

Poverty Outcomes Evaluation

UNDP Kyrgyzstan's

Country Programme Action Plan 2005-2010

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Executive Summary

1. This is a mid term outcome evaluation so it should be as formative as it is summative. It asks if the capacity of the government to formulate and implement pro-poor economic policies has been increased and if increased access by the economically active poor in rural and urban areas to employment and resources has reduced poverty. This reflects a laudable concern with development impact and how to achieve it via capacity building.
2. Clarifying what that impact has been and should be in the future will become much easier if the UNDP office, the UN community in Kyrgyzstan and the government state the specific capacities, which they expect the PRP to help to create. 'Capacity of the government increased to formulate and implement pro-poor economic policies' is an aspiration, not an objective for which anyone can manage without further focus.
3. In this instance there is concern for capacity at national/oblast/rayon/ayil okmotu and village levels. Expectations about these capacities need to be made as explicit as possible, in simple, observable terms¹. The key players in government and civil society may wish to make explicit their expectations in terms that can be observed by wise observers, if not measured. The UN system and other international partners dealing with core government functions should be willing to contribute to this task, drawing on experience elsewhere.
4. An understanding of what capacity means and what successful capacity building entails, including the country specific and dynamic capacities needed by a Central Asian society in transition to succeed in a globalizing world and how to achieve them, may be subjects worthy of further dialogue between Kyrgyzstan and its partners perhaps as part of any joint review of the CDS and the JCSS that supports it.
5. One consequence of the scope for further precision regarding reasonable expectations about capacity is that a number of the observations in this midterm outcome evaluation are more intuitive and impressionistic and less based on rigorous observation and measurement than could be desired². To be fair the most recent expected CPAP outputs; poverty strategies which address MDGs and increased income generating opportunities for the poor, are reasonably clear and operational, have been used for programme management and have been useful to the team in making its assessment of the impact of the programme. But if the programme is to continue to be a model for feedback based policy making, it may wish to establish a simple, non-onerous, extraverted but very efficient information system which keeps track of key variables and disseminates information about them to the benefit both of managers and stakeholders as well as interested observers.
6. The evaluation asks whether poverty has been reduced through increased access for the economically active poor in rural and urban areas to employment and resources. There are good indications the PRP has improved and continues to improve the lives of people in the regions where

¹ Einstein is alleged to have said 'physics should be made as simple as possible but not simpler', the same principle may be said to apply to capacity building.

² "The first step is to measure whatever can be easily measured. This is okay as far as it goes. The second step is to disregard that which can't be measured or give it an arbitrary quantitative value. This is artificial and misleading. The third step is to presume that what can't be measured easily really isn't very important. This is blindness. The fourth step is to say that what can't be easily measured really doesn't exist. This is suicide." Daniel Yankelovich

the programme has been active. These appear to have been more rural than urban.

7. The improvement seems to have been as much by offering a process for them to better their lives by using their own initiative and mobilising their own resources as in any actual increase in income or wealth. There are also some signs that the beneficiaries see that process as at least as important as positive changes in income and, to the extent it is a commonly held view in the communities, that is an indication of programme achievement. None the less further strengthening of the poverty monitoring system so that the programme and the government and UNDP can all know what is happening to the beneficiaries of the programme should be part of the extraverted information system referred to above.

8. Some of those benefits, which individuals and communities receive thanks to the processes set in motion by the PRP, appear to be being diverted away by rent seeking behaviour by other elements in society. This is an aspect of current Kyrgyz life more often commented on than acted on³. It needs to be addressed if the processes are to provide sustainable benefits to rural communities in the long term. Addressing the problem is an aspect of successful capacity building, albeit a difficult one particularly for an external agency. The PRP, via its work in raising the levels of awareness and knowledge in communities, may have been providing a useful palliative for such occurrences. There may be some regional differences on this issue and these differences may need to be reflected in the way the programme manages these issues.

9. The PRP through its work on the shadow economy and the MDGs may be seen to have made a real contribution to the policy making process. This supports a key programme hypothesis namely that the PRP work at the community level is fed back in concrete ways into policy making at the centre. That hypothesis needs to be kept in careful view by those monitoring the programme in future

10. Maintenance of an unimpeded flow of benefits to rural communities may be very good social policy in support of sustainable human development if it makes life in rural areas better than at present and so slows the current rural exodus by keeping the quality of life for all rural residents including the poorest much higher than it would be if they were living in towns.

11. The aspiration of the programme to provide a self help model of endogenous development and to test it at local level so that the lessons of its adoption can be fed into macro policy making by MEDT is a worthy and compelling one. This needs to be carefully watched to see if it remains true over time (see para 6 above). More importantly any pilot scheme that aspires to test an approach, which is expected to be generalised nationally, needs its key features to be monitored to generate enough evidence to convince Kyrgyz society whether it is an approach worth adopting or not. This needs to be done in a way that requires the minimum of data collection and analysis to address the issue.

12. UNDP's support for MEDT and its approach to social & poverty issues offers a useful vantage point from which the UN system can contribute helpfully to national dialogue and policy making. If further co-operation in this area is to be considered, and given other co-operation from which the

³ Concerns have been expressed about the volume of narcotics passing through the country and the economic consequences this traffic has for certain sections of society with significant effects on the degree of trust in, and therefore effectiveness of, existing institutions.

ministry is due to benefit, it may be helpful **to further enhance the national approach to the management simultaneously, and in an integrated fashion, of national and external resources (i.e. co-ordination of aid) and further enhancement of national capacity to evaluate the country's own development. National here refers to both government and civil society.**

13. These two niches of support could be linked to UNDP's ongoing advocacy role and its responsibility to keep an eye on progress towards the MDGs and by extension to offer constructive suggestions if the society is off track to achieve them.

14. It may be worthwhile for the government and its partners, in order to promote capacity building by doing, to create a small fund to finance high quality studies by independent policy centres and think tanks of issues of general concern to Kyrgyz society and to ensure the results of country these studies be disseminated as widely as necessary.

15. UNDP and the UN system may wish to reiterate at all levels that they have multiple roles (including convening, norm setting, advocacy as well as operational) and exploit them to the fullest in their transactions with, and for the benefit of, Kyrgyz society, notably with respect to achieving the MDGs the first of which is concerned with the reduction of poverty.

16. One aspect of this multiplicity of roles is the opportunity it offers to raise significant questions. One vehicle can be the UN system's portfolio of evaluations and the lessons that can be generated from it. Pretty much every member of the UN country team has a set of evaluations which it is obliged to perform. The budget for these evaluations can add up to a significant sum. If each evaluation costs \$20-25,000, and between them the team has to do 5 evaluations of issues that are relevant to all or most members, then the total annual evaluation budget would be \$100,000-125,000. Managing the evaluation process so that these resources are put to optimal effect in assuring accountability, providing guidance to managers and learning and applying lessons would be a worthy goal. Some lessons may be immediately available by reviewing the inventory of recent evaluations and extracting anything. If nothing emerges a rethink of the approach to evaluation may be in order

17. This may be easier to achieve if broader issues are addressed jointly by the relevant members of the country team. This may induce other international partners to join in the exercise and if each contributes to each evaluation, either in money or in kind (by providing one or more consultants to cover the skill sets needed by the evaluation exercise). Widening the scope of, and participation in, each evaluation may actually reduce the cost to the country team while significantly increasing the scope of the issues that can be raised via the portfolio of evaluations while still meeting the accountability needs of each partner.

18. It would also provide a helpful model for Kyrgyz government and society. Joint evaluation is in line with good international practice especially as elaborated in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. It could be applied to forthcoming reviews of the CDS and the JCSS associated with it.

