TERMS OF REFERENCE

Evaluation Title:	*South Sudan Recovery Fund Round 3: UN Joint Stabilization Programmes Outcome Evaluation*
Commissioned by:	*SSRF Steering Committee*

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The South Sudan Recovery Fund (SSRF), also referred to as the Sudan Recovery Fund prior to South Sudan's independence, is a UN Multi Donor Trust Fund that was established in 2008 to facilitate a transition from humanitarian to recovery assistance. The SSRF aimed to address the immense post-conflict recovery and reconstruction needs of South Sudan through delivery of catalytic, high impact projects for demonstrating peace dividends. Since its establishment, the SSRF has received financial support from four donors: Norway, Swedish International Development Cooperation (SIDA), The Netherlands and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID). Since its inception, three rounds of funding allocations under the SSRF were delivered in South Sudan.

Round 3 of the SSRF UN Joint Stabilization Programmes was developed by UNDP in partnership with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the World Food Programme (WFP), as well as NGO implementing partners, PACT and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). Approximately USD 102 million was allocated to deliver the intended results under Round 3: USD 23,449,683 under the Eastern Equatoria Stabilization Programme; USD 28,456,008 under the Jonglei Stabilization Programme; USD 31,277,662 under the Lakes State Stabilization Programme; and USD 19,645,840 under the Warrap Stabilization Programme.

Round 3 aimed to restore post-conflict socio-economic infrastructure, increase security and reduce the level of ethnic conflicts in four states of South Sudan: Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes and Warrap through the delivery of the following outputs:

a) Public administration buildings and rule of law infrastructure (county headquarters, county and payam-level police facilities and county courts) for supporting the extension of state authority to the underserved and conflict prone areas;
b) Water facilities, including large reservoirs for watering cattle and boreholes for supplying water to local communities, with the aim of providing access to clean water and also to mitigate conflict over scarce water sources during the migration of cattle in the dry season;
c) Access and security roads to and through insecure areas, for connecting communities as well as creating access to the most insecure and underserved areas;
d) Public radio telecommunication infrastructure and services for promoting social cohesion through peace-building and educational broadcasts.

Initiatives for stabilizing conflict prone communities were identified and validated through county and state-level consultations and conflict mapping processes within each state's respective counties.

UNDP served as the '*Coordinating Agency*', providing oversight, coordination, monitoring and technical support on implementation of these programmes by participating UN organizations and NGO implementing partners.

2. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The independent evaluation aims to assess the overall contribution of Round 3: the Joint Stabilization Programmes towards improving community security and reducing the levels of ethnic conflicts while distilling lessons and best practices to feed into future programming. This evaluation will cover relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, partnership as well as impact and sustainability of the Un Joint Stabilization Programmes. The evaluation will assess the intended and unintended outputs, outcomes and (possible) impact of the Stabilization Programmes on the target communities and make recommendations to enhance operational and programmatic effectiveness of similar initiatives in comparable situations.

The evaluation findings will be disseminated to all stakeholders including the Government of South Sudan, the beneficiaries, donors, PUNOs and other implementing partners. This evaluation will provide SSRF stakeholders with a comprehensive assessment of the results, impact, efficiency and effectiveness of the UN Joint Stabilization Programmes in meeting stabilization and recovery needs of the four conflict-affected target states—Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes and Warrap. In addition, the evaluation will strengthen mutual accountability among all development partners/stakeholders.

3. EVALUATION SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the validity of the SSRF Round 3 implicit Theory of Change in post-conflict and fragile state contexts, such as South Sudan. In light of this, the study will have to assess the Stabilization Programmes against a number of parameters set under evaluation questions in the sections below.

