rural versus urban population, etc)

**Sustainability**: The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.

Are conditions and premises for sustainability of the joint programme taking place?

**Country**

1. What good practices and lessons learned would be useful for other joint programmes or other countries?
2. To what extent and in what ways are the joint programmes contributing to progress in United Nations reform?
3. How are Aid Effectiveness principles (ownership, alignment, management for development results and mutual responsibility) taken into account in the joint programme?

**5. METHODOLOGY**

The Mid-term evaluations will use the appropriate methodologies to meet specific requirements on the information, the evaluation questions defined in TOR, the availability of resources and the priorities decided in the reference group of the evaluation. In any case, consultants are required to analyze all relevant sources of information such as annual reports, programme documents, internal reports and summaries, programme archives, national development documents and whatever documents that can outline evidence to assess the worth of the different dimension of analysis. It is expected that consultants will also use interviews as a form of relevant data collection for the evaluation.

The methodology of the evaluation will be described in detail in the inception report and the final report of the evaluation. At a minimum, this will include information in the instruments and tools used to collect information and analyze data (documents, interviews, field visits, questionnaires, participatory techniques, etc)

**6. EVALUATION PRODUCTS**

The consultant is responsible to deliver the following products to the MDG-F Secretariat:

**Inception report** (it will be delivered 7 days after the Secretariat hands in to the consultant all documents related to the programme)

The consultants will deliver the inception reports (with a minimum of 5 to maximum of 10 pages) based on desk reviews of documents and archive data. The report will include a calendar of activities and delivery of products. The inception report will propose an initial draft of the Theory of Change of the programmes as a benchmark for comparison during the evaluation and as common start point of agreement between the consultant and the managers of the evaluation.

**Draft of the Final Report** (it will be delivered 10 days after the consultant finalizes the field visit)

The consultant will deliver a draft of the final evaluation report with the same sections as the final report (below). This draft report will include a minimum of 20 to a maximum of 30 pages and an executive summary of 5 pages with the same sections of the final report. This report will be shared with the reference group of the evaluation for questions, suggestions, and further contributions, etc.

**Final Evaluation Report** (it will be delivered 7 days after the consultant receives the draft report with suggestions and comments from the reference group and the MDG-F Secretariat)

The consultant will deliver a draft of the final evaluation report with the same sections as the final report (with a minimum of 20 to a maximum of 30 pages). This report will be shared with the reference group of the evaluation for communication and dissemination and advisory purposes. The report will comprise the following sections:

1. Cover
2. Introduction
   1. Premises, Context, objectives and methodology
   2. Objective of the evaluation
   3. Methodology applied
   4. Limitations and caveats of the evaluation
3. Description of the development intervention
   1. Initial conditions of the intervention
   2. Detailed description of the Theory of Change of the programme
4. Level of analysis: Evaluation Criteria and Evaluation Questions
5. Findings, remarks and lessons learnt (in a prioritized, structured and clear fashion)
6. Recommendations
7. Annexes

**7. CONSULTANT REQUIREMENTS**

The consultant is hired by the MDG-F Secretariat from a selected group of consultants that applied to the MDG-F roster for evaluation consultants. At a minimum they will comply with the following requirements.

**Education:**

* A master degree on international development, public policy, social science, engineering or related field. Further education or a concentration in evaluation would be an asset.

**Experience:**

* At least 7 years of recognize expertise in conducting, project, programme, and thematic or country evaluations.

**Required Skills**

* Conceptual thinking and analytical skills

**Language skills:**

* Proficiency in English (written and spoken) is essential. Spanish and French will be a requirement depending on the countries where the assignments will take place.

**Knowledge on:**

* MDGs, Development Effectiveness (Paris Declaration, Accra Agenda for Action) United Nations and other Multilateral Development Actors as well as bilateral donor processes and interventions.
* Evaluation experiences and knowledge within United Nations system will be considered an asset;
* Evaluation experiences and knowledge on countries where MDG-F operates will be considered an asset   
  providing that the independence of the evaluator is not compromised
* Excellent communication skills
* Computer proficiency;
* One of the MDG-F thematic windows

**Corporate Competencies**

* Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN’s values and ethical standards.
* Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP.
* Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

**8. PRINCIPLES AND ETHICAL PREMISES FOR THE EVALUATION**

The mid-term evaluation will be carried out in accordance to the principles and ethic standars set forth by the United Nations Evaluation Group

**9. EVALUATION ACTORS: ROLES AND RESPONSABILITIES**

The main actors in a mid-term evaluation process are the MDG-F Secretariat as commissioner and evaluation manager, the joint programme management team and the Programme Management Committee that will function as the reference group for the evaluation.

* The reference group of the evaluation will have the following functions:
* Facilitate the participation among the various stakeholders during the design phase of the evaluation
* Identify the information needs, the definition of objectives and the scope of the evaluation.
* Express an opinion on the evaluation planning documents ( working plan, agenda of the field visit, communication plan, etc)
* Contribute by inputs for the drafting of the evaluation TOR
* Grant the evaluation team access to all relevant information and documents from the intervention as well as to key informants to interview; participate in a focus group or any other collection method of data and information.
* Review the quality of the evaluation process as well as the products to enrich, to contribute, as well as to ensure that their information needs on the development intervention are met.
* Disseminate evaluation findings and recommendations especially among the organization with the same interests.