Introduction

This mid term outcome evaluation of that part of the Kyrgyz Poverty Reduction Programme, which is supported by UNDP, was carried out between 3 -20 November 2008. The evaluation team was composed of Mr Kubat Kannimetov, Mr Roger Maconick & Mme Zaure Sydykova. The team wishes to thank the management of the PRP, notably Mme Nuria Chorobeva and the UNDP office, notably Mme Aikan Mukanbetova for the excellent support the mission received throughout in sometimes trying logistical conditions. The translation services provided by Mme Baktygul were invaluable

Methodology

This evaluation of UNDP support to the Poverty reduction programme is a mid term outcome evaluation, for which the Terms of Reference (TOR) are located in Annex 1. Three evaluators, two Kyrgyz one external, worked in a highly cooperative manner in evaluating the programme during the period November 3—November 20, 2008.

Some of the research was done in Bishkek, but the team also travelled for site visits (to the Lake Issykul region and to Osh and Jalalabad) to meet with programme operatives, regional government officials, village animators and beneficiaries. The trips provided vital insights into both the conceptual approach and the working methods of the PRP. The knowledge and expertise of the Kyrgyz evaluators provided a great deal of very useful background on the social, cultural and political context for the task, especially in the domain of national ownership and sustainable capacity building.

The evaluators applied several techniques in carrying out the research, including key informant interviews, focus group discussions, site observation and review of documents. The key informant interview technique was the primary mode used in questioning informants. This includes both government officials, members of civil society and representatives of Kyrgyzstan's international partners including UN agencies. Interviews were guided by a formal checklist of questions derived from the TOR, applied flexibly depending on the relationship of the interviewee to the PRP programme. The evaluators carried out an extensive review of documents, including Government of Kyrgyzstan (GOK) reports, UNDP and other donor reports, and UNDP office files among others.

Consideration was given to elaborating some measures of the capacity created but it was decided that the data and observations were not available and so recourse would have to be made to the judgment of the wise. Necessarily this makes the evaluation's findings and recommendations subjective and supports the view that caution should be exercised by Government and UNDP in interpreting them. It does also imply that both Government and UNDP should try to come up with some clear and observable indicators of what is expected in the way of developing capacity in future.

Scope of the Evaluation

Are the stated outcome, indicator and target appropriate for the development situation in Kyrgyzstan and UNDP's program of assistance in this field?

- 1) This is a poverty programme; poverty reduction is the first MDG goal. So the answer is yes for the poverty outcome. For some remarks re the multiplicity of outcomes and the formulation of targets and indicators see relevant sections later in the body of the report.
- 2) The MDG objectives have been adjusted for Kyrgyzstan and have been integrated in such national strategies as NPRS-1 (2005) and CDS – old version (after 2005)/ now they are integrated into the new version of CDS. At the moment MDGs are being integrated at the regional level, particularly in the course of developing development goals for the development of Talas and Batken oblasts. However the problem is that, unfortunately, not all government bodies know about the MDGs. The major activity carried out by UNDP up to 2005 to inform the Government members has therefore to be carried out again. The reason for that is: after the events of March 2005 significant numbers of both high level officials and mid-level officials have been replaced.⁴
- 3) The Outcomes of the UNDP assistance in general met priorities of the Government up to 2005 within the framework of the NPRS-1.
 - a) *Outcome A.1.1.1 CP* “Enhancing capacity on policy development” - met the national priority of the country on improving the quality of governance.
 - b) *Outcome A.1.1.2 CP* Reducing poverty through improved access of the active rural poor to resources – meets the priority on organizing social mobilization of the rural poor in overcoming poverty.
- 4) After 2005 these priorities have been retained in the CDS: only their definitions have been changed. For example, the words “reducing poverty of the population” was replaced by the words: “improving welfare of the population”. Indicators of the adjusted MDGs for Kyrgyzstan have been included into the system of monitoring and evaluation of both: the NPRS-1 and the versions of the CDS.

What is the current status and prospects for achieving the outcome with the indicated inputs and within the indicated timeframe?

- 5) Many of the activities are very relevant and successful in contributing to one of the desired outcomes; ‘Poverty reduced through increased access of economically active poor in rural and urban areas to employment and resources’.
- 6) In all the rural regions people know about this programme. More than 141 poor vulnerable villages are covered by it. A network of institutional support to its implementation has been established. About 2000 Self-Help Groups (SHG) has been established, which included more

⁴ Informal estimates of which the mission was made aware state that more than 90% of high level officials and 50% of mid-level officials have been replaced.

than 14 thousand persons. Their capacity is expanding from year to year. This can be observed as with every year they are set new and more ambitious tasks for solving common problems of local communities. Most of them have increased confidence in themselves. Some of them have cooperated through forming associations of SHGs for introducing more large scale projects. 27 NGOs have been established, which provide intermediary services independently.

7) However achievement of the first outcome ‘capacity of the government increased to formulate and implement pro-poor economic policies’ is more elusive partly because of the nature of the problem but also because of some lack of clarity about what capacity was to be created and how to about to go it. This is a situation not unique to Kyrgyzstan

What are the main factors (positive and negative) within and beyond UNDP’s interventions that are affecting or that will affect the achievement of the outcome? How have or will these factors limit or facilitate progress towards the outcome?

8) Risk management: Improving definition of objectives, determination of expected results as well as balanced state of indicators.

9) Establishment of an effective monitoring and evaluation system providing adequate tracking of outcomes and the level of influence of UNDP provided assistance within the PRP framework.

10) Establishment and development of joint institutions with the Government on monitoring and coordination of UNDP program’s implementation.

11) Strengthening integration of UNDP assistance at the policy making level and supporting rural population and their focusing on enhancing achievement of significant real outcomes, which are tangible for the population.

Risks and Issues

12) There has been a big fluctuation of personnel in Government agencies, which are being assisted by UNDP so any individual capacities that have been created have in some instances been lost to the department concerned. Fortunately much of the capacity built up over the past 15 years appears to have remained within the country.

13) As part of this it appears there is scope for greater coordination of donor assistance on the part of the Government. It was asserted to the mission that within the frameworks of separate programs decision making processes have not been regulated by the Government. There is also allegedly competition of donors in providing assistance to Kyrgyzstan in certain areas.

14) UNDP was urged by some to pay greater attention to improving the process of managing changes in providing assistance to the country at the system level. Currently it was alleged there isn’t a common understanding of the expected outcomes from programme implementation at different levels among all interested parties.

Perhaps the greatest risk concerns the ability to learn from past phases, in particular how to replicate the approach the PRP has pioneered. The Slater Pinto evaluation report of November 2004 noted

“Whilst the overall micro financing activity of PRP has most definitely contributed to rural poverty alleviation in those areas where the programme has been active, it has not been able to make much progress in promoting rural economic growth. Given the small amount of funding available to the programme as a whole, it has not been possible to achieve the scale of operations required to initiate local economic growth.

The key lessons in this case would appear to be about ensuring a) the right level of coherence across different programme areas in support of clear policy objectives and b) the right level of funding for the right type of activity, and not to get distracted by the temptation to spread resources in an attempt to increase programme coverage, especially when engaged in piloting and modelling innovation⁵”

Granted there have been significant political changes since 2004, which have clearly affected the programme and in some areas ground may have been lost and then had to be made up again. However much of the Slater – Pinto judgement above remains relevant today and raises the issue of the extent to which past evaluation lessons have been considered, analysed and acted on if in the view of relevant managers they are practical and well founded.

Are UNDP’s proposed contributions to the achievement of the outcome appropriate, sufficient, effective and sustainable?

15) Many of the approaches have been successfully introduced at village level, when the work was carried out with certain people interested in improving their living standards. This is proved by records of the meetings with representatives of local communities.

16) At the very beginning of the program’s implementation not all local authorities in the villages had a clear understanding of the programme goals. However to date all of them are providing the assistance within their scope in implementation of local community plans and integrating them into development plans of ayil okmotu and rayons.

17) At present assistance in enlarging the existing business in rural area is needed increasingly and usage of new opportunities (technology, equipment, new types of ancillary services). Besides, most of local communities started to carry out social functions (assistance in procuring manuals and textbooks and school equipment, construction and refurbishment of schools, hospitals, cultural centres, etc.) at the expense of their common savings. Thanks to UNDP there is experience exchange between local communities of different regions through conducting workshops, round tables as well as seeing the results of the activity at places. The given activity is required to be enhanced to stimulate experience exchange of different rural communities.