This evaluation will cover all UN Joint Stabilization Programmes target areas in Eastern Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes and Warrap states of South Sudan over the implementation period; January 2011 to June 2015 for Eastern Equatoria, Lakes State and Warrap Stabilization Programmes, and from November 2010 to June 2015 for Jonglei Stabilization Programme. The evaluation will cover programme conceptualisation (theory of change), design, implementation, internal monitoring and evaluation and output, outcome and impact. The UN Joint Stabilization Programmes inputs include: road, public administration, rule of law, public radio as well as water infrastructures. Target beneficiaries of the UN Joint Stabilization Programmes include state and local level government institutions as well as local communities in the project areas.

Specific objectives of the evaluation are:

a) To assess the relevance, ownership, effectiveness and efficiency of the Stabilization Programmes as well as understand the key factors that have contributed to achievement or non-achievement of the intended results;
b) To determine the extent to which the Stabilization Programmes contributed to forging and strengthening of partnerships among key stakeholders including Government, donors, UN agencies and beneficiary communities;
c) To assess the management arrangements and capacity in place by the Stabilization Programmes, Government and the beneficiary communities in sustaining the results achieved;
d) To assess opportunity costs of engaging in infrastructure investments in South Sudan;
e) To draw lessons learned and best practices and make recommendations for future programming of projects of similar nature.

4. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation questions include, but not limited to the following. Final decision on the evaluation questions will emerge from consultations among the UNDP programme unit, evaluators, and ERG.

Relevance:
- o How clear was the distinction between post-conflict recovery and construction components of the programme?
- o How relevant were the menu offered to the recovery and reconstruction needs of South Sudan?
- o To what extent were community voices incorporated effectively into local decision-making processes and siting of interventions? How could the project have given stronger voices to the local beneficiary communities?
- o How appropriate were the criteria for deciding choices of interventions menu for beneficiaries' security needs and socio-economic contexts?
- o How appropriate and useful were the roles of state level governance boards in the selection and monitoring of interventions in targeted states?
- o To what extent did the SSRF UN joint stabilization Programmes achieve the intended results and were there any unintended results?
- o To what extent did the SSRF UN Joint stabilization Programmes address state and local community priorities?
- o To what extent were the SSRF UN Joint Stabilization Programmes appropriate in terms of programme conceptualization and design?
- o To what extent did the SSRF UN Joint Stabilization Programme design contribute toward the overall recovery objectives and priorities as perceived by the beneficiaries?
- o To what extent did the SSRF UN Joint stabilization Programmes contribute to enhancing the capacity of government institutions and beneficiary communities?
- o To what extent did programme interventions contribute to mitigating local tensions and conflicts?

Effectiveness
- o How effective and efficient were the strategic partnerships that were established under the SSRF UN Joint Stabilization Programmes in programme monitoring, coordination and implementation?
- o How did the Stabilization Programmes contribute to the realization of underlying programme objectives, as perceived by the beneficiaries?
- o Have the Stabilization Programmes been able to achieve the stipulated results? Did they increase beneficiaries' security?
- o What progress have been made towards the intended outcomes?
- o What are the major factors that facilitated or impeded achievement or non-achievement of the intended results? How effective were the mitigation measures in addressing the challenges and identified risks?
- o To what extent have the SSRF UN Joint Stabilization Programme outputs contributed to the intended outcomes?
- o What is the quality and utility of the assets created under the programme?
- o How did interventions explicitly address issues of exclusion of vulnerable groups, including women and girls, and what influence did programme interventions have on these groups?
- o To what extent were the recommendations of the 2012 lessons learnt report implemented?

Efficiency
- o How efficient were PUNOs in the delivery of the Stabilization Programmes and did they respond effectively to emerging stabilization and recovery needs?
- o To what extent did the coordination of activities and engagement among the SSRF stakeholders contribute to the achievement or non-achievement of the outcomes?
- o Did the programme's implementing partners have the requisite skills/capacity to deliver infrastructure and develop governments' institutional capacity at local levels?
- o To what extent were the SSRF stabilization programmes efficient in transforming inputs into outputs and did the outputs contribute to the envisaged outcomes?
- o How efficiently was the fund flow managed at different levels? Were levels of subsequent fund disbursements comparable to the levels of physical progress made in the infrastructure across all the programmes? In other words, to what extent did the fund managers apply payment by milestones arrangement with implementing partners? Were there flow of funds tracking, disbursement triggers and monitoring of physical progress of infrastructure?
- o To what extent did the SSRF Stabilization Joint Programmes contribute to the enhancement of sustainable natural resources planning and management?
- o Did the SSRF UN Joint Stabilization Programmes provide value for money in terms of costs and benefits?
- o To what extent was the programme complementing other interventions in target states?

