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**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**FOR sPECIAL SERVICE AGREEMENT**

***(call for groups of individual consultants)***

**TITLE: End-of-Project Independent Evaluation**

**COUNTRY OF ASSIGNMENT:** Viet Nam (Hanoi and selected PRPP provinces)

**PROJECT:**  Support the implementation of Resolution 80/NQ-CP on directions of sustainable poverty reduction 2011-2020 and the National Targeted Program on Sustainable Poverty Reduction (NTPSPR) 2012-2015 - PRPP project

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| **1) GENERAL BACKGROUND** |

According to the project “***Support to the implementation of the Resolution 80/NQ-CP on directions of sustainable poverty reduction 2011-2020 and the National Targeted Program on Sustainable Poverty Reduction 2012-2015***" (PRPP) design, evaluation plan of the UNDP County Office in Viet Nam (hereinafter referred to as UNDP) and UNDP quality assurance plan of the PRPP project, the independent Mid Term Evaluation (MTE) was conducted in 2014 and an independent end of project evaluation is planned to be conducted in 2016.

The project is implemented from September 2012 to December 2016 and is co-funded by UNDP and Irish Aid with additional funding mobilized from UN Delivering Together Fund and UNDP-RoK Global Initiative “Towards Inclusive and Sustainable New Communities”, with a counterpart fund from the Government of Viet Nam.

The PRPP project National Implementing Partner is Ministry of Labor, Invalid and Social Affairs (MOLISA), and the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA) along with eight provinces (Ha Giang, Dien Bien, Cao Bang, Bac Kan, Thanh Hoa, Quang Ngai, Kon Tum, Tra Vinh) are the co-implementing partners. Besides, the project’s implementation has been engaging national agencies such as National Assembly’s Committee for Social Affairs and Ethnic Council, the Government Statitstics Office (GSO), Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), different ministries involved in management and implementation of the NTPSPR. The PRPP project was designed and has been implemented to make contributions to achieving the UN One Plan Outcome 1.1 “By 2016, key national institutions formulate and monitor people-centered, green and evidence-based socio-economic development policies to ensure quality of growth as a Middle Income Country” and Output 1.1.3 “Multi-dimensional approaches and human development are applied in poverty reduction components of SEDPs at central and local levels in order to effectively address chronic poverty and emerging forms of poverty”.

Key expected results of the Project are reflected in the three key expected output targets of the Project:

* **Output target 1:** Poverty reduction policies under the responsibility of line ministries are streamlined, and poverty reduction is mainstreamed into line ministries’ plans and policies, in which activities and investment resources for poor districts and poor communes are prioritized to accelerate poverty in these areas;
* **Output target 2:** National Targeted Program on Sustainable Poverty Reduction (NTP-SPR) is designed and implemented effectively, contributing to rapid poverty reduction in poorest districts, communes and villages and of ethnic minority people through the application of innovative modalities and approaches in terms of (i) promoting empowerment and participation of local authorities and people in formulation, implementation and management of the program at local level; (ii) anthropological approaches and modalities relevant to the particular features, cultures, traditions and knowledge of local ethnic minority people/ target groups of the program; (iii) strengthening accessibility/linkage to the market, promoting gender equality, environmental sustainability and addressing poverty from a multi-dimensional perspective.
* **Output target 3:** System for monitoring and analysis of multi-dimensional poverty and vulnerability situation and trends is operational and institutionalized; policy discussions on poverty and vulnerability contribute to improved policies and development programs for inclusive, pro-poor development better equality outcomes.

The independent End-of-Project Evaluation (EPE) is scheduled for the Quarter 2 of 2016. The EPE is expected to build on the results of MTE and measure the changes happen since MTE. A consultant group/team experienced in evaluation of similar poverty reduction programmes/projects will be recruited to conduct the Evaluation. It is expected that the institution/consultant group will provide a team with one senior international consultant as team leader and 1 national consultant as team members to meet the scope of work described below.

