Annex 6: Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference for Evaluation of the National Area Based Development Programme (NABDP)

1. Background

The National Area Based Development Programme (NABDP) is a joint intervention supported by UNDP and implemented by the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development (MRRD).The project covers the entire territory of Afghanistan and is now in its third phase (June 2009 – June 2015) of implementation. NABDP commenced as a joint initiative of MRRD and UNDP in 2002, with the goal of contributing to a sustainable reduction of poverty and an improvement of livelihoods in rural Afghanistan through a comprehensive area development approach.

The current NABDP Phase-III (2009 – 2015) has a total planned budget of 294 million the majority of which has been mobilized and despite being in the fourth year of implementation there has still not been a programmatic evaluation although there was an Independent Management Review (IMR) in 2010. During this time the project has evolved from a largely international run intervention focusing on specific geographical areas to a nationally led country wide intervention. In addition to the above the context in Afghanistan has also evolved and the current "development" agenda is very much focused upon transition, 2014 and the subsequent transformation process that is envisaged. Given the evolving environment both internally and externally plus that fact NABDP III is nearing its end date of June 2015 the leadership of the project have decided to implement a programmatic evaluation that will inform the planning and design of follow on interventions to NABDP.

2. Purpose

The specific purpose of this assignment is two fold

1. To evaluate the existing programme employing the standard UNDP evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability (given that this is a midterm evaluation for sustainability and impact there will have to be estimation). Special emphasis will be placed on Gender within each evaluation criteria.
2. In addition the evaluation team will be asked to provide recommendations/comments with regards to the design of a future follow on intervention once NABDP comes to an end in mid-2015. In this regard the important reference documents will be the UNDP Sub National Governance & Development (SNGD) strategy, Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and the National Priority Programs (NPPs) (specifically those that correspond to the Agriculture and Rural Development Cluster components: NPP1. National Water and Natural Resource Development Program and NPP4. Strengthening Local Institutions).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. Given the size of the overall task

it is recognized that the consultants will have limited time to complete this task and therefore it should involve a greater investment than 10% of the overall mission time.

3. Evaluation Scope and Objectives

The consultants will be responsible for completing the following tasks

- Evaluate the relevance of the project in the context of UNDP's role as a development actor, the function and mandate of MRRD and the situation in Afghanistan. The latter should take into account the time at which the original design took place as well as the current context. This task will be performed based on the original results framework and project document as well as subsequent amendments that were made to these documents.
- To assess the effectiveness of the project in achieving its goals and objectives. This section should examine, but not be limited to, the following
    - the project management
    - the implementation methodology

- To assess the efficiency of the implementation of the project. This aspect should examine the cost effectiveness of the implementation methodology and make a judgment on this issue as well as assessing whether other methodologies could have provided better value for money.
- Make a judgment on the long term sustainability of the different programme activities
- Make a judgment on the potential long term impact of the different programme activities
- 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 been successful in fulfilling this function.
- To highlight the key lessons learned coming out of the programme and highlight both the positive ones as well as areas where design, implementation and oversight could have been better.
- To write up the results of the final evaluation. The format will be agreed upon between the consultant and the UNDP CO during the first week of the mission. The final product will be a detailed report that is submitted to the UNDP Country Office.
- Before the end of the mission present the main findings in regards the evaluation and the design of a future follow on project to a group of the programme stakeholders and respond to initial questions and queries.

In addition to the above based on the findings of the evaluation the consultants will be expected to develop key recommendations in regards the future of NABDP 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 consultants will be expected to take into account that certain decisions have already been made regarding any future follow on project to NABDP. These are as follows

1. The Energy for the Rural Development of Afghanistan (ERDA) part of NABDP will in future be a separate stand-alone project working with the relevant unit within MRRD
2. A new policy on District Coordination Councils (DCCs) as well as the UNDP strategy clearly spells out that DCCs will be part of the local governance structures of AFG and therefore fall under the Independent Directorate of Local Government (IDLG). For UNDP, this means that DCCs will fall outside of the future UNDP-MRRD project. This has particular relevance to the work that NABDP currently does under output one "Institutions strengthened at the district level to independently address priority local needs"

Note: - During the first week of the mission there will be further discussion on this point.

The consultants 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 NABDP 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 NABDP

4. Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions are as follows

1. Was the initial design of the NABDP intervention relevant at the time of writing and does it remain so today?
2. Has the NABDP been delivered in a cost effective and efficient manner making the best use of the resources available?
3. Has NABDP successfully delivered on the results as identified under each of the project outputs?
4. Has the intervention been implemented in such a manner as to ensure that the results achieved will be sustainable in the longer term?
5. What are the long term impacts of the intervention?

6. What would be the key recommendations in regards to the future of NABDP beyond the existing phase?

5. 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 report for review of all stakeholders;
- A final report approved by the UNDP Country Office;

The mission will be largely based in Kabul relying mainly on secondary data sources and interviews with key personnel. However day trips to the surrounding provinces will be possible and should it be deemed necessary a field trip to one of the regions will be organized. The exact number and location of provinces to be visited will be decided upon during the inception period and will be reflected in the inception report.

6. Methodology

Given the time constraints and large amount of work as well as geographical area that need to be covered the evaluation will be based upon review of documentation and discussion with key stakeholders and staff. This will be complemented with field visits to a selected number of projects sites. It is proposed that the following should make up a basis for the activities of the evaluation team however the final work plan will be developed by the consultants themselves in the course of the first week.

- Review of project documentation and monitoring records as well as the inception and quarterly reports. All programme documentation will be made available including project documentation associated with the previous two phases of NABDP.
- Interviews with the key interlocutors in MRRD including the National Project Director (Deputy Minister Programmes) and the Minister as well as other advisors and key individuals who have been involved with NABDP
- 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 a selection of the project donors
- Interviews with key staff in the Programme Management including the Project Manager, CTA, Unit Heads, Regional and Provincial Managers
- Meetings and interviews with direct beneficiaries where possible.
- 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)
- Based on the findings of the evaluation to develop key recommendations in regards the future of NABDP beyond the existing phase.
- Presentation of draft report and findings with key stakeholders.
- Preparation of the final report

7. Evaluation Ethics

This Evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation (UNEG 2008) and the consultants must use measures to ensure compliance with the evaluator code of conduct (e.g. measures to safeguard the rights and confidentiality of their sources, provisions to collect and report data, particularly permissions needed to interview or obtain information about children and young people, provisions to store

8. Time Frame for the Evaluation Process

The estimated time for the conduct of this evaluation is 30 working days and is scheduled to start in early 2014. A tentative time table is outlined below that could be amended in consultation with UNDP.

Item	Schedule / Days
Initial review of documents	3days
Consultations with UNDP and key stakeholders in Kabul	3 days
Inception Report produced	5 days
Comprehensive desk review and through consultations including if time allows one or two field visits to projects.	10 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 27
Draft shared for comment	By day 27
Incorporating the comments and submission of final report	3 days
Total work days	30 working days

This is a tentative schedule and will be finalized with the team upon their arrival

9. Evaluation Team composition and required competencies

It is envisaged there will be two members in the evaluation team that will be as follows, an international team leader with a strong background in managing evaluations on large rural development projects, and a local Afghan with a background in development/governance. . In addition staff from the project will assist the team in all issues such as arranging logistics and translation where necessary.