18) In one case the community animators described how one of their major projects had been to refurbish their school. Since mission members had separately been advised that the process

⁵ External Evaluation of the Poverty Reduction Programme (1998 – 2004) and Recommendations for the 2005-2010 Cycle
by Richard Slater & Ricardo Pinto, GHK International and Stratagem Consulting International, 30th November 2004

of school repair via regular channels was one not infrequently subject to rent seeking behaviour. This action of using profits generated through private market activities to fund community investments in shared facilities has significance that goes beyond simple restoration of a public buildings/community asset to issues of accountability and governance and making rural areas attractive places to live using the local spirit and ingenuity.

19) It prompts the suggestion made later that the UN country team consider as part of the poverty programme an initiative whereby each community that refurbishes its school be provided with at least one computer with access to the internet and an assured power supply via solar energy (thin film photovoltaic roofing material).

Sufficiency of UNDP assistance

20) UNDP assistance will never be sufficient nor should it in general be expected to be. UNDP exercises its influence as much through its convening, norm setting and advocacy roles as it does through operational support to programmes such as the PRP. So the question could perhaps be better posed as does UNDP have the resources, the relationships needed and the means to manage them to help set in motion a sustainable process of autonomous development at village and ayil okmotu levels and to extract policy relevant lessons and help to have them applied and integrated into central policy formulation and implementation.

21) Ever growing demand for the UNDP provided assistance at the rural area level provides evidence that within the framework of the planned collaboration not all the villages of the country have been covered. This means that the programme and the UN country team need to spend a bit more thought on how to go from small to large and the government and the donor community may wish to consider how best to channel increased resources to the rural sector and promoting local initiative and enterprise. This process could perhaps be matched by a process of gradual administrative and fiscal decentralisation.

22) As to the sufficiency of the assistance at the level of supporting policy its volume in many cases depends on the willingness and ability of the Government to enhance its capacity in strategic planning. Besides many other donors (WB, ADB, USAID) provide assistance with the Government in this direction. With this it should be pointed out that with every year the number of independent research institutes is increasing and with it the capacity of the community of national experts' is expanding. To date most of them are practically carrying out functions of the Government in policy formulation area.

UNDP Contribution's Sustainability

23) The way to assess the sustainability of any assistance is to see if it has helped to set in motion processes that are positive over time. The current trend remains positive at the rural level. Local initiatives helped by the PRP are developing dynamically through enhanced community cooperation, expanding the variety of the produced goods and services, gradual enhancement of financial independence and movements along the value chain.

24) With regard to UNDP support to the Government's capacity in policy formulation the picture is less clear. Ideas from the periphery do still appear to be affecting policy including the work on the shadow economy and aligning plans with the MDGs unsustainable for the big fluctuation of personnel in the state service system. However there is scope for far more positive processes to be set in motion at the centre. Some suggestions are made later for the niches UNDP could occupy if it wishes to maintain a distinct constructive role in the dialogue about poverty in Kyrgyzstan

Effectiveness

25) In terms of achievement of the planned objectives generally all the objectives have been addressed. However sometimes it was difficult to judge performance as expectations have not always been clearly defined and formulated in a way that permits performance to be measured at least observed. An examination of the expected outputs, some targets and indicators shows in some documents that they were formulated in one way, whereas elsewhere they were differently formulated.

26) Some targets and indicators were for process management. Others referred to outcomes and achievements. Both are needed. There needs to be an understanding of where they fit into the management, monitoring and evaluation functions. In general the thrust of the new formulations remained the same as for the programme at its outset. There have been changes that were necessary to adjust the program to the new government policy after March 2005. The essential thrust of the poverty programme remains as before but the changes do complicate any judgment about programme effectiveness.

27) Most actions aimed at assisting the rural areas have been important. However it was not easy to assess effectiveness in enhancing the Government's capacity to formulate policy and develop rural initiatives. That is why the effectiveness of the program is in the view of the mission members is significant but less than totally so

Output analysis: What are the key outputs that have been or that will most likely be produced by UNDP to contribute to the outcome?

28) Adjustment of the MDGs for Kyrgyzstan, integration of MDGs into the national development strategies NPRS and CDS via providing assistance to their development, implementation and monitoring. Enhancing UNDP's activity in supporting certain priorities in the country development. Particularly for improving the state's approach to reducing the level of shadow economy and the extra transaction costs that it and the activities it prompts imposes on daily life and the consequent drag on economic growth. Visibility of UNDP activity in creating institutional capacity of animators in villages, mobilizing the local population for the joint and initiative improvement of its welfare.

Are the UNDP outputs relevant to the outcome?

29) To date UNDP is a key player among those donors, who are making significant influence on poverty reduction both at the national and local levels. This not a reflection of the volume of

UNDP resources devoted to poverty reduction but a recognition that through its work in advocating for the MDGs ensuring they are reflected at least in national plans if somewhat less in implementation, UNDP is helping to keep the issue of poverty on the national agenda notwithstanding some initial reticence by the new presidential administration in 2005. To the extent that plans reflect the MDGs and are implemented then that UNDP output is extremely relevant to the poverty outcome. As noted elsewhere the capacity outcome and the outputs associated with it needs further work before one can make much of a judgement. In deciding on relevance and given the progress towards the strengthening of civil society UNDP may wish to encourage consideration of what exactly small self help groups should be capable of.

30) Going forward UNDP and the PRP may wish to expect the MEDT to play a strong role in managing the resources available to the nation whether they are internal or external in origin and to contribute in the most constructive way possible to that process.

What is the quantity, quality and timeliness of outputs? What factors impeded or facilitated the achieving of such outputs?

31) The number, quality, timeliness of UNDP outcomes especially in rural areas can be characterized as positive achievements. Positive feedback from simple people in the program provides evidence that their economic activity has significantly increased their incomes thanks to the UNDP program. In many respects progress towards the poverty outcomes can be improved through improving understanding and assistance on the part of local authorities. And the effect will be much stronger if national coordination of UNDP and other donors providing assistance to Kyrgyzstan in developing villages is strengthened.

32) At the policy formulation level the number, quality, timeliness of UNDP outcomes could be more significant if personnel fluctuation in the government were lower. One way in which the capacity the effect would be stronger is if UNDP assistance was aimed not only at enhancing Government's capacity but also at enhancing capacity of independent experts' institutes, which have been actively performing functions for the government during the past few years.

Are the monitoring and evaluation indicators appropriate to link these outputs to the outcome, or is there a need to improve these indicators?

33) The existing monitoring and evaluation system requires improvement. First of all, if the objective is to assess outcomes it is necessary to have indicators which speak to achievement of outcomes production of output. Such indicators are different from the process indicators needed for management of the programme balance all the existing indices both between each other and the existing goals. It will enable following up an effect of assessment of one indicator to another more clearly as well as the level of the contribution of the various program components to achievement of the goals approved. Also, existing indices require definition since there are new initiatives that need to be assessed in a future.

Has sufficient progress been made with regard to UNDP outputs?

34) No doubt, progress has been made with regards to the UNDP outcomes. This is confirmed by the dynamics of the MDG achievement, adapted for Kyrgyzstan. However capacity building like paradise is a moving target ADD

Output-outcome links

Whether UNDP's outputs or other interventions can be credibly linked to the achievement of the outcome (including the key outputs, projects, and soft assistance)

35) Certainly, such associations can be made, but the key points is less linkage which is not difficult to infer but the degree of causality and whether UNDP's involvement has acted as a catalyst is harder to conclude with certainty. There are some good indications though that UNDP PRP has raised the issue of sustainable development at the community development and put it squarely on the national agenda. That is an important outcome. Looking forward greater internal coordination of the interventions supported by UNDP and the approach to planned outcomes will focus all the UNDP interventions towards better achievement of the outcomes expected. Besides, it is necessary to assure a shared understanding of the outcomes expected both among the UNDP staff and between the UNDP and the Government.