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| **2) OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT** |

The overall main objective of the independent End-of-Project Evaluation (EPE) is to, **building on the MTE**, measure and assess the project progress in achieving the project’s results, the relevance, efficiency, sustainability and impactson the targeted beneficiaries and stakeholders as well as to, draw lessons learnt and recommendations for replicating and sustaining project’s results (thus enhancing the project’s sustainability and impacts) and informing future GOVN-UNDP-DP cooperation on poverty reduction in the next programming cycle.

Specific objectives of this assignment include:

1. To review key changes in the project context and issues the project set out to address and assess the relevance of the project.
2. To review project’s progress in achieving its results both at provincial and central level and assess the project’s impacts/contributions to the relevant national development targets/One Plan Outcomes/ Outputs, along the line of a reasonable “theory of change”.
3. To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the project in realizing its results and the sustainability of the results.
4. To identify key lessons and make recommendations for the future GOVN-UNDP-DP cooperation in the area of poverty reductionin terms of the relevance and effectiveness of (i) capacity building support, technical assistance and policy advising, (ii) partnership and implementation strategy, including partnership with donors (iii) management arrangements and M&E, while addressing the cross cutting topics such as gender equity/equality, ethnic minority development and inclusion, etc, taking into account recent developments and likely future scenerios related to sustainable poverty reduction and reducing inequality in Viet Nam.

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| **3) SCOPE OF WORK AND SPECIFIC TASKS** |

**3.1. The specific scope of work of the Independent EPE includes (a) building on the MTE’s findings and (b):**

1. ***Assessment of project’s relevance***

* Identify and analyze **changes in the project context** since the mid-term evaluation: in poverty situation, changes in institutional arrangements and in the GOVN’s priorities and directions for poverty reduction policy and programming.
* Assess the **relevance of the “issues to be addressed**“ identified in the project document and the designed project objectives, outputs and activities, types of technical assistance and capacity building support, and partnership and implementation/management strategy and arrangements, and implementation of the related changes as recommended by the MTE. This includes:
* Review the project’s (as designed and changes occurred during the implementation, including as recommended by the MTE): (i) objectives, outputs (and links to the One Plan outputs/outcomes), annual targets and indicative activities set in the project document, result framework and the annual work plans; (ii) types of technical assistance and capacity building support; (iii) partnership and implementation/management strategy and arrangements;
* Assess the extent to whichthe above are relevant and aligned/adapted to Viet Nam’s changing context and poverty situation, changes in institutional arrangements and in the GOVN’s priorities and directions for poverty reduction policy and programming.

1. ***Assessment of the project progress in achieving results***

Building on the MTE’s findings and recommendations, record the project’s progress/achievement of results and assess the level of achievement of the **activity results**, project **outputs and** contributions **to the development results**/**One Plan’s outcomes** by (i) using the result-based approach; (ii) assessing actual vs. planned/intended results based on clear baselines and targets, indicators and credible “theories of change”, (iii) backing the assessments with clear evidences, supporting documents and credible “stories” of project contributions to the development results.

1. ***Assessment of effectiveness and efficiency of project’s contributions to the development results***

* Review and assess the optimality and effectiveness and efficiency of the (i) choices of project’s supported activities, policy advising, technical assistance and capacity building support, (ii) implementation modalities, arrangements and processes (including of the arrangement of national implementing and co-implementing, vertical and horizontal project management and coordination structure/mechanisms), (iii) partnership and project management/implementation strategy and arrangements. The assessment should be “result based”, i.e. effectiveness and efficiency (including cost-effectiveness and related alternatives used in the project management and implementation) should be assessed in terms of maximizing the project’s contribution to/attainment of development results, taking into account of the country ownership, different stakeholders’ involvement and responsibilities in producing the project’s outputs and realizing them into the development outcomes.
* Review the Project’s ability to monitor and communicate the progress and results, make changes to adapt to changing conditions to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency in maximizing project’s contributions to the development results.

