# Terms of Reference

**Terms of Reference Evaluation**

***Project Number: ATLAS 00060880***

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# INTRODUCTION

**A.1 Project background**

The NEYP focus is to protect the banks and catchment areas of Nyabarongo river system from land degradation and solid waste pollution while creating employment opportunities for the youth in both rural and urban Districts. The aim of the project was to promote a wide range of income generating environmental activities and these includes terracing, nursery development, tree planting and rehabilitation of degraded areas; waste collection and recycling particularly transforming some of these materials to produce fertilizer for farmers and briquettes for cooking and other uses.

With the support of the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), Ministry of Natural Resources (MINIRENA) and the National Youth Council, the project mobilized youth associations to establish pilot projects where the youth will be directly involved in rehabilitating, conserving, protecting and sustainably managing the natural resources. In this process, viable income generating projects were established in an effort to create employment and eradicate poverty among the Youth.

The project built capacities for youth in income generating activities with a view to turning their life into a more attractive one through environmental conservation.

The project executed through National Execution (NEX) process by the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), with support from UNDP has started in 2008 with a budget of 6 m USD as planned in the project document till to December 2011.

**As stipulated in the Project document, an independent Mid-Term Evaluation should be conducted by REMA and UNDP.**

**A.2 M&E requirements**

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy at the project level has four objectives:

1. To monitor and evaluate results and their influence on impacts;
2. To provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvements for project delivery;
3. To promote accountability for use of project resources; and
4. To document, provide feedback on lessons learned, and disseminateidentified best practices.

A mix of tools is used to ensure effective project M&E, including periodic monitoring of indicators as well as specific time-bound exercises such as mid-term and final evaluations and audit reports. In particular, the mid-term and final evaluations provide an independent in-depth review of implementation progress, this type of evaluation is also responsive to better access of information during implementation.

Mid-term evaluation is intended to identify potential project design problems, assess progress towards the achievement of objectives, identify and document lessons learned (including lessons that might improve design and implementation of other REMA/UNDP projects), and make recommendations regarding specific actions that might be taken to improve the project. It is expected to serve as a means of validating or filling the gaps in the initial assessment of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency obtained from monitoring. The mid-term evaluation provides the opportunity to assess signs of project success or failure and prompt necessary adjustments in the future.

# OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The present Mid-term Evaluation has been commissioned by REMA and UNDP\_RWANDA and will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures for such evaluations established by REMA and UNDP. The evaluation team will work closely with all project stakeholders, particularly the Rwanda Environment Management Authority, Districts and other relevant government agencies such as National Youth Council (NYC) and Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA) at both national and local level; and the communities involved in activities in selected sites.

The overall objective of this Mid-Term Evaluation is to review progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outputs, identify strengths and weaknesses in implementation, assess the likelihood of the program achieving its objectives and delivering its intended outputs, within the current timeframe. The mission will provide recommendations on modifications to increase the likelihood of success of the project and the monitoring system that guides these findings.

This evaluation will provide an assessment of the project design, scope, status of implementation and capacity to achieve the set objectives. The evaluation will also collate and analyze lessons learned and best practices obtained during the period of implementation of the project that shall be taken into consideration during the remaining project implementation period and subsequently for the development and implementation of other environmental protection programmes in Rwanda.

The report of the Mid-Term Evaluation will be disseminated for review to the executing and implementation partners of the project. Upon finalization, it will be forwarded to REMA and UNDP/RWANDA for purposes of mobilizing funds to build on the experiences and support dissemination and sustainability of best practices.

# SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The Mid-Term Evaluation will:

* Determine progress being made towards the achievement of outcomes and will identify adjustments needed. It will focus on the effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of project implementation;
* Highlight issues requiring decisions and actions; and present initial lessons learned about project design, implementation and management.

The Mid-Term Evaluation will address the project’s achievements according to the following Project Review criteria:

1. **Outcomes:**

* Assess progress towards attaining the project’s environmental objectives and outcomes:

1. Youth associations and local authorities have the capacity to undertake environmental conservation along the Nyabarongo River System;
2. Appropriate technologies are used to conserve and manage the Nyabarongo River System;
3. Waste management along the Nyabarongo river in Kigali area has been effectively undertaken ;
4. Livelihood activities have been supported through natural resources and environmental management.

This should include the extent to which the project is likely to contribute to:

1. Capacity enhancement of Institutions and key stakeholders at central, district and local levels to manage and conserve the Nyabarongo river system;
2. Socio-economic value and financial benefits linked to protection of the 10m along Nyabarongo River System.
3. **Implementation approach:**

* Review the clarity of roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders: Agencies, Institutions, Districts, Sectors, cells and local communities and the level of coordination between relevant players to improve the sustainability of project activities;
* Evaluate the partnership arrangements established for implementation of the project between REMA, National Youth Council and Local authorities;
* Describe and assess efforts of UNDP in funding regularly the action plan;
* Make recommendations as to how to improve project performance in terms of effectiveness and efficiency in achieving impact on Nyabarongo River System protection and youth employment creation as well as the institutional and capacity development of youth associations and local leaders.

1. **District Ownership:**

* Assess the extent to which the representatives of the Districts concerned (including governmental officials at District and Sector level, National Youth Council, etc.) are actively involved in project implementation.

1. **Co-financing:**

* Assess whether the UNDP and associated implementation partners have maintained financial commitments to the project and the extent to which the reconciliation of the co-financing pledge has been realized.