What are the key contributions that UNDP has made/is making to the outcome?

36) -Improvement of the institutional capacity of local communities in implementation of the rural population's initiatives and so increasing their ability to influence their own futures.
- Reduction of the extreme poverty level in the village. Development of national and line ministry policies integrating the MDG goals.
-Promotion of capacity improvement of the expert community in the area of government policy

With the current planned interventions in partnership with other actors and stakeholders, will UNDP be able to achieve the outcome within the set timeframe and inputs – or whether additional resources are required and new or changed interventions are needed?

37) Additional interventions are needed that intensify coordination of stakeholders' actions towards achievement of outcomes. Specifically, it is necessary to propose the new mechanisms on improvement coordination of the donors' assistance. For example, the UNDP may initiate a process of introducing unified accounting among donors on separate trends of activity. According to the survey made among the civil servants, at present, no state body has unified information related to donors' support. This process might be started on data collection, i.e. what donors provide assistance at the village level and in what areas. This made it possible to coordinate the activity carried out in the rural area, increase the volume of assistance, enlarge territory for its arrangement and improve implementation effectiveness

Assess UNDP's ability to develop national capacity in a sustainable manner (through exposure to best practices in other countries, holistic and participatory approach). Has UNDP been able to respond to changing circumstances and requirements in capacity development?

38) Above all, given there are three or more programmes with relevance for poverty there is scope for greater synergy in UNDP support. At present, this interconnection, certainly, exists but could be strengthened. A Program Supervisory Council that could coordinate and monitor/oversee the program implementation process for all three major programmes may be a good idea. It may include representatives of state agencies, donors and civil society. It would enable the Government to take the unified and coordinated decisions during the program implementation.

What is the prospect of the sustainability of UNDP interventions related to the outcome?

39) Sustainability in this context means have UNDP interventions initiated or helped to initiate processes that are both positive and self sustaining. The UNDP interventions in the development of the rural area population initiatives have clearly set some good things in motion. Some could have been improved through the introduction of 'cluster' approaches in promotion of the products and services produced by local communities i.e. extending activities along the value chain. For instance UNDP assistance (designing) in the construction of meat processing plant in Naryn oblast and attracting necessary investments for that allowed not only to breed eco-friendly meat but also provide for its processing, storage and guaranteed sale. However the overall verdict while tentative is positive and promising.

40) This made it possible to provide for the efficient placement of productive forces in appropriate places and to introduce state-of-art technologies and equipment, as well as provide needed quality standards.

41) These measures have been included into the national strategies of Kyrgyzstan. Besides, the UNDP has started to work on providing assistance to the country in arrangement and optimization of the delivery ranges in production promotion. Thus, assistance is possible for further involvement of direct investments in the future.

42) It is necessary to improve assistance in the policy formulation area towards preparation of young specialists, with introduction of the system of incentives for its long-term activity in the public service system. New approaches to building capacity in new independent think tanks should also be explored so that they can respond to the increased demand of the country for sound products in policy area. Such an approach of simultaneous support in the policy formulation area for both the state and independent analytical institutes will reduce the capacity risks associated with the staff turnover and improve competitiveness in the elaboration of sound policy.

Resources, partnerships, and management: Is UNDP's resource mobilization strategy in this field appropriate and likely to be effective in achieving this outcome?

43) UNDP's transition from the project to the program approach in poverty reduction facilitates the mobilization of resources and focusing on the outcomes. The participation of UNDP in the donors' Steering Council will also strengthen this.

Were partners, stake holders and/or beneficiaries of UNDP assistance involved in design of UNDP interventions in the outcomes area? If yes, what were the nature and extent of their participation? If not, why not?

44) UNDP regularly involves representatives of state agencies, civil society in the development of interventions plan through the meetings, workshops, round tables, experts' involvement, and presentations on the results of their activity, distribution of information in Mass Media, PR support, publishing of reports etc. This activity might be improved when strengthening state bodies' coordination and regulating interaction procedures with them. Involvement of the poor in the management of their own lives is the essence of the programme's approach and as the evaluation notes achievement on this is significant but not complete

Are UNDP's management structures and working methods appropriate and likely to be effective in achieving this outcome?

45) It is necessary to direct business processes towards successful performance of the UNDP strategic targets. Also it is necessary to adapt management approaches for the successful performance of all types of business processes making substantive achievement rather than procedural cleanliness the prime directive. There are some indications mainly ad hoc that there is still work to be done on this score. Moreover, it is necessary to improve regulations for strengthening corporate approaches in the process of decision making. All these measures would enable to effectively reduce administrative costs in the management. The development of some low key locally generated administrative performance indicators, which help managers focus on achievement before process, may help programme quality in UNDP.

46) An additional complicating factor here is the multiplicity of roles UN system and the country team play including convening, norm setting, advocacy as well as operational. While this does add to the managerial burden it does offer the opportunity to raise significant questions. One vehicle to do so is to use UNDP's and the UN system's portfolio of evaluations and the lessons that can be generated from them both to explore particular topics of common concern to the team. Pretty much every member of the UN country team has a set of evaluations which it is obliged to perform. The budget for these evaluations can add up to a significant sum. If each evaluation costs around \$20-25,000, and between them the team has to do 5 evaluations of issues that are relevant to all or most members, then the total annual evaluation budget would be \$100,000-125,000. Not all of these exercises necessarily overlap but it would be surprising if many did not.

47) This may be easier to achieve if broader issues are addressed jointly by the relevant members of the country team. This may induce other international partners to join in the exercise and if each contributes to each evaluation, either in money or in kind (by providing one or more of the skill sets needed by the evaluation exercise) then widening the scope of, and participation in, each evaluation may actually reduce the cost to the country team while significantly increasing the scope of the issues that can be raised via the portfolio of evaluations while still meeting the accountability needs of each partner. It would also provide a helpful model for partners in Kyrgyz government and society. This is in line with good

international practice especially as elaborated in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. It could be applied to forthcoming reviews of the CDS and the JCSS associated with it.

Overall, assess the scope, relevance, efficiency and sustainability of UNDP's resources mobilization, partnership and management arrangements in achieving this outcome.

48) The PRP has a community of interest with some other UNDP and UN system supported programmes notably but not only Democratic governance and Environment. Deepening collaboration between these programmes and widening the degree of joint management of such common interests may permit more to be done with available resources.

Some Lessons

49) There is an apparent conflict between UNDP's corporate approach to programme management and a programme level focus on outcomes and this conflict may have had consequences for the poverty programme. The present instruments which UNDP officers use:- the CPAP, AWP and reporting via the ATLAS system encourage a rigorous but bottom up approach to programme management and reporting. So statements about performance and achievement are based on a simple and logical construction moving from presumably well managed inputs, activities, targets, outputs to outcomes⁶.

50) This approach, while not without virtues, has some drawbacks. In the first place it appears to reflect a belief that development is a simple and straightforward process of assembling ingredients putting them together and a development outcome is achieved as if it were a lamb stew. Reality is otherwise as the history of poverty and praxis based programme such as the PRP, which tries out approaches and then modifies them in the light of experience, amply demonstrates.

51) In the second place it assumes that UNDP is a significant player in the areas in which it intervenes and that therefore its presence necessarily significantly improves the probability the desired outcome will be achieved. But UNDP works through the convening, norm setting and

⁶ "The issue of capacity development still retains a good deal of uncertainty and ambiguity across most of the organizations and agencies in the UN system, just as it does in other development agencies. At its most aggregated level, little theoretical or operational understanding has been developed that is comparable to that which exists for subjects such as economic development. We still have only a crude sense of how complex institutional systems develop, behave and evolve --- and how their improved performance can be induced by outside interventions. For those involved at the field level in designing capacity development programmes the term remains too all-encompassing and must be de-constructed into more manageable aspects - community development, institutional strengthening, public sector reform, training, decentralization, improved service delivery and many others - to acquire much relevance. For practitioners and managers, capacity development must then be linked to specific critical functions that people can do something about before it can be made operational." Page 42 in 'An Operational Review of the UN System Impact on Capacity Development in Basic Health and Education in Pakistan 1980-1995' by Shelton Wanasinghe and Peter Morgan in *Capacity- Building Supported by the United Nations: Some Evaluations and Lessons*, United Nations, New York, 1999, accessible at http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/Capacity_Building_supported_by_the_UN.pdf

advocacy roles as well as the operational. The current management system focuses almost exclusively on the operational. It appears also to be uneasy with qualitative concepts such as capacity development.