1. ***Assessment of sustainability of the achievements undertaken by the Project***

Given the capacity building, technical assistance and policy advising nature of the project, the assessment of sustainability should focus on the level and/or likelihood of institutionalization of the project-supported/introduced imporvements in policies, capacities strengthened at the individual and organizational levels, poverty reduction models and related coordination and implementation mechanisms, etc. In line with the project’s exist strategy, the sustainability of the project’s results should be assessed by the extents, to which GOVN agencies adopt, continue and scale up the project-supported/introduced improved policies and strengthened individual and institutional capacities (and thus realize the related benefits) by using their own financial and human resources and mechanisms after the completion of the project. The assessment will also need to identify the factors contributed to and require attention in order to improve prospects of the sustainability and potential for replication/scaling up of project results.

1. ***Lessons learned and recommendations***

- Identify lessons learned in: ensuring the relevance of the project; ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of the project implementation (choices of project’s support and activities, modalities and management arrangements, partnership and involvement of stakeholders, including partnerships with different national stakeholders, UN, Development Partners and NGOs working in the same areas/topics); result-based M&E and communication; in compliance of GOVN ODA/project management regulations, UNDP project management policies and co-funding donors’ requirements (in the context of Delivery as One in Viet Nam).

- Provide recommendations for improving the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of support to poverty reduction in Viet Nam for the next cycle, including comprehensive proposals for future interventions such as areas of interventions, types of TA, CD and policy advising support; partnership and implementation staregy; etc.

***3.2. Specific tasks of the assignment***

The consultants are expected to fulfil (but not limited to) the following tasks:

* Propose detailed EPE methodology, methods, workplan, interview questionnaires, outline of the evaluation outputs/report that reflect the requirements of the EPE for comments/inputs of UNDP (and other stakeholders – as necessary);
* Collect relevant documentation with support from MOLISA, CEMA, 8 PRPP project provicnes, PRPP Office, UNDP and other partners;
* Conduct a desk study of the MTE report and feedbacks of PRPP project stakeholders to the MTE report; One UN Plan and outputs of PRPP in contribution to the One Plan), project document; PRPP project document, annual and quarterly work plans, progress reports, annual review minutes, PRPP project supported study/research papers/reports, consultant reports/papers, assessments/reports of trainings and other (including communication) products, other documents relating to the project (such as the IA-UNDP cost-sharing agreement, the UN Joint Programming Group JPGs plans and reports, documents of the UN-Ireland co-chaired Ethnic Minority Poverty Working Group, etc.);
* Conduct in-depth interviews with key informants at central level (MOLISA, CEMA, related line ministries and National Assembly committees, UNDP, Embassy of Ireland/Irish Aid, relevant UN agencies , donors and PRPP staff) and local level (8 pilot provinces being supported under the Project) authorities and beneficiaries to collect necessary evidences and consult these actors for their opinions about the project’s relevance, effectiveness and impact;
* Prepare the first draft report to be shared with UNDP for obtaining comments/inputs from MOLISA and CIPs, MPI, IA, UNDP and other relevant stakeholders;
* Based on the comments/inputs received, produce second draft report and present its key findings, lessons and recommendations in the PRPP project mid-year (2016) Steering Committee meeting for the second round of comments and inputs;
* Finalize and submit the final report to UNDP, for sharing with GACA, MOLISA, project co-implementing partners, IA and other relevant stakehodlers, for developing the management response actions;

Within the above tasks, proposed task division between team members includes:

The Evaluation Team Leader will have overall responsibility for the quality and timely submission of the final evaluation report to UNDP. ***Specifically, the team leader will perform the following tasks: (i)*** Lead and manage the evaluation mission, ensure efficient division of tasks among two team members; (ii) Design detailed evaluation scope, methodology and approach; (iii) Conduct the evaluation in accordance with proposed objectives and scope; (iv) Draft and communicate draft evaluation report;Finalize the evaluation report (in English) and submit to UNDP.

***Under leadership of the Team Leader, the team member will perform the following tasks: (i)*** Provide inputs to the design of evaluation methodology; (ii) Support the Team Leader in conducting the evaluation in accordance with proposed objectives and scope; (iii) Draft certain parts of the report (as assigned by the Team Leader) and support in communicating the evaluation report; (iv) Suport the Team Leader in finalization of the evaluation report (in English) and translation into Vietnamese.