As stated in its mandate The MDG-F Secretariat commissions and manages mid-term evaluation by promoting and financing its execution. As evaluation manager the Secretariat ensures a timely and high quality exercise by leading the design of TOR, coordinating and overseeing progress of the evaluation work plan and assessing the quality of the process and products. The Secretariat is also responsible for communicating and disseminating findings and recommendation to evaluation stakeholders.

**10. CALENDAR FOR THE MID-TERM EVALUATION**

1. **Design Phase (Duration: 10 days)**

The portfolio managers of the Secretariat will send to the Evaluation focal point in the country (manager of the joint programme, coordination officer, etc) a template of a generic TOR for the specific window the joint programme is being financed. The reference group of the evaluation will adapt the TOR to their specific information needs and context of the programme and the country. All MDG-F joint programmes mid-term evaluations will share a set of the same questions in order to aggregate and contribute to show evidence for higher levels of information of the Fund.

The Secretariat and the reference group of the evaluation will start a dialogue to complete the dimensions of study and the evaluation questions that not addressed in the generic TOR, either are insufficient or irrelevant to the specific joint programme.

1. TOR is finished and the Secretariat hires a consultant selected from the MDG-F roster.
2. Each portfolio manager is in charge of managing the evaluation with 2 main functions:

Facilitate the work of the consultant by acting as a main communication channel among the evaluation stakeholders (reference group, stakeholders in the country, etc); review and ensure of the quality of the evaluation products (reports and documents)

1. **Implementation phase (duration 53-55 days)**

**Inception report (Duration: 15 days)**

1. Briefing with the consultant **(1 day).** The Secretariat hand the consultant a check list of activities and documents to review. The evaluation process is explained and all questions sorted out.
2. The consultant reviews the documents as listed in the annex and the check list (financial documents, programme document, monitoring reports, etc)
3. The consultant delivers a brief inception report with preliminary conclusions, on the programme’s theory of change based on the desk reviewed performed. This document will also include a detailed work plan (per activity) to carry out the evaluation. (7 days after the Secretariat hands in to the consultant all document related to the programme)
4. The portfolio manager of the Secretariat prepares an agenda for a field visit jointly with the evaluation focal point in the country (interviews, focus groups, document review, visit UN agencies) **(7 days after the Secretariat receives the inception report)**

**Field Visit (Duration 5-7 days)**

1. The consultant travels to the country to observe and contrast the preliminary conclusions stated in the inception report. The agenda establishes the visit in the country and the Secretariat facilitates the consultant’s visit through e-mails, telephonic calls and coordination arrangements and the evaluation focal point in the country.
2. The consultant will have a debriefing session with the main stakeholders with whom he has interacted.

**Final report (Duration 31 days)**

1. The consultant delivers a draft of the final report to the Secretariat that is shared with the reference group of the evaluation (10 days from the day the field visit finalizes).
2. The reference group of the evaluation could suggest changes in data or facts that do not reflect the reality or are incorrect based on evidence that can be contrasted. The evaluator fully exercises its independence; she/he will be the only responsible for the changes in the text of the report. The Secretariat is also entitled to suggest changes to the report in order to ensure quality and reliability of the evaluation exercise **(7 days from the delivery of the final report)**

The reference group of the evaluation can also express its opinion on the different evaluation judgments but these opinions cannot affect the independent judgement of the evaluator to express his/her evidence-based appreciations, findings and recommendations on the programme.

1. The portfolio managers assess the quality of the evaluation report by applying the criteria established in this TOR (included as annex)
2. Once the reference group of the evaluation finishes its contribution and suggestions to the report. The consultant decides which ones will integrate the report and discard the rest by explaining why. The portfolio manager reviews the final copy of the evaluation report that officially sends it to the evaluation reference group, relevant stakeholders and published online. **(7 days from the day the reference group sends their comments on the report)**
3. **Management response and improvement plan: (7 days after the report is delivered to the reference group)**
4. The portfolio manager of the Secretariat initiates a dialogue with the joint programme management to establish an improvement plan that incorporates the recommendations from the mid-term evaluation.
5. The portfolio manager also agrees to a simple dissemination and communication plan in order to spread findings and recommendations to different stakeholders.

**11. BUDGET**

The consultant will receive 10% of the total allowances plus the travel expenses and DSA based on UN regulations, when the inception report is delivered and approved by the Secretariat. The Secretariat will disburse 40% of the total allowances once the draft evaluation report is delivered and approved by the Secretariat. The remaining amount 50% will be paid at delivery and approval by the Secretariat of the final evaluation report.

**12. ANEXXES**

* Joint Programme document, results framework, M&E framework
* Annual Plan
* Monitoring reports
* Annual reports