Terms of Reference

Project Evaluation of Support to Capacity Strengthening of Zimbabwe Electoral Commission

A. Background

Since 2004, the country has been undertaking key electoral reforms which, amongst others, included the setting up of an electoral management body tasked with the responsibilities for the management and conduct of elections and referendums in Zimbabwe. These reforms sought to strengthen the democratic principles on elections in line with the local contexts as well as with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and African Union (AU) guidelines and principles governing democratic elections. To this end, the reconstituted Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) of 31st March 2010 succeeded the earlier Electoral Commission of 2005.

Over the years, ZEC has demonstrated the need for more support to carry out its mandate in an effective, efficient and transparent manner. As part of enhancing the governance institutions in Zimbabwe, UNDP supported the ZEC in developing a Five-Year Strategic Plan in 2010 to provide a road map for strengthening the institutional capacity of the electoral management body.

The five-year Strategic Plan highlighted the need for ZEC to undertake an organizational restructuring and realignment in order to strengthen its capacity to deliver on its mandate. It also identified capacity gaps in terms of human resources, support infrastructure and financial resources. Among other recommendations, the plan noted the need for ZEC to undertake a comprehensive capacity building programme to address shortcomings in institutional, structural, administrative and operational systems and processes.

Based on the strategic plan, in January 2011 UNDP and ZEC, in partnership with EU, Denmark and SIDA, initiated an eighteen month comprehensive capacity building support project for strengthening the institutional capacity of ZEC. The current project was supposed to end in July 2012 but has been extended by six months until January 2013 at the request of ZEC.

The overall objective of the project is to strengthen the institutional capacity of ZEC for effective and efficient discharge of its mandate. Specifically, the support is aimed at strengthening ZEC’s institutional, structural, administrative and operational systems and processes through human resource development and related capacity development interventions. The project identified three key outputs in the areas of institutional reform/development, professionalization of ZEC staff, and development of communication and ICT strategy.

Since its inception, the project has contributed significantly to positive institutional development of ZEC both in terms of putting in place hardware (vehicles, computers and other office equipment) as well as software (training/workshops, study tours and exposure). Over 200 ZEC staff members have received training in a number of areas addressing identified needs, and all nine Commissioners actively participated in a number of different forums including Electoral Commissions Forum (ECF) of SADC countries.

B. Evaluation purpose

This project evaluation is being conducted at the request of the ZEC – UNDP Project Board. It will determine progress in the implementation of the project, look at challenges faced and ensure
accountability for the overall results. The lessons learned and recommendations from the evaluation will be used in the design of any capacity development support in the future.

C. Objectives and scope of the Evaluation

- Evaluate the relevance of the project and the impact of project interventions and contribution in building institutional capacity of ZEC to carry out its functions.
- Assess if the outputs and outcome have been achieved and/or will be achieved, given the activities supported by the UNDP and identify challenges in the implementation of the project.
- Assess the appropriateness and relevance of the project strategies in addressing the identified problems and hence contributing to the achievement of the stated outputs and outcomes.
- Identify gaps/weaknesses in the project design and implementation and provide recommendations as to their improvement.

Review and assess the efficiency of implementation and management arrangements of the Programme.
Make recommendations about design of any capacity development support in the future bases on lessons learned in the project implementation.

Expected outputs and deliverables
The following deliverables will be expected from the evaluation team:

1. Inception Report, detailing evaluation scope and methodology, including data collection methods as well as approach for the evaluation. The inception report should also contain a detailed work plan with timelines for agreed milestones;
2. The Draft Evaluation Report which will be shared with ZEC, UNDP and funding partners for comments and input; and
3. The Final Evaluation Report, incorporating comments from stakeholders.

Scope of the Evaluation
The evaluation will cover the period from the inception of the project to its envisaged end, that is, January 2011 to December 2012.

Questions guiding the evaluation

Relevance:
- Was the initial design of the project adequate to properly address the issues envisaged in formulation of the project and provide the best possible support to the ZEC? Has it remained relevant?

Effectiveness
- Are the project outputs appropriate, sufficient, effective and sustainable for the desired outcome?

Output analysis
- Are the project outputs relevant to the outcome?
- What are the quantities and qualities of the outputs, and their timeliness? What factors impeded or facilitated the delivery of the outputs?
- Are the indicators appropriate to link the outputs to the outcome?
- Has sufficient progress been made in delivering the outputs?
- Which aspects of the project have been most effective so far? Which ones are least effective?
- What key challenges have hampered the delivery of intended outputs?
• How can the effectiveness of support to the project be strengthened going forward?

