

**Draft Terms of reference**

**Final evaluation of the Project “Expansion of Successful Poverty Reduction and Women’s Empowerment Model in West Africa”**

1. **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

Smallholder farms are the hallmark of Africa’s landscape and economy. In Sub-Saharan Africa, where there are over 60 million smallholder farmers, more than two-thirds of farm holdings have an average size of less than one hectare but account for over 90 percent of the region’s agricultural output[[1]](#footnote-1). The majority of these farmers practice subsistence farming or operate in local markets due to low productivity, lack of agro-processing skills and facilities and limited access to lucrative markets at the national and international levels. This has kept the incomes of rural people low, entrenching millions of Africans in poverty. Food and agro-processing are particularly important aspects of Africa’s agricultural sector. *In* *Africa*, *food processing accounts for 40 percent of the value-added by manufacturing*[[2]](#footnote-2). These activities, which are mostly cottage, informal enterprises, are a major source of rural food, income and employment. They create jobs and income for about 60 percent of the Sub-Saharan African labor-force, most of whom are women[[3]](#footnote-3). Improving food- and agro-processing is key to adding value to Africa’s agricultural sector and promoting equitable economic growth.

Realizing this, a number of West African countries are taking steps to improve their agro-processing industries. One of the first to do so is the Government of Mali, which is developing a plan to ensure universal access to food and agro-processing in rural areas of the country. Other West African countries - namely Burkina Faso and Senegal - have taken similar steps. Most notable of all, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), is putting forth plans to provide *all* villages within the region, covering over 150 million people, with access to modern agro-processing services within the next 10 years[[4]](#footnote-4).

The project “Expansion of Successful Poverty Reduction and Women’s Empowerment Model in West Africa**”** has been developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) to feed directly into these national and regional plans.

This proposal is designed to build upon the Malian experience and broaden its success within Mali and to other West African countries, namely Burkina Faso and Senegal, where similar efforts are underway. UNDP, as the proponent and implementer of the project, has more than a decade-long experience and knowledge of direct relevance to the project; a direct result of UNDP-supported multifunctional platform projects in West Africa. In 2013, a supplement funding was awarded aiming at consolidating the results gained and for the development of high performing and more commercially competitive MFP agro-enterprises.

The project intends to consolidate field-proven best practices into rural agro-enterprise models that are replicable and scalable across West Africa and other Sub-Saharan countries. These best practices will inform the implementation of the project and help to accelerate the scaling up of rural agro-enterprises across the region. This project is aimed at establishing sustainable, replicable rural agro-enterprises in West Africa to raise incomes of rural smallholder farmers, particularly women.

The 660 MFP-based agro-enterprises implemented by this project represent a significant increase in the number of MFP-based agro-enterprises in the region and an important contribution to improving the livelihood of smallholder farmers. While the enterprises are important outputs in themselves, they are also significant in their role in generating lessons and knowledge for national/regional up-scaling.

The project has interrelated and mutually reinforcing objectives:

1. The first is to enable smallholder women to increase and diversify their income by developing 600 MFP-based agro-enterprises in Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal.
2. The second part of the project is to strengthen human and institutional capacities which are essential to expanding service delivery at the community level and to up-scale.
3. The third and last part of the project seeks to enable governments to upscale their MFP programs by consolidating best practices into rural agro-enterprise models that are replicable and scalable across West Africa and *other* Sub Saharan countries.

In Addition, the supplement funding aims at consolidating the results built on existing activities and the enhancement of the project’s impact through specific activities in supporting the shift to more commercially driven MFP agro-enterprises.

The project is aimed at helping Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal and the rest of West Africa achieve their vision of universal access to mechanical power for agro-processing within the next 15 years (2015-2030); thereby helping to enable millions of smallholder farmers, particularly women, to improve their livelihood.

Expected Outcomes[[5]](#footnote-5):

1. Income of 260,000 rural women (direct clients of the agro-enterprises) increased by 30-50% within 5 years
2. Time savings for women and young girls (2 to 6 hours per day)
3. Women diversify away from low value staple foods (e.g. shea nuts) into higher value commodities (e.g. shea butter)
4. Increased trading activities for agricultural commodities in local markets (due to an increase in women’s market attendance and visits from nearby villages)
5. Production of rice and other agricultural commodities increased along with their household consumption and the amount of surplus available for marketing
6. Income of rural women diversified through increased off-farm income generating opportunities
7. Girl-to-boy ratios in primary school increased
8. Number of young girls completing primary school increased
9. Institutional and human capacity strengthened at local and national levels to support the planning, implementation and monitoring of MFP programs, including the expansion of technology and financing options
10. Enhanced knowledge codification and sharing in support of implementing MFP-based agro-enterprises
11. All three countries have launched full scale national MFP programs with complementary funding from national budgets and development banks to cover all villages in need of agro-processing services
12. Sustainable, replicable rural ago-enterprise models conceptualized and adopted throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, ensuring universal access to mechanical power for agro-processing within 10 years
13. Number of MFP agro-enterprises performing on a sustainable basis and commercially competitive