The significance for UNDP Bishkek and the PRP is that in addition to dutifully meeting the requirements laid down by headquarters by way of planning and reporting they need to generate manageable and observable expectations about the capacities they seek to strengthen or maintain at different levels of Kyrgyzstan's government and society and to reflect them in their CPAP and Annual work plans. In doing so it may be worthwhile to review all the evaluations that have been made of any capacity building/ poverty reduction activity undertaken in the country since 1991 to see what can be learned from them. In addition any analysis undertaken under the NaTCAP programme might prove useful.

Some recommendations

Based on the above analysis, how should UNDP adjust its programming, partnership arrangements, resource mobilization strategies, working methods and/or management structures to ensure that the proposed outcome is fully achieved by the end of the CPAP period?

1. As noted earlier the capacity outcome, as currently formulated, is too vague for any non omniscient being to know if it has been attained or not attained and the poverty outcome while more clearly identified and managed for, is an ongoing task as it is in most countries. So a little more precision would be helpful to those managing and monitoring both processes.
2. As far as capacity is concerned the mission suggests that the PRP managers, national counterparts and UNDP consult together before the first quarter of next year and establish what they expect a typical ministry, oblast, rayon, ayil okmotu, village to be capable of with respect to the PRP, the inclusion of the MDGs in the plans and their implementation, for which each level is responsible. These expected capabilities could then become the targets for the last two years of the programme. They need not be too heavy, the information needed to monitor them should not be too time consuming to collect and the three parties should review them end 2009 to see if their late 2008 hypotheses were good ones or need to be revised for 2010 and succeeding years

The following should also be considered:

3. to promote greater coherence of the donor assistance with national efforts through strengthening of national capacity in the management of national and external resources. i.e. further strengthen national aid co-ordination capacity. This would be helped by elaboration of a unified accounting among donors on the separate activities they support
4. Establish a Steering committee to improve performance of programmes relevant to poverty reduction including as well as the PRP, democratic governance and environment and any others UNDP management and the UN country team deem to have a community of interest and objectives.
5. The above approach above should be matched by an initiative to promote better coherence of national and externally supported programmes in the rural sector at oblast, rayon and ayil okmotu level. This would an important aspect of the capacity building support to the respective levels of government.
6. The national statistical office should be encouraged to publish and diffuse widely regular data on the success of the society and it s international partners in combating poverty
7. Enhance the capacity of the country's capacity to evaluate its own development. This can be both by strengthening existing government departments enlarging their skill sets and reach as well as by building up independent analytical centres in civil society through enlargement of their involvement into the implementation and analysis of the Programme, sharing knowledge with international institutes etc disseminating their findings within Kyrgyzstan and building up a constructively critical climate of opinion.
8. Extend the value chain in which local enterprises are involved both in terms of product lines e.g. sheep- wool/meat/milk-clothing/carpets as well as processing chains e.g. scale and degree of sophistication of technology, financing arrangements and markets. Where a group or an enterprise manages to produce a unique tradable good or service, seek to market it globally.
9. Promote further cooperation of local communities at villages, through intensification of experience sharing with similar associations in other regions of the republic and other countries. Intensify awareness of the local authorities about the expanded capacities of and information available to rural peoples and groups and their ability to undertake task on their own.
- 10.) wide and regular dissemination of information about poverty issues and anti poverty achievements in succinct form to all bodies of Government, civil society and the international community including on progress toward the MDGs

What corrective actions are recommended for the new, ongoing or future UNDP work in the CPAP outcomes?

It would be a good idea to:

- i. do the hard work necessary soon to define reasonable expectations which can be managed for in capacity building whether at local, provincial or national levels

- ii. To improve the statement of strategic purposes, determination of the outcomes expected as well as the indicators both progress indicators for managers and achievement indicators for accountability, learning and management. It is necessary to obtain well-defined awareness among all stakeholders.
- iii. To intensify flexibility in formulation of action plans for implementation of UNDP's collaboration, taking into account changes in the social and economic situation in the country
- iv. To intensify integration of UNDP assistance at the level of policy development and at the level of the support to the rural population in order to intensify its focus on achievement of the goals set up and the outcomes expected.
- v. To develop the kind of indicators which help managers assess the quality of the UNDP management without flooding them with data but starving them for useable analysis.

Provide preliminary recommendations on how the Programme can most effectively continue to support the Government

The following should be considered:

- 1) UNDP's support for MEDT and its approach to social & poverty issues as well as its longstanding role in providing support to core economic management offers a useful vantage point from which the UN system can contribute helpfully to national dialogue and policy making. The evaluation team takes note of the assertion that the political evolution of the last few years has led to a net decrease in the capacity of some ministries and departments. Fortunately much of that capacity appears to have remained within Kyrgyzstan. It does mean that there is scope for continued collaboration with MEDT in maintaining and further expanding its capacity in well chosen fields. If further UNDP co-operation in this area is to be considered, and given other co-operation from which the ministry is due to benefit, it may be helpful to further enhance:-
 - i.) **the national approach to the management simultaneously, and in an integrated fashion, of national and external resources (i.e. co-ordination of aid) and**
 - ii.) **further enhancement of national capacity to evaluate the country's own development. National capacity here refers to that of both government and civil society.**
- 2) To enlarge and extend the range of the existing businesses in the rural area through introduction of new technologies, optimization of delivery ranges of the generated production and arrangement of the cluster approaches to the production organization., and to intensify the assistance provided at the level of rural regions through intensification of targeted support to the potential areas for economic growth, cooperation with the other donors.
- 3) To reduce the outflow of civil servants, who are professional partners of the programme through examination of the system for their active and long-term involvement in public service using incentives that are common across the whole organisations and do not include special payments or other measures which distort the incentive package.
- 4) At the level of UNDP there is a need to adapt the CPAP so it becomes a useful servant of management accountability. Once the clarification of capacity expectations referred to above is completed the CPAP could be revised to include both capacity and poverty outcomes that are

reasonable expectations capable of being assessed. To do that they need to be complemented with outputs which are the results of the activities the programme will carry out in 2009 and 2010. For their work plans managers and monitors need management indicators that refer to both activities and outputs for judging outcomes BUT there is also a need for some achievement indicators for both capacity and poverty dimensions and both sets of indicators need to be consistent with each other.

5) Consideration needs to be given to UNDP's poverty strategy going forward. The policy targets appear to be more capable policy formulation and implementation capacity at the centre and a vibrant set of pilot activities at the periphery testing approaches and feeding back their lessons into both policies and their implementation. The strategy is capacity building support and policy collaboration at the centre and technical guidance, training and financial support at the periphery. It is timely now to foresee how the UN team's collaboration both with the central policy organs and the peripheral implementation systems can evolve over time more towards substantive exchange than operational support. For the centre the evaluation capacity avenue alluded to earlier may be helpful here. At oblast, rayon and ayil okmotu levels there is a need to see now how collaboration can evolve over the next five years stressing the need for groups even of the poorest to build on their own initiatives rather than replacing old dependency attitudes with new ones.

6) It might be worthwhile considering a policy whereby groups and communities work towards greater economic and community success, then as successful socio economic entrepreneurs take on responsibilities for social policy towards the poor in their areas. When they have successfully created economic entities capable of improving their individual and communal needs using the discipline and dynamics of the market system to good collective benefit, it may be appropriate to set up an arrangement whereby a portion of their "profits" are diverted to a common fund managed by the communities themselves but for the initiatives to be designed to promote self help among the poorest and those with the least access to opportunities. Using the most successful groups and individuals is a good example as it is capacity building by doing. Incentives for successful socio economic entrepreneurs, and the groups they belong to, to act in this way would need to be built into the system.