Efficiency:
• Was UNDP support to the project appropriate to achieving the desired objectives and intended results? If not, what were the key weaknesses?
• Were the results delivered in a reasonable proportion to the operational and other costs? Could a different type of intervention lead to similar results at a lower cost? How?
• Were the funds utilized as planned? If not, why?

Sustainability:
• Will the outputs delivered through the project be sustained by national capacities after the end of the project duration? If not, why?
• Will there be adequate funding available to sustain the functionality over the short, medium and longer term?
• Has the project generated the buy-in and credibility needed for sustained impact?

Resources, partnerships, and management analysis
• Were project partners, stakeholders and/or beneficiaries involved in the design of interventions? If yes, what was the nature and extent of their participation? If not, why not?
  Was the structure and management of the project appropriate to achieving the desired objectives and intended results of the project? If not, what were the key weaknesses?
• Has the intervention developed the necessary capacities (both human and institutional) for sustainability?

Recommendations
• If supported by 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?
• If supported by the evidence from the evaluation, what corrective actions are recommended for the new, ongoing or future UNDP work in the same area?

Evaluation report format
The key product expected from this project evaluation is an analytical report that includes, but is not limited to, the following components:

• Title
• Table of Contents
• List of Acronyms and Abbreviations
• Executive summary
• Introduction
• Description of the evaluation Scope and methodology
• Analysis of the situation with regard to outcomes, outputs, resources, partnerships, management and working methods
• Key findings and Conclusions
• recommendations
• Lessons Learned
• Annexes
**Audience**
The evaluation findings are intended mainly for ZEC, the UNDP and funding partners.

**D. Methodology**
The evaluation exercise will be wide-ranging, consultative and participatory, entailing a combination of comprehensive desk reviews, analyses and interviews. While interviews are a key instrument, all analysis must be based on observed facts to ensure that the evaluation is sound and objective.
The UNDP Guidelines for project evaluation will be shared with the evaluators and is expected to be adhered to.

Based on the guiding documents, and in consultation with UNDP Zimbabwe, the evaluators should develop a suitable methodology for this specific project evaluation.

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

- Desk review of relevant documents (list and documents provided see attached)
- Discussions with UNDP Zimbabwe senior management and ZEC Commissioners and management.
- Consultation meetings and interviews:
  - Interviews with relevant project staff
  - Interviews with ZEC Commissioners, staff at Headquarters, provinces and districts and
  - Interviews with other stakeholders of ZEC

**F. Evaluation Team**
Under the direct supervision of the UNDP Assistant Resident Representative, Governance and Gender, the Evaluation Team will consist of two consultants - an international consultant (team leader) and a national expert.

**G. Requirements**
Qualified requirements for the International Consultant/Team Leader:

- University degree in public administration, economics, development planning, business administration, law or other relevant qualifications;
- Extensive experience in conducting evaluations, with a strong working knowledge on institutional capacity building/development and state building;
- Extensive knowledge of result-based management (RBM) evaluation, UNDP policies, procedures and participatory monitoring and evaluation methodologies and approaches;
- Minimum of 7-10 years professional expertise in international development co-operation, governance issues, programme/project evaluation, impact assessment/development of programming/strategies;
- Minimum of 7 – 10 years experience in leading multi-disciplinary multi-national teams;
- Good professional knowledge of the Africa region; and
- Demonstrated analytical, communication and report writing skills.

The **Team Leader** will have overall responsibility for the quality and timely submission of the final evaluation report. 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 project evaluation in accordance with the proposed objective and scope of the evaluation and UNDP evaluation guidelines;
• Draft and present the draft and final evaluation reports;
• Finalize the evaluation report and submit it to UNDP and ZEC.

Qualification requirements for the National Expert
National consultant – Capacity development
• University degree in area(s) such as public administration, economics, business management, development planning or law and at least 3 years of professional experience in the area of capacity development and governance issues;
• Sound knowledge of governance issues in Zimbabwe; and
• Experience in conducting evaluations.

The National Expert will, *inter alia*, 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 as agreed with the Team Leader; and
• Assist the Team Leader in finalizing the draft and final evaluation report.