***3.3. Methodology***

The EPE is expected not to repeat the assessments that have been done in the MTE. Rather, it should (i) build on the results of MTE (including the feedbacks of the stakeholders on the MTE Report, management actions on MTE Report’s recommendations) and (ii) focus on assessing the relevance of the project vis-à-vis the changes in the context and evaluating the project progress/results, effectiveness and efficiency since the MTE (while the assessment of sustainability will need to be for the entire project results).

The EPE is expected to be carried out as an independent and objective, result and evidence-based evaluation.

Findings are expected to be fully backed up with evidences and data, and objective and vigorous analysis. Assesments of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, sustainability are expected to be result based, i.e. on how these contributed or not to the results. Evidence and (quantitative and qualitative) data to be collected should be systematically disaggregated by sex and age and, to the extent possible, disaggregated by geographical region, ethnicity allowing analysis of gender and ethnic minority sensitivity and equality.

The evaluation is expected to be participatory and consultative to ensure the active and meaningful participation of all project stakeholders in the valuation process. This can be done through engaging partners in (i) desk review, (ii) in depth interviews to gather primary data from key stakeholders/key informants using structured/semi-structured interviews/ questionnaires/checklists; (iii) focus group discussion with project beneficiaries and other stakeholders, (iv) EPE team’s own observations (made during field visits/discussions).

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| **4) DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT, DUTY STATION AND EXPECTED PLACES OF TRAVEL** |
| The interested research institution/consultancy group are invited to provide a proposal of the human resources and plan to conduct the EPE with the scope as above. It is expected that the duration of the assignment is up to 25 working days for the Team Leader and 30 working days for the national consultant **during May – June 2016.** The consultants will work mainly in Ha Noi, with field trips to some provinces selected from the 8 provinces (Ha Giang, Dien Bien, Cao Bang, Bac Can, Thanh Hoa, Quang Ngai, Kon Tum and Tra Vinh). |
| **5) FINAL PRODUCTS** |

The Evaluation Team is expected to produce an independent, objective, result and evidence-based EPE Report in both Vietnamese and English. The report must highlights the findings, recommendations and lessons learnt, and gives an assessment of performance. The report is to be a maximum of 40 pages excluding annexes, which might include, but is not limited to, the following components:

* Executive summary (max 3 pages);
* Introduction; scope and purpose of the EPE
* Description of the evaluation questions, methodology and analytical framework with proposed data and evidences to be used for analysis/evaluation;
* Key findings and lessons and recommendations (backed up with data and evidences);
* Conclusions
* Annexes: Work plan; Questionnaires/checklists (used in structured and semi-structured interviews), list of people met and interviewed, list of documents reviewed/used in the evaluation, etc.
* Intermediate semi-products and tools should be submitted: draft report outline; draft report on the findings and recommendations; presentations in technical consultation meeting(s) and the mid-2016 Project Review Meeting.

The findings of the mission should be disaggregated by gender and ethnicities where possible, and should follow the ethical code of conduct for UNDP evaluations as specified in Annex 1.

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| **6) PROVISION OF MONITORING AND PROGRESS CONTROLS** |

The Consultant Team will work closely with and report to UNDP Head of Inclusive and Equitable Growth Unit, with main contact with UNDP PO focal point of Poverty Reduction, in order to implement the work and achieve the required results.

The deliverables/reports are submitted according to plan.

The final report of the EPE will be endorsed by UNDP in close consultation with MOLISA, CEMA, other CIPs, IA and GACA.

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| **7) DEGREE OF EXPERTISE AND QUALIFICATIONS** |

The Evaluation Team will consist of one international consultant as Team Leader and 1 national consultant as the team member with poverty reduction and policy making expertise.