7) There is scope for some intelligent opportunism in the choice of activities in the rural areas. For instance it may be worth considering whether small labour intensive public works could be initiated by the programme e.g. to build small dams to catch winter runoff and increase availability of water for grazing and local irrigation year round. To the extent that this occurs in the relevant watershed it could increase the availability of water to the main reservoir which the mission was advised was dangerously low for this time of year.

8) Elsewhere increased local water availability could be used to provide water for a communal fuelwood plantation for each community. This could reduce demand for non renewable energy in the rural areas and give employment. If it were possible to place such plantations in a continuous ring around areas (for example a hill top) where it is desired to regenerate the original flora, there is a powerful incentive for the community to prevent animals from entering the plantation and thus prevent grazing pressure on the regeneration area within it.

9) Another idea which emerged from informal discussion with one UN agency was to launch an appeal to provide every school with at least one computer. This would be matched with a parallel demarche to donors to provide the necessary thin film photovoltaic roofing material for the school so that it could be assured of a continuous power supply. This concept might work if the power authorities were to agree to use the concept of net metering common in Europe and the USA whereby the power generated by such sources is fed into the national grid and paid for as is the electricity these small suppliers consume when they are not generating power. Not only would the school be able to use the computer to access the internet but also any self help groups and community organisations could use it outside of school hours to gain and share relevant information and raise the level of awareness among the members of rural communities both of economic opportunities as well as of their rights and responsibilities. This shared information could have an effect beyond the immediate administrative and economic concerns of the village concerned. The mission gained the distinct impression that the more informed and aware a group was the less its members are likely to be subjected to rent seeking behaviour.

Annex 1

Terms of Reference for the Evaluation Team to conduct Poverty Outcomes Evaluation within UNDP Kyrgyzstan's Country Programme Action Plan 2005-2010



A. Background

According to the evaluation plan of the UNDP County Office in the Kyrgyz Republic (hereinafter referred to as UNDP), an outcome evaluation is to be conducted in 2008 for the following two Poverty Outcomes within Country Programme Action Plan 2005-2010:

- ✓ Capacity of the government increased to formulate and implement pro-poor economic policies
- ✓ Poverty reduced through increased access of economically active poor in rural and urban areas to employment and resources

These two outcomes make strategic contributions to UNDAF outcome A1 for increased employment and income generation, with a special emphasis on women and the disadvantaged and expand choices of the poor.

The Poverty Reduction Programme strategy was developed to make a sound contribution to achievement of the outcomes in 2010 through defined outputs at national and local level interventions:

- ✓ Output 1: Poverty reduction strategies at national and local levels adequately address MDGs in their formulation, implementation and monitoring and actively promote creation of favourable business environment;
- ✓ Output 2: Income generating opportunities for the poor through integrated package of services

The Poverty Reduction Programme through its Policy advice component committed UNDP's support to the process of implementation and monitoring of Country Development Strategy. The Programme provides long-term technical support to the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT) through top management strategic guidance and assistance in capacity building of key departments in macroeconomic analyses and pro-poor policy development.

As follow up to recommendations of Shadow Economy Report that was commissioned by UNDP Poverty Reduction Programme in 2006, the Government has adopted Program and Action Plan on Legalizing Shadow Economy in the Kyrgyz Republic 2007-2010 and established Task Force led by MEDT. The Programme supports Special Secretariat on Shadow Economy under the Ministry.

Since 2005, UNDP by building upon the established capacities of the rural communities during 1999-2004, the Programme's strategy was to continue support the vulnerable groups of the population to enable their integration into the sustainable income generation and job creation opportunities. Although the Programme has enabled large numbers of the poor to increase incomes however the economic activity in rural areas is as yet at subsistence levels due to the fact that the overall business environment is still very poor, and the supporting infrastructure and service delivery systems can not meet the existing demands.

The essence of the Programme's local interventions is to bridge previous poverty alleviation efforts with strong medium and small enterprises development by creating an integrated, broad approach in dealing with the problem of poverty. This entails moving from protecting the poorest and mobilizing the poor layers of society, to giving them an opportunity to change their status from vulnerable job seekers to job creators. To assist the beneficiaries in this process the Programme made substantial investments to deliver an integrated package of services to support entrepreneurship of the

economically active rural poor, including women and youth to enable them to grow into sustainable businesses.

A1. Country background and context

Since 1996, the Kyrgyz Republic has experienced steady economic growth and improved macroeconomic parameters⁷. During a process of implementation of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS) for 2003-2005 several reforms have been undertaken. It ensured macroeconomic stability and average annual economic growth in the amount of 5%.

During 2000-2006 the country's average gross domestic product (GDP) growth average 4.0% per year. Despite the GDP growth, the reform process has not been easy and progress has been variable. Gross domestic savings in the Kyrgyz Republic remained low while foreign savings had to be gradually curtailed due to the growing indebtedness as a result of low savings. Even the recent growth in remittances⁸, accounting to 16% of GDP, was insufficient to guarantee adequate levels of gross national savings, as they are mostly used for consumption. As a result, domestic investment rates remain at only 20 percent of GDP, and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has been channelled almost exclusively into gold mining.

In 2007 together with high GDP growth rate (8,5% for 9 months), taking into account low growth rates (-0,2%) in 2005 and (2,7%) in 2006, there is rapid inflation rate (10,1% in September 2007 in comparison with December of 2006). Rapid price increase for basic food products affects at the level of living of the population. It is closely connected with world trends in price increase for food and energy resources and to high dependency of the country on import and little effectiveness of the national economy.

According to the data from the National Statistics Committee in 2006 consumption based poverty level decreased from 43.1% in 2005 to 39.9% in 2006, extreme poverty level was at 9.1%. The value of the total poverty line in 2006 is amounted to 10325,3 soms (US\$ 265,4) per year per capita, the extreme poverty line was at 6695,59 soms (US\$ 172,1) per year per capita.

The Kyrgyz Republic's close proximity to three fast growing countries (China, Russia and Kazakhstan) has provided an opportunity for the expansion of exports. Even after a decade and a half transition, production in the Kyrgyz Republic is mostly concentrated in non-manufacturing groups: primary agricultural goods (cotton, tobacco, hides and skins), services, and extractive industries (gold). The Kyrgyz export supply has not adapted well to the increasing demand in these markets for high quality food and manufacturing products. Instead, a steady and growing flow of labour migrants has led to significant remittance flow into the Kyrgyz economy, mainly from Russia and Kazakhstan.

In May 2007, the new Country Development Strategy was approved for 2007-2010. Economic policy will first be aimed at ensuring sustainable economic growth by enhancing competitiveness of the country through intensification of development and growth of labour productivity, as well as higher integration of the Kyrgyz economy in the global economy through higher growth rates and export diversification and maintaining a liberal foreign trade policy

⁷ Social and economic development in the Kyrgyz Republic, National Statistics Committee, 2003

⁸ According to the International Organization for Migration, some 300,000 migrant workers from the Kyrgyz Republic work in the Russian Federation; the number for Kazakhstan is 50,000 (Unofficial estimates are higher, at 400,000 – 700,000 in the Russian Federation, and 70,000 in Kazakhstan)

UNDP together with other UN agencies in the Kyrgyz Republic, ADB, WB, DFID, SECO developed Joint Country Support Strategy (JCSS) for 2007-2010. It is aimed at supporting Government CDS. JCSS contains measures on developing regional cooperation for economic growth.