Partnership/ownership/sustainability:
- o To what extent are the assets created under the programme likely to be utilised and maintained beyond the programme end date by the intended beneficiaries?
- o How many target beneficiary communities' security needs have worsened since the outbreak of internal conflict in December 2013?
- o What were the levels of participation of the different stakeholders at the different implementation phases?
- o Has the SSRF UN Joint Stabilization Programmes partnership strategy been appropriate, effective and contributed to sustainable impact?
- o What is the extent of ownership of the SSRF outputs among the different stakeholders at the different levels and implementation phases?
- o How were risks owned and monitored throughout programme delivery?
- o How strong is the level of ownership of the SSRF UN Joint Stabilization Programmes outputs by the government and beneficiary communities?
- o What is the level of stated commitment by the government and beneficiary community in sustaining the SSRF UN Joint Stabilization Programmes outputs/outcomes and continue working for sustaining/enhancing the impact?
- o Have some lessons learnt been transferred to partners, including local governments, in order to strengthen long-term sustainability?
- o What lessons learnt need to inform future stabilization and/or post conflict recovery interventions?
- o What was the impact of interventions in the different states on social cohesion or women's empowerment at local levels?
- o Overall, was the Steering Committee's role inclusive enough to strategically guide programme relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and in leveraging partnerships among the stakeholders?
- o Was SSRF balance right in relation to investments given to software as opposed to hardware?

5. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation process will involve a wide range of methods. The evaluation is expected to adopt a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches including document review, stakeholder interviews, site inspections, system analysis, inventory and resource records and cost / benefit analysis. The evaluators will have access to all relevant documents and staff who have worked on SSRF Round 3 and will develop a rigorous methodology for the final evaluation and the sampling strategy as part of this assignment with guidance provided by the programme team. An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG)—consisting of donor representatives, lead UN coordinating agency and the SSRF Secretariat—will be established and the ERG will evaluate the proposed methodologies as part of the selection process.

The evaluation process will include the following:
- Document review and analysis;
- Interviews with key beneficiaries (target population) and key stakeholders (both men and women) including SSRF Secretariat, donors, government officials, Participating United Nations Organisations (PUNOs);
- Field visits;
- Participatory observation and rapid appraisal and
- Incorporation of stakeholder feedback to the draft evaluation report.

Documents related to SSRF Round 3 will be provided as reference. Please see section 12 for the list of documents.

6. EVALUATION PRODUCTS (DELIVERABLES)

The main deliverables of the evaluation are:
a) **Inception report**: The inception report should detail the evaluators understanding of the final evaluation questions and objectives; present a detailed methodology including sampling strategy, data collection and analysis plan (based on the guidance given by the ERG). The inception report should also include a refined work plan with clear timelines, detailing key deliverables and a comprehensive evaluation matrix with a detailed list of key questions, sub questions relating to the evaluation criteria; data sources; methods of data collection, indicators/success standards and methods of data analysis.

b) **Draft evaluation report and a PowerPoint presentation**: The first draft of the report will be completed in-country. The first draft will contain summary of key findings, lessons learned, risk management and recommendations, which will be presented in Juba to the Steering Committee and to other key stakeholders. Feedback from the presentation and reviews by key stakeholders will be shared with the evaluator for finalisation of the report.

c) **Final evaluation report**: After incorporating feedback received on the draft report, the evaluator will submit a final report as per the agreed timelines. The evaluator will attach the following annexes to the final report; data collection tools and guidelines, datasets, analysis plans, collation and aggregation tables, risk matrix, etc., if available. Guidance for the outline of the report is contained in Annex 1 below.
The evaluator will make a presentation of the evaluation findings to all stakeholders including state government officials.

7. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION AND REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

Skills and qualifications
The evaluator will be an international firm with extensive experience of conducting improvement-and-accountability evaluations in stabilization and post conflict recovery programmes. The evaluation provider is expected to demonstrate:

- **Excellent value for money:** including competitive consultancy rates, a detailed financial plan, a clear methodology to ensure products will be delivered in line with agreed costs, a mitigation strategy for financial risk, and clear financial reporting processes.
- **An excellent understanding of evaluation principles and methodologies:** including capacity in a range of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods; evidence of research or implementation expertise in stabilization and post conflict recovery; and an awareness of gender, social and conflict analysis in evaluation.
- **Expertise in communications, dissemination and advocacy around evaluation findings:** including a good understanding of the use of evidence-based approaches to influence stakeholders.
- **A high quality proposal for this assignmen**t: including a good understanding of these terms of reference; an evaluation methodology which meets international best practice; and a realistic and adequate workplan to deliver outputs.
- **A qualified and structured team:** including demonstrated capacity by the study leader in financial and human resource management, and in the production of timely, high-quality reports; a balance of appropriate skills and expertise within the team in evaluation methodologies, sector expertise, and social analysis; and appropriate involvement of local partners to build evaluation capacity and provide value for money.

It would be up to the evaluator to propose the optimum team composition and clearly specify the role of each team member required to achieve the objectives of the evaluation. However, it is suggested that the evaluation team must be composed of experts who have proven knowledge and relevant work experience in the field of conflict and community security as well as sound knowledge about results-based management (especially results-oriented monitoring and evaluation). The team needs to comprise local (South Sudanese) and international experts. Given the limited timeframe available, it is expected that (at least) two teams be deployed to cover the field work. Each team should have at least one South Sudanese team member.

The independent evaluator should have:

- At least ten years of experience in programme evaluations, of which at least five years should be in international settings – preferably in post-conflict or fragile state contexts;
- Experience in operating in difficult operational environment;
- Experience in South Sudan, post-conflict areas, and/or other East African countries will be an advantage;
- Experience in engaging with local community members, using participatory and consultative approaches;
- Experience in engaging with government institutions and handling sensitive information;
- Experience in monitoring/evaluating conflict prevention, peacebuilding, stabilization or community security-related programmes or projects will be an advantage; and

- The evaluation team should be sufficient and technically qualified to monitor and implement activities and deliver all required outputs. Moreover, the evaluation teams must have:
  - Demonstrated strong oral and written communications skills;
  - Good interpersonal skills and ability to work in a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity;
  - Ability to work independently with minimal supervision and maintain flexibility in working hours.

8. EVALUATION ETHICS

The evaluation should be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the United Nations Evaluation Group Ethical Guideline, which is available at http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/100. Evaluator's methodology should ensure independence and impartiality of judgment in assessment findings and recommendations.

9. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The selected independent evaluator is responsible for the overall evaluation activities and quality of the evaluation process as well as the products. An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) composed of representatives of SSRF stakeholders and partners will be established. The independent evaluator reports to the ERG and the Evaluation Manager (SSRF Secretariat). The ERG reviews the deliverables and methodologies proposed by the evaluator and advices on any improvements to ensure the validity and quality of the evaluation, if need be. Moreover, the UNDP SSRF stabilization team will:
- Provide the evaluator with appropriate support (in those situations that are beyond the evaluator's control) to ensure that the objective of the evaluation is achieved with reasonable efficiency and effectiveness;
- Appoint a focal point in the programme section to support the evaluator during the evaluation process;
- Ensure that relevant documents are available to the consultants upon the commencement of their tasks;
- Coordinate and inform government counterparts, partners and other related stakeholders as needed;
- Support to identify key stakeholders to be interviewed as part of the assessment;
- Help in liaising with partners; and
- Organize inception meetings between the selected evaluator, partners and stakeholders prior to the scheduled start of the evaluation assignment.

