

AREDP Evaluation

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terms of Reference for REDKAN and Red-Helmand projects Evaluation

Background

The Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Project (AREDP) is a project of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). Implementation began on 14 June 2010 and ends on (1st January 2015).

AREDP Phase I is aimed at harnessing the potential of the private sector for inclusive economic growth and sustainable job creation in rural Afghanistan over a 5-year time period. The program aims at building on the social capital gained under the National Solidarity Program (NSP) and transforming it into economic capital. AREDP has been designed to address failures in the market for business and financial services to rural entrepreneurs. AREDP uses Community facilitation paving the way for AREDP's entry into villages; facilitating community-level mobilization and capacity building which is targeted at Enterprise Groups (EGs) and Savings Groups (SGs).

AREDP has proven to be flagship, in helping the Afghan people to not only tap into their internal resources but empower them through fiscal, technical and socio-economic assistance to start contributing to an intended unique rural economy.

As part of the AREDP, the Rural Enterprise Development projects in Kandahar and Helmand (REDKAN and RED HELMAND) are implemented by AREDP under the overall administration of UNDP. The two projects have been designed to support economic generation using AREDP model focusing on supporting small and medium enterprise development in Kandahar and Helmand. As such the two projects are linked to UNDP Afghanistan 2010-2014 CPAP outcome 6 "Increased Opportunities for income generation through promotion of diversified livelihoods, private sector development and public private partnership".

Unlike AREDP projects in other provinces the REDKAN and RED HELMAND end on March 2014. UNDP intends to undertake an independent evaluation of the interventions specifically for the mentioned two projects.

The projects are designed around the following 3 components:

Component A: Community-based Enterprise Development: Supplies business knowledge and builds financial capacity and sustainable linkages through community-based enterprise development interventions;

Component B: SME Development: Supports rural small and medium enterprises with business development services and facilitates the rural SMEs to access to credit and other financial services;

Component C: Program Management Support: Plans, manages, supervises and monitors the implementation of all Program activities.

2. Purpose

The specific purpose of this assignment is twofold: 36

- To provide an independent assessment of the RED-Helmand and REDKAN, employing the standard UNDP evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact¹⁹ and sustainability. Special emphasis will be placed on Gender within each evaluation criteria.
- To generate lesson learned and recommendations which are expected to identify appropriate strategies and operational approaches to strengthen the envisaged UNDP new economic generation programmes across Afghanistan. Based on the lessons learned the evaluation will provide recommendations on the future design for the two projects.

For both of the above, the important reference documents will be the UNDP Sub National Governance & Development (SNGD) strategy, Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and National Priority Programs. Furthermore other cluster strategies that have been developed by the UNDP CO will be important reference documents in particular those related to Gender and Capacity Development.

3. Evaluation Scope and Objectives

The evaluation will cover all the implementation period and all interventions implemented in Kandahar and Helmand provinces. The evaluation will assess the results, the use of resources, approaches, strategies and partnership strategy.

The evaluation shall have the following objectives:

Evaluate the relevance of the project in the context of UNDP's role as a development actor, the function and mandate of MRRD/REDKAN/HELMAND and the situation in Kandahar and Helmand. The latter should take into account the time at which the original design took place, adjustments to date and the current context. This task will be performed based on the original results framework and Cost-sharing Agreements together subsequent amendments that have been made to these documents.

The primary objective of the evaluation is to generate lessons learned to inform UNDP, to highlight both the positive ones and negative ones where design, implementation and oversight could have been better and to correlate the lessons learnt and their impact on UNDP programming in the area of rural enterprise development, job creation and income generating activities

To assess the effectiveness of the project in achieving its goals and objectives, this includes but is not limited to, the following;

- The project management
- The implementation methodology and make a judgment assessing whether other methodologies could have provided better value for money
- The Project outputs
- The project time performance

- Make a judgment on the potential for long term growth impact and sustainability of the job creation program activities and income generating activities.
- Evaluate success of rights based approach and gender mainstreaming in job creation and income generating development efforts
- To review the oversight role provided by the UNDP Country Office. This aspect of the evaluation should focus upon examining the oversight and control mechanisms that are in place and whether they have been successful in fulfilling this function.

In addition to the above based on the findings of the evaluation the consultant will be expected to develop key recommendations in regards the future of REDKAN/HELMAND beyond the existing phase. This is a specific task within itself and the exact amount of time given over to it will be clarified in the inception report. However, when performing this task the consultant will be expected to take into account that certain decisions have already been made regarding any future follow on project to REDKAN/HELMAND.