B. Objectives of the Evaluation

According to the UNDP Evaluation Policy and UNDP Kyrgyzstan Evaluation Plan, 2 outcomes evaluation are to be conducted for the CP outcome A.1.1. and CP outcome A 1.2 as stated in the Country Program Action Plan (CPAP) 2005-2010. The main objective of the mid- term outcomes evaluation are the following:

- Evaluate the progress towards achievement of the poverty reduction outcomes as identified in the Country Programme Action Plan, including achievement of the Poverty Reduction Programme interventions during 2005-2008;
- Review effectiveness of the overall programme interventions, it's main achievements, compliance with expanding country's needs in terms of poverty reduction and overall impact in building national capacity to implement pro poor economic policies and facilitating economic growth and employment generation;
- Review and assess the Programme's partnership with the government bodies, civil society and private sector, international organizations in Programme implementation;
- Review and assess the efficiency of implementation and management arrangements of the Programme;
- Develop recommendations on introducing appropriate changes into CPAP or Poverty Reduction Programme strategy;
- Review sustainability of the achievements undertaken by the Programme;
- Identify gaps/weaknesses in the current Programme design and provide recommendations as to their improvement;
- Identify lessons learnt from previous and ongoing interventions in this area;
- Identifying possible future interventions of the Programme.

B1. Expected outputs

The Evaluation Team is expected to produce an Outcome Evaluation Report that highlights the findings, recommendations and lessons learnt, and give a rating of performance. This report should follow the Outcome Evaluation Report Template and include all sections recommended therein (see attached template).

B1. Scope of the Evaluation

Outcome analysis

- Are the stated outcome, indicator and target appropriate for the development situation in Kyrgyzstan and UNDP's program of assistance in this field?
- What is the current status and prospects for achieving the outcome with the indicated inputs and within the indicated timeframe?
- What are the main factors (positive and negative) within and beyond UNDP's interventions that are affecting or that will affect the achievement of the outcome? How have or will these factors limit or facilitate progress towards the outcome?

- Are UNDP's proposed contributions to the achievement of the outcome appropriate, sufficient, effective and sustainable?

Output analysis

- What are the key outputs that have been or that will most likely be produced by UNDP to contribute to the outcome?
- Are the UNDP outputs relevant to the outcome?
- What is the quantity, quality and timeliness of outputs? What factors impeded or facilitated the achieving of such outputs?
- Are the monitoring and evaluation indicators appropriate to link these outputs to the outcome, or is there a need to improve these indicators?
- Has sufficient progress been made with regard to UNDP outputs?

Output-outcome link

- Whether UNDP's outputs or other interventions can be credibly linked to the achievement of the outcome (including the key outputs, projects, and soft assistance);
- What are the key contributions that UNDP has made/is making to the outcome?
- With the current planned interventions in partnership with other actors and stakeholders, will UNDP be able to achieve the outcome within the set timeframe and inputs – or whether additional resources are required and new or changed interventions are needed?
- Assess UNDP's ability to develop national capacity in a sustainable manner (through exposure to best practices in other countries, holistic and participatory approach). Has UNDP been able to respond to changing circumstances and requirements in capacity development?
- What is the prospect of the sustainability of UNDP interventions related to the outcome?

Resources, partnerships, and management analysis

- Is UNDP's resource mobilization strategy in this field appropriate and likely to be effective in achieving this outcome?
- Were partners, stakeholders and/or beneficiaries of UNDP assistance involved in the design of UNDP interventions in the outcomes area? If yes, what were the nature and extent of their participation? If not, why not?
- Are UNDP's management structures and working methods appropriate and likely to be effective in achieving this outcome?
- Overall, assess the scope, relevance, efficiency and sustainability of UNDP's resources mobilization, partnership and management arrangements in achieving this outcome.

1.1.1.1.1.1.1.1.1

B2 Recommendations

- Based on the above analysis, how should UNDP adjust its programming, partnership arrangements, resource mobilization strategies, working methods and/or management structures to ensure that the proposed outcome is fully achieved by the end of the CPAP period?
- What corrective actions are recommended for the new, ongoing or future UNDP work in the CPAP outcomes?
- Provide preliminary recommendations on how the Programme can most effectively continue to support the Government.

B3 Products expected from the evaluation

The key product expected from this outcome evaluation is a comprehensive analytical report that includes, but is not limited to, the following components:

- Executive summary;

- Introduction;
- Description of the evaluation methodology;
- Analysis of the situation with regard to outcome, outputs, resources, partnerships, management and working methods;
- Key findings;
- Conclusions and recommendations for the future program implementation (with reference to the draft project proposal for the second phase of the programme).

(See UNDP Guidelines for outcome evaluators for more detailed information.)

B4 Audience

- 1.2 The evaluation is intended mainly for UNDP CO Kyrgyzstan, including Senior Management, the Poverty Reduction Programme related staff.

C. Methodology

Overall guidance on outcome evaluation methodologies is provided in the *UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Results* and the *UNDP Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators*.

Based on these guiding documents, and in consultation with UNDP Kyrgyzstan, the evaluators should develop a suitable methodology for this outcome evaluation.

During the outcome evaluation, the evaluators are expected to apply the following approaches for data collection and analysis:

- Desk review of relevant documents
- Discussions with UNDP Kyrgyzstan senior management and programme staff;
- Interviews of partners and stakeholders;
- Consultation meetings and interviews:
 - Interviews with relevant projects' staff;
 - Interviews with partners;
 - In-person interviews and focal groups with local National Programme Directors, local authorities and a sampling of communities and stakeholders;
- Following the country visit, the evaluator will prepare a report based on the above objectives.

E. Evaluation Team

The Evaluation Team will consist of 3 consultants: one independent international consultant (Team Leader) and 2 short term national consultants. Under the overall supervision of UNDP Programme Officer, the Evaluation Team will conduct a participatory outcome evaluation. One additional national expert from the Poverty Reduction Programme will be assigned to assist the Evaluation Team during the evaluation in Bishkek.

- International Consultant (Team leader)
- 2 National consultants
- National expert of UNDP Kyrgyzstan Poverty Reduction Programme

F. Requirements

Qualification requirements for the international consultant/team leader:

- Higher education (a degree) in economics, business administration or any other social sciences related to the pro poor economic growth and poverty reduction;
- Extensive experience in conducting evaluations, strong working knowledge of UNDP, the civil society sector and working with state public authorities in the field of pro poor economic growth and poverty reduction.
- Extensive knowledge of result-based management evaluation, UNDP policies, procedures, as well as participatory monitoring and evaluation methodologies and approaches ;
- Experience in applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
- Minimum 7-10 years professional expertise in international development co-operation, in poverty reduction area, in programme evaluation, impact assessment and strategic recommendations for continued support/development of programming/strategies including strong reporting skills;
- Good professional knowledge of the CA region;
- Extensive experience in working with the donors;
- Demonstrated analytical, communication and report writing skills;
- Excellent interviewing, public speaking at high levels;
- Teamwork capacity to work with the target group representatives;
- Fluency in written and spoken English.

The Evaluation Team Leader will have overall responsibility for the quality and timely submission of the final evaluation report to UNDP. Specifically, the team leader will perform the following tasks:

- Lead and manage the evaluation mission;
- Design the detailed evaluation scope and methodology and approach;
- Ensure efficient division of tasks between the mission members;
- Conduct the outcome evaluation in accordance with the proposed objective and scope of the evaluation;
- Draft and communicate the evaluation report;
- Finalize the evaluation report in English and submit it to UNDP.

Qualification requirements for the National Consultants:

- University degree in economics, business administration, social sciences or any other relevant disciplines;
- At least 3-5 years of professional experience with Government agencies and international organizations in the area of pro poor economic growth in Kyrgyzstan and/or Central Asia
- Deep knowledge and understanding of pro poor economic growth concept in Kyrgyzstan;
- Experience in conducting researches and other analytical works in the area of pro-poor economic growth
- Experience in conducting evaluations is desirable
- Good communication and presentation skills
- Knowledge of Russian, knowledge of Kyrgyz and English is an advantage

S/he will perform the following tasks:

- Review documents;
- Participate in the design of the evaluation methodology;
- Conduct the outcome evaluation in accordance with the proposed objective and scope of the evaluation;
- Draft related parts of the evaluation report ;
- Assist the Team Leader in finalizing the draft evaluation report through incorporating suggestions received.

2 G. Timeline and schedule (tentative)

The mission will commence in October 2008. The duration of the assignment is up to 20 working days, including writing of the report.