**e) Stakeholder Participation and benefits accrued:**

* Assess the level of public and youth associations involvement in the project and comment as to whether the scope of public involvement has been appropriate given the broader goals and objectives of the project;
* Review, characterize (in monetary and/or non-monetary terms) and evaluate the extent to which project benefits have or will reach the intended beneficiaries;
* Review the involvement of implementing partners.

1. **Sustainability:**

* Assess the likelihood of consolidation an building on the project outcomes/benefits after completion of UNDP funding;
* Judge if the implementation arrangements by youth cooperatives, potentially allows them to continue income generating projects that contribute to the project’s sustainability;
* Describe the key factors that will require attention in order to improve prospects for sustainability of project outcomes.

1. **Replication Approach:**

* Describe the main lessons that have emerged in terms of: strengthening District ownership, strengthening stakeholder participation; application of adaptive management strategies; efforts to secure sustainability; knowledge transfer in terms of environmental protection and cooperative management; and the role of M&E in project implementation.

In describing all lessons learned, an explicit distinction needs to be made between those lessons applicable only to this project, and lessons that may be of value more broadly;

* Make recommendations on how the lessons and experience can be incorporated into the design of similar initiatives in the future.

1. **Financial Planning:**

* Assess the financial control systems, including reporting and planning, that allowed the project management to make informed decisions regarding the budget;
* Assess the extent to which the flow of funds has been proper and timely, i.e. from UNDP-CO, from the Project Management Unit to Districts and from the Districts to field implementation partners (youth cooperatives);
* Evaluate the extent of due diligence in the management of funds and financial audits.

1. **Cost Effectiveness:**

* Assess the extent to which the project has completed the planned activities and met or exceeded the expected outcomes according to schedule and as cost effectively as initially planned.

1. **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

* Review the project’s reporting systems and their efficiency; and
* Review the implementation of the project’s monitoring and evaluation plans including any adaptation to changing conditions (adaptive management);
* Revisit the environmental protection indicators along rivers that were proposed in the project document but have shown to be with limited relevance to the project objectives. Review the proposed amendments for these indicators.

# PRODUCTS EXPECTED FROM THE EVALUATION:

The Team Leader will present the mission key preliminary findings during a debriefing with the key stakeholders of the project at the end of their field mission (week 4). This includes a preliminary report listing the conclusions and recommendations of the mission.

At the end, The Team Leader will present a final report to REMA employing the headings outlined in these TORs (Annex I). The Report will include an Executive Summary summarizing the main findings, lessons and recommendations. The evaluation will include ratings[[1]](#footnote-1) on the following aspects (1) Sustainability, (2) Outcome/achievement of the objectives, (3) Implementation approach.

# METHODOLOGY OR EVALUATION APPROACH:

The evaluators will undertake a review of documentation, including the Project Document and selected technical reports (a list of all reports will be provided by PMU, based on which the consultants may request the mailing of documents selected).

The evaluators will liaise with all key stakeholders including Project Steering Committee members, particularly the Rwanda Environment Management Authority, National Youth Council, Publics Institutions, Districts, Sectors, population along the river and Youth cooperatives. Structured and semi-structured interviews will be conducted with key stakeholders to collect information. Structured feedback mechanisms such as a self-administered, electronic set of questions (survey) could also be designed and utilized. A detailed list of stakeholders will be included in the inception report of the consultancy.

Field visits to project sites will be undertaken to monitor the progress in implementing the pilot projects provided for in the project document.

The Team Leader and the evaluators should not have been associated with the design and implementation of the project.

1. **ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE:**

The assignment should take 30 working days and start no later than 25 June 2012. A draft indicative work program is included in Annex II.

The REMA, assisted by the Project Management Unit, will assume responsibility for coordinating the program of the evaluation team, including the organization of stakeholder meetings and field visits. The evaluation team will be briefed by the UNDP Country Office Environment Team, as well as by REMA/NEYP, upon the commencement of the assignment. The evaluators will provide a terminal briefing at the end of the assignment. Other briefing sessions may be scheduled, if deemed necessary.

**Annex I**

Evaluation Report: Sample Outline

Executive summary

1. **Brief description of project**
2. **Context and purpose of the evaluation**
3. **Main conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned**

Introduction

1. **Purpose of the evaluation**
2. **Key issues addressed**
3. **Methodology of the evaluation**
4. **Structure of the evaluation**

The project(s) and its development context

1. **Project start and its duration**
2. **Problems that the project seek to address**
3. **Immediate and development objectives of the project**
4. **Main stakeholders**
5. **Results expected**

Findings and Conclusions

1. **Project formulation**
2. **Implementation approach**
3. Country ownership/Driveness
4. **Stakeholder participation**
5. **Replication approach**
6. **Cost-effectiveness**
7. **UNDP comparative advantage**
8. **Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector**
9. **Indicators**
10. **Management arrangements**
11. **Implementation**
12. **Financial Planning**
13. **Monitoring and evaluation**
14. **Execution and implementation modalities**
15. **Management by the UNDP country office**
16. **Coordination and operational issues**
17. **Results**
18. **Attainment of objectives**
19. **Sustainability**

Recommendations

1. **Corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of**

**the project**

1. **Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project**
2. **Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives**

Lessons learned

1. **Best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance**

**and success**

Annexes

1. **TOR**
2. **Itinerary**
3. **List of persons interviewed**
4. **Summary of field visits**
5. **List of documents reviewed**
6. **Questionnaire used and summary of results**

1. The ratings will be Highly Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Marginally Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory and N/A. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)