The consultant will be expected to make recommendations on the following issues:

- A recommendation as to what should be the focus/core business of a follow on project to REDKAN and Helmand taking into account the following factors; UNDP's role and the comparative advantage that it offers; the mandate of MRRD; the transition that is currently underway and the transformation decade that it is anticipated will precede it; and the likelihood of an environment of decreasing donor funding with increased accountability requirements attached to the funds that are disbursed.
- A recommendation on the implementation methodology for a new phase in particular this should look at how the project can strike a balance between delivering results and capacity development of existing MRRD structures at central and more importantly provincial level.
- A recommendation on how any future intervention would address the issue of targeting rural women and developing their capacity to sustain a livelihood given the lessons learned from the current phase.
- Recommendations on the future design coming out of the lessons learned from REDKAN and RED HELMAND.

4. Evaluation Questions

The evaluation team, as part of the inception report, has to prepare appropriate detailed questions to come up with answers and clarifications in fulfillment of the requirements of the evaluation objectives. However, the evaluation questions, at minimum, should be aligned to the following general questions:

- Are the projects (REDKAN and HELMAND) relevant in the context of UNDP's role as a development actor, the function and mandate of MRRD/REDKAN/HELMAND and the situation in Kandahar and Helmand?

- What are the lessons learned to inform UNDP, where design, implementation and oversight could have been better and how the lessons learned could be correlated the impact on UNDP
- programming in the area of rural enterprise development, job creation and income generating activities?
- Have the projects been effective in achieving their goals and objectives? If not what could be the reasons?
- Do the projects have any potential for long term growth impact and sustainability of the job creation program activities and income generating activities?
- Have the projects been successful in taking the rights based approach? Are they gender sensitive?

5. Methodology

Based on the objectives mentioned above, the evaluation will be based upon review of documentation, discussion with key stakeholders and staff (in Kabul, Helmand Kandahar) as well as field visits to a selected number of projects sites. It is expected that the evaluation team, as part of the evaluation inception report, will propose a detailed methodology and plan for this assignment grounded in evidence and analytical work derived from the following:

- Review of project documentation and monitoring records as well as the quarterly reports. All programme documentation will be made available including project documentation associated with REDKAN and RED HELMAND.
- Interviews with the key interlocutors in REDKAN/HELMAND including the National Project Director (Deputy Minister Programmes) and the Minister as well as other advisors and key individuals who have been involved with AREDP.
- Interviews with key individuals at the UNDP Country Office including the Senior Deputy Country Director Programmes, the head of the Sub National Governance Unit, the Programme Officer, representatives from the Strategic Management Support Unit, representatives from the Compliance and Oversight Unit and representatives from the Cross Practice Unit
- Interviews with all the project donors
- Interviews with key staff in the Programme Management including the Project Coordinator, CTA, Unit Heads, Regional and Provincial Managers
- Meetings and interviews with direct beneficiaries of REDKAN and HELMAND intervention. In addition documented feedback from the direct beneficiaries will be provided where it exists.
- For each output a review of the results achieved against the targets set as reflected in the Results Framework. (This specific tasks will require further explanation in the work plan and will be based on review of the documents and evidence available, interviews with staff and stakeholders and some specific site visits)

4. Deliverables

The deliverables of the mission are comprised of:

An inception report no later than seven days after the commencement of the mission. The inception report should outline the evaluation team's understanding of what is being evaluated and why, an evaluation matrix outlining which data collection methodologies will be used to address each of the evaluation questions, a proposed schedule of tasks. This inception report will also provide the evaluation team with an opportunity to comment upon the ToR should it be deemed necessary.

- Presentation of preliminary findings including recommendations on the design of any future interventions;
- A draft evaluation report covering the issues outlined in the terms of reference including evaluation findings and conclusions, lessons and recommendations for the review of all stakeholders;
- Final evaluation report²⁰ : The final report incorporates the inputs resulting from the review of the draft report if deemed convincing (i.e. incorporate corrections of factual errors and incomplete information contained in the draft report)

TIME FRAME FOR THE EVALUATION PROCESS

	Schedule / Days
The estimated time for the conduct of this evaluation is 30 working days and is scheduled to start in late 2013 early 2014. A tentative time table is outlined below that could be amended in consultation with UNDP. Item	
Initial review of documents	2 days
Consultations with UNDP and key stakeholders in Kabul	3 days
Inception Report produced	2 days
Comprehensive desk review and through consultations including Field visits to selected project sites in the localities and beneficiary communities	13 days
Analysis of the information collected and preparation of a draft report	5 days
Debriefing to the project stakeholders (presenting the draft report)	By day 25 of the assignment
Draft shared for comment	(Day 26 of the assignment)
Incorporating the comments and submission of final report	Day 30 of the assignment
Total work days	30 working days