H. Timeline and schedule (tentative)
The evaluation assignment will commence on 1 December 2012. The duration of the assignment is up to a maximum of 24 working days, including writing of the report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inception meeting with UNDP and ZEC, Desk review, Evaluation design, methodology and detailed work plan (inception report).</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>Harare</td>
<td>UNDP, ZEC and evaluation team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present and refine Inception report</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Harare</td>
<td>UNDP, ZEC and Evaluation team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultations, meetings, interviews related to the Programme with Stakeholders and funding partners</td>
<td>11 days</td>
<td>Harare provinces and districts</td>
<td>Evaluation team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis, synthesis and preparation of draft evaluation report</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>Harare</td>
<td>Evaluation team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debriefing and presentation of draft report to UNDP and ZEC</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Harare</td>
<td>Evaluation team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finalization of evaluation report incorporating comments provided</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>Harare</td>
<td>Evaluation team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission of the final evaluation report to UNDP ZEC and funding partners</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Harare</td>
<td>Lead consultant</td>
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I. Documents for desk review
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 Zimbabwe Country Office Documents:
1. Zimbabwe Development Assistance Framework (ZUNDAF) 2007-2011;
2. ZUNDAF 2007-2011 mid-term review
3. ZUNDAF 2012-2015
7. CP Mid-term review report
8. Project Annual Work Plans and Progress Reports and
9. The ZEC Five-Year Strategic Plan and related documents.

J. Cost and financing

The following anticipated costs of the evaluation will be financed by the UNDP/ZEC project. Breakdown of the resources required for:

- National/regional consultants – professional fees
- International Consultant – professional fees, international travel costs and DSA costs
- Local travel costs and DSA
Evaluation Report Template and Quality Standards

1. **Title and opening pages**—Should provide the following basic information:
   - Name of the evaluation intervention
   - Time frame of the evaluation and date of the report
   - Countries of the evaluation intervention
   - Names and organizations of evaluators
   - Name of the organization commissioning the evaluation
   - Acknowledgements

2. **Table of contents**—should always include boxes, figures, tables and annexes with page references.

3. **List of acronyms and abbreviations**

4. **Executive summary**—A stand-alone section of two to three pages that should:
   - Briefly describe the intervention (the project(s), programme(s), policies or other interventions) that was evaluated.
   - Explain the purpose and objectives of the evaluation, including the audience for the evaluation and the intended uses.
   - Describe key aspect of the evaluation approach and methods.
   - Summarize principle findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

5. **Introduction**—Should:
   - Explain why the evaluation was conducted (the purpose), why the intervention is being evaluated at this point in time, and why it addressed the questions it did.
   - Identify the primary audience or users of the evaluation, what they wanted to learn from the evaluation and why, and how they are expected to use the evaluation results.
   - Identify the intervention (the project(s) programme(s), policies or other interventions) that was evaluated—see upcoming section on intervention.
   - Acquaint the reader with the structure and contents of the report and how the information contained in the report will meet the purposes of the evaluation and satisfy the information needs of the report’s intended users.

6. **Description of the intervention**—provides the basis for report users to understand the logic and assess the merits of the evaluation methodology and understand the applicability of the evaluation results. The description needs to provide sufficient detail for the report user to derive meaning from the evaluation. The description should:
   - Describe what is being evaluated, who seeks to benefit, and the problem or issue it seeks to address.
   - Explain the expected results map or results framework, implementation strategies, and the key assumptions underlying the strategy.
   - Link the intervention to national priorities, UNDAF priorities, corporate multiyear funding frameworks or strategic plan goals, or other programme or country specific plans and goals.
   - Identify the phase in the implementation of the intervention and any significant changes (e.g., plans, strategies, logical frameworks) that have occurred over time, and explain the implications of those changes for the evaluation.
• Identify and describe the key partners involved in the implementation and their roles.
• Describe the scale of the intervention, such as the number of components (e.g., phases of a project) and the size of the target population for each component.
• Indicate the total resources, including human resources and budgets.
• Describe the context of the social, political, economic and institutional factors, and the geographical landscape within which the intervention operates and explain the effects (challenges and opportunities) those factors present for its implementation and outcomes.
• Point out design weaknesses (e.g., intervention logic) or other implementation constraints (e.g., resource limitations).

7. Evaluation scope and objectives—the report should provide a clear explanation of the evaluation’s scope, primary objectives and main questions.

