



## Terms of Reference

### Equity-focused Systematic Review of Viet Nam's One Plan (2012-2016)

#### 1. Background

The One Plan (2012-2016) is the **common programmatic framework** for UN agencies in Viet Nam responding to Viet Nam's priorities as outlined in the 2011-2020 Socio-Economic Development Strategy and the 2011-2015 Socio-Economic Development Plan. Leadership and oversight for the implementation of the One Plan, as well as of the broader Delivering As One (DaO) initiative, adopted back in 2006 following the 2005 Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness, has been provided by a **tripartite governance structure** formed by the Government of Viet Nam, the United Nations and the donor community.

The One Plan (2012-2016) incorporates lesson learned during the implementation of the One Plan (2006-2007) and the One Plan (2008-2011) and is therefore designed aiming at even **greater programme coherence and coordination** by the participating UN Agencies in order to achieve better results for the benefit of the people of Viet Nam.

The One Plan is organized around three Focus Areas -(1) Inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth, (2) Access to quality essential services and social protection, and (3) Enhanced governance and participation- and it has a **strong equity-focus**, with eight out of twelve One Plan Outcomes and 11 of 43 Outputs explicitly mentioning 'most vulnerable and disadvantaged' groups as key right holders (Annex A: One Plan overview).

As indicated in the One Plan signed document, an evaluation will be undertaken in the penultimate year of the Plan's implementation (that is 2015) assessing the work accomplished at the country level since 2012 and formulating recommendations to inform the development of the One Plan 2017-2021. In **preparation for the evaluation in 2015**, an equity-focused systematic review of the One Plan will be conducted in 2014 as outlined in the next sections.

## 2. Purpose, objectives and value added

The equity-focused Systematic Review has two-fold objectives under an overall purpose of improving development results particularly for most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups through evidence-based learning.

First, it is expected to **help define a manageable scope for the evaluation** in 2015 by reconstructing the One Plan's theory of change and identifying existing and anticipated limitations in terms of One Plan's conceptual design and data availability.

Secondly, it is meant to **enhance learning on what works and what does not for achieving equity-focused development results** by analyzing the effectiveness to date of UN and partner's efforts to reduce disparities, with special emphasis on reaching vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, on each of the three One Plan's Focus Areas.

The value added of the proposed approach is its **cost-effectiveness** considering that the systematic review approach:

- Is expected to obtain critical information on 'what works' in terms of achieving equity-focused results under the One Plan by taking advantage of UN agencies' relevant evaluation and reviews conducted to date, therefore adding a minimal cost to individual UN agencies.
- Is designed as a rigorous and comprehensive form of desk review to be conducted in a resource intensive manner.
- Is expected to facilitate the planning and design of the evaluation in 2015 by identifying knowledge gaps and highlighting inconsistencies and weaknesses in the One Plan Focus Areas' theory of change.

## 3. Key questions

The proposed systematic review will seek to answer the following key questions:

### Objective 1:

**Assess the quality of the One Plan's conceptual design and the availability and adequacy of progress information and evaluative evidence**

- a. To what extent is the One Plan results framework coherently articulated? To what extent do the outcomes, outputs and annual expected results per Focus Area follow results chain logic?
- b. What are the systems and practices currently in place to promote equity-focused monitoring and evaluation within the UN system? And within national systems? What are the challenges and/or enabling factors?
- c. What are the most promising areas for collaboration among national partners and the UN system on equity-focused monitoring and evaluation? What are untapped opportunities?

**Objective 2:**

**Assess the effectiveness to date of UN and partner's efforts to reduce disparities, with special emphasis on reaching vulnerable and disadvantaged groups**

- a. What have been the contributions to equity-focused development results achieved to date by UN agencies and partners on the three Focus Areas?
- b. What is the relevance of these results for national commitments to development results?
- c. How are these results being achieved? What were key enabling factors, constraining factors, lessons learned and good practices identified at this point?

**4. Scope and Methodology**

The systematic review is proposed to be conducted by external independent evaluation/research consultants over a two-month period from October-November 2014. The final report will be organized into two sections aligned to the two objectives and related questions and will be based on secondary data from existing evaluations, reviews and other relevant documents available as well as a selected number of interviews with key stakeholders.

**Section 1** will involve an in-depth systematic review and meta-analysis of the findings and lessons learned from the contribution to equity-focused results contained in evaluations and reviews conducted by UN agencies to date. The main, but not exclusive, source of information will be Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP), which is a database that has identified around 83 evaluations and 46 reviews of UN agency work in Viet Nam from 2012 until the end of 2016 (See Annex B). The analysis will be organized around the One Plan's Focus Areas. A first screening will determine whether a critical mass of evaluative evidence is available for each Focus Area. Additional sampling criteria will be developed.

**Section 2** will require outlining and analyzing the One Plan's theory of change based on the One Plan Results Framework and 2012, 2013 and 2014 Annual Work Plans. It will also consist of a comparative analysis of the monitoring and evaluation systems used by the whole UN, individual UN agencies and national partner in the framework of the One Plan (2012-2016) implementation.

**5. Management**

Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the consultant team.

The UN Results Based Management Working Group (RBM WG) who will act as the focal point for this exercise will support the chair of the group in decision-making and provide quality assurance throughout the process and may request revisions of products until quality standards have been achieved. A member from UNEDAP/UNEG will provide advisory support. (see annex C for detailed description of responsibilities).