10. TIMEFRAME FOR THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluator should provide the detail list of activities and timeframe during the inception report. However, evaluation activities should be carried out and deliverables produced within 40 working days during the period mid-April to June 2015.

11. PAYMENT MODALITY:

The payment modality would be based on the following milestones:
a) Up on signing of the agreement (20%).

b) Completion of inception report (30%).
c) Submission of Draft Evaluation Report and a PowerPoint presentation (30%).
d) Submission of Final Evaluation Report (20%).

12. DOCUMENT FOR STUDY BY THE CONSULTANTS
- SSRF Terms of Reference
- Strategic Framework of the SSRF
- Republic of South Sudan Aid Strategy
- South Sudan Development Plan
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Standard Administrative Agreements
- UNDG Guidance Note on Establishing, Managing and Closing Multi-Donor Trust Funds (7 January 2011)
- UNDG Guidance Note on Joint Programming (2003)
- UNDG Generic SC TOR
- Consolidated Annual reports (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014)
- SSRF Lessons Learned Exercise Report (2012)
- Quarterly Progress Reports
- Project Evaluation Reports
- Audit Reports
- Field visits reports
- Bi-lateral donor review report
- DFID SSRF Completion Review 2014
- OCHA South Sudan conflict related incidents reports and maps
- DFID 2014 SSRF Project Completion Review Report
- Approved programme documents and
- Other relevant documents.

Information on the SSRF and documents/reports can be found using the following link:
http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/SRF00

ANNEX 1: SUGGESTED REPORT STRUCTURE

Indicative section	Description and comments
Title and opening pages	
Table of contents	
List of acronyms and abbreviations	
Executive summary	This should be an extremely short chapter, highlighting the evaluation mandate, approach, key findings, conclusions and recommendations. Often, readers will only look at the executive summary. It should be prepared **after** the main text has been reviewed and agreed, and should not be circulated with draft reports.
Chapter 1: Introduction (Background and approach/methodology)	Introduce the rationale for the evaluation, including mandate, purpose and objectives, outline the main evaluation issues including the expected contribution at the outcome level, address evaluability and describe the methodology to be used.
Chapter 2: The development context and challenges of South Sudan	In addition to providing a general overview of historical trends and development challenges, specifically address the evaluation theme. Explain how the theme is addressed by government, and how it is reflected in national policies and strategies. Also provide information on the activities of other development partners in the area.
Chapter 3: SSRF UN Joint Stabilization Programmes response and challenges	Against the background of Chapter 2, explain what the SSRF UN Joint Stabilization Programmes have achieved in this area (purely descriptive, not analytical). Provide the overarching outcome model, specifying the results frameworks for the programmes, as well descriptions of some of the main SSRF UN Joint Stabilization Programmes activities.
Chapter 4: Development results (Presentation of findings based on the evaluation criteria, questions and other cross-cutting issues).	Against the background of Chapters 2-3, analyse findings without repeating information already provided. Also, minimize the need to mention additional factual information regarding projects and programmes (these should be described in Chapter 3). Focus on providing and analysing **evidence** relating to the evaluation criteria. Preferably, structure the analysis on the basis of the main evaluation criteria: • **Relevance** • **Effectiveness** • **Efficiency** • **partnership** • **Sustainability.** In addressing the evaluation criteria, the narrative should respond to the corresponding evaluation questions identified and agreed on during the inception stage. It should also provide a summary analysis of the findings.
Chapter 5: Conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations	Conclusions are judgments based on evidence provided in Chapter 4. They are pitched at a higher level and are informed by an overall, comparative understanding of all relevant issues, options and opportunities. Do not provide new evidence or repeat evidence contained in earlier chapters. Lessons learnt and recommendations should be derived from the evidence contained in Chapter 4. They may also, but need not necessarily, relate to conclusions.
Annexes	