Expected Outputs:

1. MFP-based agro-enterprises installed and functioning in an autonomous manner
2. Capacity building provided to national coordination offices;
3. Plans developed for full fledge national programmes with country specifics,
4. Local experts (from academia, NGOs and private enterprises) trained on all aspects of MFP operations
5. Local and national credit facilities made available to MFP-based enterprises for helping finance new equipment and income generating activities
6. Income generating activities enabled by increased availability of new MFP services and provision of adequate technology options
7. National policy dialogue process initiated, endorsing MFP-based agro-enterprises
8. National and local development plans and budgetary frameworks aligned to support an up-scaled agro-enterprise program over 10 years
9. Learning network on agro-processing enterprises is operational and linked to partner groups at national and community level
10. Operational experience captured in communication tools and guides
11. Data from the implementation of MFPs gathered and distilled into lessons learned
12. Best practices published and shared
13. Full-scale national MFP programs approved and launched in all three countries
14. Strategy in place for scaling up MFP-based agro-enterprises in ECOWAS and the rest of Sub Saharan Africa
15. Transition phase from actual project to innovative approaches, including use of renewable energies,
16. High performing MFP transformed into more commercially competitive agro-enterprises and further expand to additional agricultural inputs;
17. Number of MFP women entrepreneurs’ center of agribusiness developed to increase productivity and market access.

The regional project is essentially a mechanism for initiating national dialogues, knowledge/capacity transfer and policy analysis/advocacy, which will result in the establishment and the implementation of a number of national rural agro-enterprises using multifunctional platforms.

The project includes a Regional Component implemented through The United Nations Office for Project services (UNOPS) from 2008 to December 2013 (UNDP DEX started on January 2014) and 3 National Components implemented by UNDP Country Offices in Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal, through the National Execution (NEX) method.

1. **RATIONALE FOR THE FINAL EVALUATION**

The project has been operational for over seven years (both *initial and supplementary phase*) and needs to be evaluated in accordance with the governance principles of the project. The purpose of the final evaluation is to:

1. assess overall performance of the project and identify constraints and prospects in the implementation of project activities paying particular attention to whether or not the project goals and objectives have been met effectively and efficiently within the given time frame and resources.
2. and examine opportunities and outline potential areas of collaboration and support from various actors and stakeholders (sub regions, UNDP CO, Gates…) in order to further define the institutional setting beyond this project.

UNDP and the ting ins anvices and support for expanding access to energy services and strengthening the RECs role in promoting acceGates Foundation value external and independent assessment of results achieved and its contribution to sharing lessons learned on projects funded through their initiatives.

1. **SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION**

The evaluation will assess the performance of the project based on the following criteria:

**Effectiveness:** have project objectives been achieved. In doing so, the team is expected to, amongst other things, assess:

1. the design and process of implementation of country projects;
2. The level of implementation of projects in each beneficiary country (Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal);
3. internal and external factors that affected positively or negatively the performance of each component and measure the effect of specific countries contexts on the implementation of projects;
4. the extent to which the outputs produced will contribute to expected outcomes.

**Efficiency**: Assess the cost effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation process in terms of how much it costs to convert inputs into outputs, including the efficacy of management arrangements and other accountability arrangements.

**Relevance:** Relevance of the project to UNDP mandate, national priorities and to needs of targeted women and men. Also, determine relevance of the strategies deployed (strengths, weaknesses and gaps).

**Sustainability and impact:** Assess the probability of continuation of country level project activities after phasing out of UNDP support – which by design was intended as catalytic instrument, and provide recommendations for strengthening sustainability.

In addition, the three elements outlined below, should be included in assessing the performance of the project:

1. **Lessons learned**: Record significant lessons learnt from the experience at both country and regional levels. Such lessons should include those pertaining to the design, implementation and management of the project.
2. **Partnerships :** Assess the strategic and substantive relevance of the partnership established during the implementation of the project;
3. **The operational Context**: identify factors that facilitated and/or hindered both the advancement and production of project outputs.