Activity	Timeframe	Place	Responsible Party
Desk review, Evaluation design, methodology and detailed work plan, and access to relevant reports	Two days	On-line	UNDP and International consultant
Initial briefing	One day	Upon arrival to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan	UNDP, International consultant, National consultants
Consultations, meetings as well as for phone/in-person interviews related to the outcome evaluation including relevant partners	Twelve days	Bishkek	UNDP, International consultant, National consultants
Preparation of draft evaluation report	Two days	Bishkek	International consultant, National consultants
Debriefing with UNDP	One day	Bishkek	International consultant, National consultants
Finalization of evaluation report incorporating additions and comments provided by projects staff and UNDP CO	One day	Bishkek	International consultant, National consultants
Submission of the final evaluation report to UNDP Kyrgyzstan	One day	Bishkek	International consultant, National consultants

H. Document for study by the evaluators

UNDP Corporate Policy Documents:

1. Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for results
2. UNDP Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators
3. UNDP Result-Based Management: Technical Note

UN/UNDP Kyrgyzstan Country Office Documents:

1. Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Kyrgyzstan 2005-2010;
2. Country Program Document for Kyrgyzstan 2005 – 2010
3. Country Program Action Plan for Kyrgyzstan for 2005 – 2010
4. Country Development Strategy 2007-2010
5. Joint Country Support Strategy
6. Millennium Development Goals Report
7. Shadow economy report
8. Urban poverty report
9. Annual Work Plans and Progress Reports
10. External Evaluation of the Poverty Reduction Programme (1998–2004) and Recommendations for the 2005-2010 Cycle
11. Other documents and materials related to the outcome to be evaluated (from the government, donors, etc.)

Useful links:

- www.undp.kg

TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates should send their P11 with the letter of interest and reference letters to jyldyz.choroeva@undp.org by **August 1, 2008 18.00** Bishkek time.

Attachment to the Terms of Reference

Outcome Evaluation Report Template⁹

This is an outline for an outcome evaluation report. It does not follow a prescribed format but simply presents one way to organize the information. Project evaluations should employ a similar structure and emphasize results, although they may differ somewhat in terms of scope and substance.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- What is the context and purpose of the outcome evaluation?
- What are the main findings and conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned?

INTRODUCTION

- Why was this outcome selected for evaluation? (refer back to the rationale for including this outcome in the evaluation plan at the beginning of the Country Programme)
- What is the purpose of the outcome evaluation? Is there any special reason why the evaluation is being done at this point in time? (is this an early, mid-term or late evaluation in the Country Programme)
- What products are expected from the evaluation? (should be stated in TOR)
- What are the key issues addressed by the evaluation? (should be stated in the TOR)
- What was the methodology used for the evaluation? (should be stated in the TOR)
- What is the structure of the evaluation report? (how the content will be organized in the report)

THE DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

- When and why did UNDP begin working towards this outcome and for how long has it been doing so? What are the problems that the outcome is expected to address?
- Who are the key partners for the outcome? The main stakeholders? The expected beneficiaries?

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings and conclusions of the evaluation report should reflect the scope presented in the TOR. There should be some flexibility for the evaluation team to include new issues that arise during the course of the evaluation. The findings and conclusions in the report will take their lead from the nature of the exercise. If the purpose of the outcome evaluation was to learn about the partnership strategy, the findings and recommendations may address issues of partnership more than the other elements listed below. If the purpose was for mid-course adjustments to outputs produced by UNDP, the report findings and conclusions might give some more emphasis to issues related to UNDP's contribution to the outcome via outputs. The section on findings and conclusions should include the **ratings** assigned by the outcome evaluator to the outcome, outputs and, if relevant, to the sustainability and relevance of the outcome.

⁹ This format is also presented in the annex to the Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators ([Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators](#)).

The following questions are typical of those that must be answered by the findings and conclusions section of an outcome evaluation. They reflect the four categories of analysis.

1. Status of the outcome

- Has the outcome been achieved or has progress been made towards its achievement?
- Was the outcome selected relevant given the country context and needs, and UNDP's niche? (Presumably, if the outcome is within the CPAP it is relevant; however, the outcome evaluation should verify this assumption.)

2.1.1.1.1.1.1 2. Factors affecting the outcome

- What factors (political, sociological, economic, etc.) have affected the outcome, either positively or negatively?
- How have these factors limited or facilitated progress towards the outcome?

3. UNDP contributions to the outcome through outputs

- What were the key outputs produced by UNDP that contributed to the outcome (including outputs produced by "soft" and hard assistance)?
- Were the outputs produced by UNDP relevant to the outcome?
- What were the quantity, quality and timeliness of outputs? What factors impeded or facilitated the production of such outputs?
- How well did UNDP use its resources to produce target outputs?
- Were the monitoring and evaluation indicators appropriate to link outputs to outcome or is there a need to establish or improve these indicators?
- Did UNDP have an effect on the outcome directly through "soft" assistance (e.g., policy advice, dialogue, advocacy and brokerage) that may not have translated into clearly identifiable outputs or may have predated UNDP's full-fledged involvement in the outcome? (For example, was policy advice delivered by UNDP advisors over the course of several years on the advisability of reforming the public service delivery system and on the various options available? Could this have laid the groundwork for reform that subsequently occurred?)

2.1.1.1.1.1.2 4. UNDP partnership strategy

- What was the partnership strategy used by UNDP in pursuing the outcome and was it effective?
- Were partners, stakeholders and/or beneficiaries of UNDP assistance involved in the design of UNDP interventions in the outcome area? If yes, what were the nature and extent of their participation? If no, why not?

RECOMMENDATIONS

Flowing from the discussion above, the section on recommendations should answer the following question:

- What corrective actions are recommended for the new, ongoing or future UNDP work in this outcome?

LESSONS LEARNED

- What are the main lessons that can be drawn from the outcome experience that may have generic application?
- What are the best and worst practices in designing, undertaking, monitoring and evaluating

outputs, activities and partnerships around the outcome?

ANNEXES

Annexes are to include the following: TOR, itinerary and list of persons interviewed, summary of field visits, questionnaire used and summary of results, list of documents reviewed and any other relevant material.

Table 8. A Good Evaluation Report is...	A Weak Evaluation Report is...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• impartial• credible• balanced• clear and easy to understand• information rich• action oriented and crisp• focused on evidence that supports conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• repetitious• too long• unclear and unreadable• insufficiently action oriented• lacking hard data and relying on opinion• poorly structured and lacking focus on key findings• lacking comprehension of the local context• negative or vague in its findings

Source: Adapted from DAC review of principles for evaluation of development assistance, 1998

Annex 2
People who generously gave of their time to meet with the mission

1. Jyldyz Moldokulova and Aikan Mukanbetova
2. Meeting with Socio-Economic Development Unit + Poverty Programme staff:
3. Neal Walker, UN Resident Co-ordinator & UNDP Resident Representative
4. Azamat Dikambaev, Head of Socio-Economic Policy Development, President's Administration
5. Mr. Aliev, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT)
6. Anara Bayzhumanova, Coordinator assistant, GTZ project on promotion sustainable economic development
7. Dilyara Alimjanova President, Association of Processing enterprises
8. Hasanov R, Investment Round table
9. Mansu Tsoy, Adviser to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade
10. Ten L., ADB Expert
11. Shamshiev N., Head of Regional Policy Department, MEDT
12. Ismaylov K., UNDP Expert
13. Ibragimova Sh, NGO Socioeconomic consultant
14. Mogilevsky R., NGO Case
15. Julia kercher & Louise Nylin, Human Rights Based Approach Mission
16. Bektemir Samaganov and Zulayka Dzhamangulova, PIU specialists Karakol.
17. NGO animators Karakol
18. ASHG members Kok-Say village, Ton rayon
19. L. Ketelsen and Mr Islan Osmonaliev, EC Delegation
20. Timothy Schaeffer and Gulsana Turusbekova, UNICEF
21. Mr. McHugh, IMF
22. Martin Dawson DFID