The draft report will be shared with the UNCT, Government of Viet Nam (specifically Ministry of Planning and Investment) and the One UN Informal Donor Group for comments and findings will be presented to the Delivering as One Steering Committee (DaO SC).

## **6. Evaluation team qualifications**

The review will be conducted by external independent consultants. The team will be composed by an Evaluation Specialist and a Research Assistant.

The required qualifications are as follows:

### ***Evaluation Specialist***

- An MA related to any of the social sciences, preferably international development.
- At least 7 years of working experience in designing and conducting reviews, research or evaluation.
- Experience in a wide range of qualitative and quantitative approaches, methods and techniques.
- Excellent analytical skills.
- Ability to work with the RBM WG to produce a high quality report delivered in a timely basis.
- Knowledge and experience working with the UN system.
- Experience working in development issues in Viet Nam.
- Familiarity with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Evaluation Norms and Standards.
- Specific experience in conducting meta-analysis/synthesis will be an asset.
- Experience and background in gender equality, specifically international normative frameworks, gender mainstreaming and gender analysis will be an asset.
- Experience and knowledge in human rights issues, the human rights-based approach to programming, human rights analysis and related UN mandates will be an asset.
- Proficiency in English.

### ***Research Assistant***

- An Bachelors Degree related to any of the social sciences, preferably international development.
- At least 3 to 5 years of working experience in designing and conducting reviews, research or evaluation.
- Experience in some qualitative and quantitative approaches, methods and techniques.
- Excellent analytical skills.
- Ability to work with the Management Group to produce a high quality report delivered in a timely basis.
- Knowledge and experience working with the UN system.
- Experience working in development issues in Viet Nam.
- Familiarity with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards.
- Specific experience in conducting meta-analysis/synthesis will be an asset.
- Experience and background in gender equality, specifically international normative frameworks, gender mainstreaming and gender analysis will be an asset.
- Experience and knowledge in human rights issues, the human rights-based approach to programming, human rights analysis and related UN mandates will be an asset.
- Proficiency in English.

## 7. Timeframe and Deliverables

The proposed timeframe and expected products will be discussed and finalized with the selected consultants.

	Timeframe		Evaluation Team working days
	Begin	End	
<b>Phase I – Preparation</b>			
TORS approved by UNCT	25 Aug	5 Sept	
Selecting and contracting an Evaluation Team	5 Sept	30 Sept	
<b>Phase II - Conduct of the systematic review</b>			
Work plan and feedback	<b>1 Oct</b>	3 Oct	3 days
Inception report (detailed methodology and final report structure) and feedback	6 Oct	8 Oct	3 days
Power Point presentation with preliminary findings	9 Oct	17 Oct	7 days
Draft report	17 Oct	31 Oct	10 days
Feedback to the draft report	3 Nov	14 Nov	
Final report (including a summary of purpose, methodology and key findings)	17 Nov	<b>21 Nov</b>	5 days
<b>Phase III- Use of findings</b>			
Dissemination (RBM WG to develop a user-friendly Policy Brief for wider dissemination)		Dec	
UNCT to discuss and decide on the follow up actions		Dec	
DaO SC members to be informed		Dec	
			<b>Total: 28 working days</b>

The RBM WG reserves the right to ensure the quality of products submitted by the external consultants and will request revisions until the product meets the quality standards as expressed by the group.

The Evaluation Team will maintain an audit trail of the comments received from the RBM WG and provide a response on how the comments were addressed in the final report.

The final products will be delivered in electronic format in both PDF and Word versions, with all text and images provided in formats that facilitate the copy-editing, format and design of products for publication.

## **Annex A: One Plan**

[http://www.un.org.vn/en/publications/one-un-documents/cat\\_view/106-one-un-documents/119-one-plan.html](http://www.un.org.vn/en/publications/one-un-documents/cat_view/106-one-un-documents/119-one-plan.html)

## **Annex B: Proposed sources of information**

### **Objective 1:**

- One Plan (2012-2016) between the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the United Nations in Viet Nam.
- SEDS (2011-2010) and SEDP (2011-2015)
- One Plan online Database
- One Plan Annual Work Plans 2012, 2013 and 2014
- DaO Results and Monitoring Framework
- Results Based Management Strategy (December 2012)

### **Objective 2:**

The IMEP to date makes reference to:

- Research and Survey
- Reviews
- Evaluations

In addition to this the Viet Nam Delivering as One Annual Results Report 2012 and 2013 can also be used as sources of information under this objective.

## **Annex C: Responsibilities of the RBM WG as the focal point for the Systematic Review**

- To support the hiring process of the team of external consultants, reviewing proposals and approving the selection of the team;
- To supervise and guide the evaluation team in each step of the process;
- To review, provide substantive comments and approve the work plan and inception report;
- To review and provide substantive feedback to the draft and final reports, for quality assurance purposes;
- To ensure the quality and independence of the exercise and to guarantee its alignment with UNEG Norms and Standards and Ethical Guidelines;
- To facilitate the team access to information and update the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation plan as needed;
- To ensure the findings and conclusions are relevant and recommendations are implementable; and
- To contribute to the dissemination of the findings;
- To support the drafting of the management response for the Reference Group's endorsement and DaO Steering Committee's approval.