• Evaluation scope—the report should define the parameters of the evaluation, for example, the time period, the segments of the target population included, the geographic area included, and which components, outputs or outcomes were and were not assessed.
• Evaluation objectives—the report should spell out the types of decisions evaluation users will make, the issues they will need to consider in making those decisions, and what the evaluation will need to achieve to contribute to those decisions.
• Evaluation criteria—the report should define the evaluation criteria or performance standards used. The report should explain the rationale for selecting the particular criteria used in the evaluation.
• Evaluation questions—Evaluation questions define the information that the evaluation will generate. The report should detail the main evaluation questions addressed by the evaluation and explain how the answers to these questions address the information needs of users.

8. Evaluation approach and methods—The evaluation report should describe in detail the selected methodological approaches, methods and analysis; the rationale for their selection; and how, within the constraints of time and money, the approaches and methods employed yielded data that helped answer the evaluation questions and achieved the evaluation purposes. The description should help the report users judge the merits of the methods used in the evaluation and the credibility of the findings, Conclusions and recommendations. The description on methodology should include discussion of each of the following:

• Data sources—the sources of information (documents reviewed and stakeholders), the rationale for their selection and how the information obtained addressed the evaluation questions.
• Sample and sampling frame—If a sample was used: the sample size and characteristics; the sample selection criteria (e.g., single women, under 45); the process for selecting the sample (e.g., random, purposive); if applicable, how comparison and treatment groups were assigned; and the extent to which the sample is representative of the entire target population, including discussion of the limitations of the sample for generalizing results.
• Data collection procedures and instruments—Methods or procedures used to collect data, including discussion of data collection instruments (e.g., interview protocols), their appropriateness for the data source and evidence of their reliability and validity.
• Performance standards—The standard or measure that will be used to evaluate performance relative to the evaluation questions (e.g., national or regional indicators, rating scales).

• Stakeholder engagement—Stakeholders’ engagement in the evaluation and how the level of involvement contributed to the credibility of the evaluation and the results.

• Ethical considerations—The measures taken to protect the rights and confidentiality of informants (see UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators’ for more information: www.unevaluation.org)

• Background information on evaluators—The composition of the evaluation team, the background and skills of team members and the appropriateness of the technical skill mix, gender balance and geographical representation for the evaluation.

• Major limitations of the methodology—Major limitations of the methodology should be identified and openly discussed as to their implications for evaluation, as well as steps taken to mitigate those limitations.

9. **Data analysis**—the report should describe the procedures used to analyse the data collected to answer the evaluation questions. It should detail the various steps and stages of analysis that were carried out, including the steps to confirm the accuracy of data and the results. The report also should discuss the appropriateness of the analysis to the evaluation questions. Potential weaknesses in the data analysis and gaps or limitations of the data should be discussed, including their possible influence on the way findings may be interpreted and conclusions drawn.

10. **Findings and conclusions**—the report should present the evaluation findings based on the analysis and conclusions drawn from the findings.

• Findings—should be presented as statements of fact that are based on analysis of the data. They should be structured around the evaluation criteria and questions so that report users can readily make the connection between what was asked and what was found. Variances between planned and actual results should be explained, as well as factors affecting the achievement of intended results. Assumptions or risks in the project or programme design that subsequently affected implementation should be discussed.

• Conclusions—should be comprehensive and balanced, and highlight the strengths, weaknesses and outcomes of the intervention. They should be well substantiated by the evidence and logically connected to evaluation findings. They should respond to key evaluation questions and provide insights into the identification of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to the decision making of intended users.

11. **Recommendations**—the report should provide practical, feasible recommendations directed to the intended users of the report about what actions to take or decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation. They should address sustainability of the initiative and comment on the adequacy of the project exit strategy, if applicable.

12. **Lessons learned**—As appropriate, the report should include discussion of lessons learned from the evaluation, that is, new knowledge gained from the particular circumstance (intervention, context outcomes, even about evaluation methods) that are applicable to a similar context. Lessons should be concise and based on specific evidence presented in the report.
13. **Report annexes**—Suggested annexes should include the following to provide the report user with supplemental background and methodological details that enhance the credibility of the report:

- ToR for the evaluation
- Additional methodology-related documentation, such as the evaluation matrix and data collection instruments (questionnaires, interview guides, observation protocols, etc.) as appropriate
- List of individuals or groups interviewed or consulted and sites visited
- List of supporting documents reviewed
- Project or programme results map or results framework
- Summary tables of findings, such as tables displaying progress towards outputs, targets, and goals relative to established indicators
- Short biographies of the evaluators and justification of team composition
- Code of conduct signed by evaluators