**Qualification requirements for the Team Leader:**

* Higher education (Masters degree) in development/project management, economics, business administration or any other social sciences related to pro poor economic growth and poverty reduction;
* Minimum 15 years professional expertise in international development co-operation, in poverty reduction policy area (particularly with reference to ethnic minorities in Vietnam), in programme evaluation, impact assessment and strategic recommendations for continued support/development of programming/strategies including strong reporting skills;
* Extensive experience in conducting evaluations, strong working knowledge of GoV Poverty Reduction Policies and implementation mechanisms, UNDP, Irish Aid, the civil society sector and working with state public authorities in the field of pro poor economic growth, ethnic minority development, policy-making for poverty reduction with a focus on ethnic minorities in particular;
* Extensive knowledge of results-based management evaluation, UNDP policies, procedures, UNDP capacity development approach, as well as participatory monitoring and evaluation methodologies and approaches;
* Experience in building M&E tools for capacity development projects is an advantage
* Experience in applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios;
* Extensive experience in working with donors;
* Demonstrated analytical, communication and report writing skills;
* Excellent interviewing, public speaking at high levels;
* Teamwork capacity to work with the target group representatives;
* Fluency in written and spoken English.

**Qualification requirements for the Poverty Reduction Policy Experts/Team member:**

* Graduate degree in development/project management, economics, business administration, social sciences or any other relevant disciplines;
* At least 10 years of professional experience with Government agencies and international organizations in the area of PR/EM development and/or pro poor policy making in Vietnam;
* Deep knowledge and understanding of PR/EM development and pro poor policy making concept in Vietnam;
* Experience in conducting research and other analytical works in the areas of capacity development, institutional development, PR/EM development, pro-poor economic growth and policy making for poverty reduction;
* Experience in conducting evaluations;
* Good analytical capacity and good communication and presentation skills;
* Fluency in written and spoken English and Vietnamese.

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| **8) ADMIN SUPPORT AND REFERENCE DOCUMENTS** |

UNDP will extend support to the international consultant for arranging VISA for Vietnam. An office space will be provided to the consultants in project office.

MOLISA (NIP) and PRPP project office, CIPs will be responsible for providing all documents and reference materials as well as administrative support required to conduct the EPE. They will also be involved in interviews, briefings and debriefings.

The following documents will be shared to the consultants upon start of the assignment:

* UNDP Evaluation Policy and Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators (UNDP publication)
* UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017 and IRRF
* UN Viet Nam documents (One Plan 3, Annual One Plan reports)
* Project Document/Detailed Project Outline (DPO)
* Progress and Financial Reports (quarterly and annually)
* Annual Project Review (APR) Meeting Minutes
* Relevant project M&E and project meeting minutes
* MTE report with stakeholders’ comments and management responses
* Consultants Reports (Research/Studies/Training/Workshops/Forum)
* Project M&E Framework, communication strategy
* Related Government documents (Resolution 80, NTPSPR programme and project documents, NA oversight report, NTPSPR MTR report, national guidelines, directives from GOV in poverty reduction, etc.)
* Any other materials if deemed useful and necessary.

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| **9) REVIEW TIME REQUIRED AND PAYMENT TERM** |
| First installment of 20% of the contract value upon receiving the detailed proposal of methodology, work plan and related evaluation tools, EPE Report outline by UNDP and submission of the Certification for payment signed by the Team Leader.  Second payment of 40% of the contract value upon receiving and accepting the first draft of the report by UNDP and submission of the Certification for payment signed by the Team Leader..  Last payment of 40% of the contract value upon receiving and accepting the final report by UNDP and submission of the Certification for payment signed by the Team Leader. |
| **10) CONSULTANT PRESENCE REQUIRED ON DUTY STATION/UNDP PREMISES** |
| The consultants will work with different stakeholder and there is no requirement to be present at UNDP premise. |

## Annex 1: Ethical Code of Conduct for UNDP Evaluations

Evaluations of UNDP-supported activities need to be independent, impartial and rigorous. Each evaluation should clearly contribute to learning and accountability. Hence evaluators must have personal and professional integrity and be guided by propriety in the conduct of their business.

**Evaluators:**

Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.

Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.

Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and: respect people’s right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people’s right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.

Evaluations sometimes uncover evidence of wrong doing. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.

Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders’ dignity and self-worth.

Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.

Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.