Given this is a final evaluation the team is further expected to assess the following:

1. Assessment of which outputs were achieved, lessons learnt and whether the outputs so achieved are contributing to the intended outcomes?
2. Current and possible trends in the near future with regard to the outcomes?
3. Whether sufficient progress has been made vis-à-vis the outcomes as measured by the outcome indicators?
4. Identify the main factors (positive and negative), if any, which have affected the project implementation and progress towards the achievement of the outcomes?
5. Assess relational and management coherence between UNDP Country Offices, National Counterparts, and the UNDP Regional Office?
6. Whether the project’s and/or other interventions can be plausibly linked to progress towards achievement of the outcomes?
7. Assessment of the perceived impact of the project and the role so far played or, to be played, by relevant partners in the achievement of the ultimate impact?
8. The key development and advisory contributions that the project has made/is making towards the outcomes?
9. The project’s ability to develop regional capacity in a sustainable manner (through exposure to best practices in other regions and south-south cooperation)?
10. **METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation will be conducted by two independent, international consultants one of whom will be the team leader. The team leader will be responsible for presenting a detailed methodology for the final evaluation and including a structured set of questionnaires to be used for data gathering. Specifically, he/she will be responsible for developing tools and methods to be used to collect and analyze relevant information for evaluation. Overall guidance on the Project evaluation and approach are provided in the UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results.

In particular, the methodological approach will be based on:

1. Literature review (key documents); the consultants will analyze the various documents and reports (e.g., briefs, progress reports) detailing the activities of the project and any other document enabling a better understanding of the project including (financial information, consultation reports, studies, documentation of countries Projects, etc.);
2. Meetings and interviews with stakeholders (including national institutions and women involved or benefiting from the Project at the country level), partners and resource persons;
3. Interviews through questionnaires, individual or group (focus group);
4. Participatory techniques or any other methods of collecting relevant information;
5. Processing and analysis of information that are collected to produce the report.
6. **EVALUATION OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES**

The four main deliverables of this evaluation will include:

1. **An inception report on the evaluation design** (in both hard and soft copies): This entails the production of an initial report describing the evaluation methodology to be used for the evaluation. It shall describe the understanding of evaluators of the elements that are evaluated and indicate how each evaluation question will be answered by using the proposed methods, data sources and data collection procedures, identification of key stakeholders, evaluation matrix. It will include data collection instruments (questionnaires and guides individual semi-structured interview and focus groups, etc.). The report must also include a detailed timeline of the various tasks of each team member. It will be approved by the Team Leader, DRR, CC & Energy on behalf of UNDP, after review by the Regional Project and Evaluation Advisors (at both RSC-A and the Dakar Platform).
2. **A draft evaluation report** (in both hard and soft copies): the evaluation team will prepare the **mid-** report corresponding to the format provided in UNDP evaluation hand book. This draft report will serve as a working paper for UNDP.

This report will not exceed 25 pages excluding annexes. It will provide:

* List of acronyms and abbreviations,
* Table of contents, including list of annexes,
* Executive Summary in English and French (maximum 4 pages),
* Introduction: (Project description, including regional context, its logical framework and the external factors that have affected and or are likely to affect success,
* Evaluation purpose and objective (including the rationale and the scope of the Evaluation,
* The Evaluation Criteria,
* The Evaluation approach and methodology including the limitations and constraints,
* Findings, including discussion of constraints that impacted on the delivery of results,
* Lessons learned,
* Conclusions, and recommendations,
* Annexes.

1. **A** **Final evaluation report** (in both hard and soft copies): the team leader working in full collaboration with the second consultant, and after integrating all the relevant comments and suggestions provided by key stakeholders, project team, RSC and RBA, will be responsible for ensuring the production of the final report in English. The final report will include an executive summary in English and French and all related attachments.
2. **A Power Point presentation** summarizing key findings and recommendations. It will be presented to the UNDP and during the meeting with key stakeholders.
3. **ADMINISTRATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**
4. The evaluation will be fully independent and the Evaluation Team will retain enough flexibility to determine the best approach in collecting and analyzing data for the Project evaluation. Although the team is at liberty to discuss with the project partners any matter relevant to the assignment, it is not authorized to make any commitments on behalf of any Government, UNDPor the Gates Foundation.
5. The UNDP Regional Service Centre provides direct supervision (in collaboration with project team) ensuring the smooth administration of the contract and the overall assignment.
6. The Energy project will prepare all the key documents required for the evaluation, including a complete list of key documentations and partners and stakeholders. The team will also facilitate the day to day coordination, such as travel and related logistics and interaction with country offices.
7. Fees, travel expenses (tickets and DSA) for the evaluation will be provided in accordance with UN regulations and the full cost of the evaluation will be charged to the project.
8. **DURATION / SCHEDULE FOR THE EVALUATION**

The duration of this evaluation is estimated at 30 working days. The draft timetable of the mission is presented in the table below for discussion. A final version will be given by the evaluation team.

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| Major tasks to implement | Responsible party | Duration |
| Briefing with UNDP/Dakar and via teleconference with Addis and/or N.Y | UNDP | 1 day |
| Development and transmission of an inception report: understanding the mandate, methodology to be followed, timing of implementation including the allocation of tasks between the principal consultant and his second; timing of the intervention - Presentation by the consultant / review and validation by The UNDP | Evaluation team - presented by (Team leader) | 3 days |
| Document review, analysis and field mission. First findings of the evaluation, based on analysis of data collected, key information, consultation and discussions with stakeholders and partners for the production of the Draft Report (to be shared for comments). | Evaluation team | 18 days |
| Finalization of the report, taking into account comments received on the First draft | Team leader (in collaboration with 2nd consultant) | 4 days |
| Debriefing with UNDP and gather additional comments | Team Leader | 1 day |
| Final report incorporating comments, for sign off by UNDP: Final Report version | Team leader | 3 days |
| **Total duration** |  | **30 days** |

1. **PROFILES AND COMPETENCIES OF CONSULTANTS**

The service will be provided by a bilingual (French and English) team of consultants with proven experience in evaluation, and a profound understanding of the development context in Africa, in particular, as it relates to food and agro-processing, agricultural sector, gender empowerment and sustainable access to energy services in Africa’s rural areas. The evaluation team should be balanced, to the extent possible, in their gender composition.

**Team Leader** – Qualifications, Experience and Competencies:

1. Advanced university degree in one of the following areas: Economics, Development Studies, or related social sciences;
2. At least 10 years professional experience in conducting evaluations, preferably within an international cooperation environment;
3. Substantive knowledge and proven experience in macro-frameworks and pro-poor policy development;
4. Solid understanding of the challenges facing Africa in small farmers, and empowerment of women;
5. Professional experience in the field of sustainable access to energy services in rural Africa
6. Proven experience in development/strategic programme formulation, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation will be assets;
7. Strong knowledge of results-based management;
8. Knowledge of UNDP and its policies and procedures;
9. Excellent writing and communication skills;
10. Ability to lead teams within a multicultural setting;
11. Languages: fluency in French and English.

**Second consultant** – Qualification, Experience and Competencies:

1. Advanced university degree in one of the following areas: Economics, Development Studies, or related social sciences.
2. Minimum of 7 years of professional experience in development management, especially in the formulation and implementation of projects aimed at promoting entrepreneurship
3. Good knowledge and proven experience working on income generating initiatives, wealth creation and/or inclusive finance, for stimulating entrepreneurship.
4. Working experience and familiarity with the functioning of a development agency
5. Experience with the UN system, particularly UNDP and a good knowledge of its mandate as an asset;
6. Ability to work in team and good communication skills;
7. Ability to organize and synthesize information from multiple sources
8. Fluency in French, knowledge in English will be asset

**IX. Schedule of payment**

The payment for the assignment will be output based and structured as follows:

1. 40% upon receipt and approval of the draft evaluation report;
2. 60% after approval of the final evaluation report.
3. **Evaluation Ethics**

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UN Evaluation Group, “ Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations”, which among other things, addresses safeguards to the confidentiality of information providers.

1. **Annexes**

List of Documents for Desk review

1. Gates’ Projects Documents
2. National MFP Project documents
3. UNDP Regional Program Document for Africa
4. Project work-plans ( country and regional component)
5. Project Progress reports (national and regional)
6. UNDP Regional Program final evaluation report (RCF III)
7. National Project Evaluation reports
8. Gates Foundation field Monitoring reports
9. Gates Foundation’s Evaluation of MFP Operations report
10. Stock taking reports and other knowledge papers (briefing papers, brochures, …)
11. MFP Web Portal
12. MFP Observatory and Database
13. Impact evaluation reports
14. Other Countries’ report/programme/framework documents involving MFP scaling-up
15. Ethical Code of Conduct for Evaluation in UNDP
16. UNDP Handbook on planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results
17. UNDP Outcome-Level Evaluation: A Companion Guide

1. IFPRI (2002). *Sustainable Food Security for All by 2020: Proceedings of an International Conference,* September 4–6, 2001, Bonn, Germany (Washington, DC: IFPRI, 2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. ECOWAS (2005). *White Paper for a regional policy geared towards increasing access to energy services for rural and peri-urban populations in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals*. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Expected outcomes and outputs as per the Project document [↑](#footnote-ref-5)