

## Annex 2

### **TEMPLATES FOR UNDP MANAGEMENT RESPONSES TO INDEPENDENT EVALUATIONS<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Clearance Routing:**

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<sup>1</sup> See instructions at the end of the document on how to use the templates.

## **Management response to the Assessment of Development Results of UNDP in Viet Nam**

### **Context, background and findings**

1. The first Assessment of Development Results (ADR) in Viet Nam was conducted in 2003. This ADR is the second evaluation and spans through two programme cycles – from 2006 through 2015 – covering a decade of UNDP’s work in a fast-changing development context of Viet Nam. During the period under evaluation, Viet Nam has continued to develop as one of the fastest-growing economies. In 2010, the country entered the group of lower middle-income countries, requiring the UN and other development partners to shift their support modalities to address emerging development challenges and agenda. These included the need for greater attention to ‘inclusiveness’ in development – for example, addressing ethnic minority issues – and the implementation of rigorous institutional reforms to strengthen governance, better protect the environment, and address challenges arising from climate change.
2. As Viet Nam is one of the ‘Delivering as One’ pilot countries, the common UN programmatic frameworks, such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the One Plan, have served as the fundamental platforms, based on which UNDP has operationalized its support in the past 10 years.
3. For the Regional Bureau and the Viet Nam Country Office, the ADR serves at least three very important purposes:
  - First, we see the ADR as an important mechanism for our accountability to all stakeholders, to make sure we are progressing towards the goals we had set ourselves in the Country Programme and that we are responsible stewards of the resources entrusted to us;
  - Secondly, the ADR exercise provides valuable feedback on programme quality parameters we seek to achieve – specifically those related to the relevance of UNDP’s projects, outputs and outcomes; effectiveness of UNDP interventions in terms of achieving stated goals; efficiency of those interventions in terms of use of human and financial resources; and sustainability of the results to which the UNDP contributes.
  - Thirdly, ADR is an important learning opportunity, which enables us to make timely corrections and feed lessons learned into our future work.
4. We welcome the findings and recommendations of the ADR and believe that it offers rigorous and constructive assessment of the Country Office’s strengths, capacities and role in Viet Nam and helpful recommendations to enrich our development contributions in the country. The ADR exercise came in very timely, as we are formulating the UN One Strategic Plan as well as UNDP’s Country Programme Document (CPD) for 2017-2021. This will ensure that the critical lessons from the ADR will inform the new country programme and avoid the risk of the ADR becoming an assessment without practical follow-up.

5. We are pleased to note that the ADR recognizes the relevant role played by UNDP through upstream policy oriented approach as Viet Nam transitioned into a middle-income status. UNDP in the next CPD will focus on continued support to the country's vision and providing policy advice on specific game changing and break through strategies to avoid the 'middle income trap'.
6. The findings on gender also highlight a development challenge that must be at the core of the post-2015 global development agenda in the Asia Pacific region and in Viet Nam. The Viet Nam Country Office has been implementing this recommendation by embarking on the UNDP Gender Seal certification process in order to significantly increase the quality of gender-related, as well as overall, results. We will continue to place high priority on gender results in the next Country Programme.
7. Finally, we would like to thank the Independent Evaluation Office for conducting this important exercise and its team for the Viet Nam ADR, led by Ms. Fumika Ouchi. The evaluation team worked hard and covered a lot of ground – literally and figuratively – in order to produce a thorough analysis of UNDP's contribution to development results.

## Annex

### Key recommendations and management response

<p><b>Evaluation recommendation 1.</b> Policy work: UNDP should continue to focus on the upstream policy work as its core country programme strategy, but revisit its overall policy praxis/approach to develop a comprehensive strategy that will ensure that all efforts link to contribution to the CCPD/One Plan outcomes and outputs.</p>				
<p><b>Management response:</b> The recommendation is accepted. Policy work will continually be central to UN/UNDP development results in 2017-2021. Upstream policy work and integrated programming to ensure that policy work contributes to the One UN Strategic Plan Outcomes will be the focus of the next country programme. We will also maintain the existence of the Policy Advisory Team as a UNDP global best practice, and strengthen the linkages between the Policy Advisory Team (PAT) and the programme/projects by ensuring the use of PAT expertise in quality assuring programme/project design, implementation and reporting of results. An emerging priority for our work in 2017-2021 is to address policy implementation gaps, in addition to policy development.</p> <p>To increase UNDP's role and contribution at the UN level, we will implement agreed actions in 2016 to promote issue-based, multi-disciplinary programming through sectoral work by Joint Programming Groups (JPGs) and contribute actively to defining UN-level policy visions and approaches in the formulation of the One UN Strategic Plan 2017-2021.</p>				
Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status
1.1 Deepen links between programme and policy work, strengthen quality assurance of programmatic results by Policy Advisory Team.	2016 onwards	PAT and programme units		Ongoing
1.2 Focus on policy implementation gaps in addition to policy development is an emerging priority for UN/UNDP work in 2017-2021.	2017-2021	Programme units and PAT		Initiated
1.3 Implement agreed actions in 2016 to promote issue-based, multi-disciplinary programming within UNDP and as part of UN-wide results.	2016 onwards	Programme units and PAT		Ongoing
<p><b>Evaluation recommendation 2.</b> In close consultation with the government and UN agencies, UNDP should further strengthen its programme approach.</p>				
<p><b>Management response:</b> The recommendation is accepted and being taken on board. We are reviewing our programme approach and planning a shift away from project-focused to a more programme-focused approach in the formulation of 2017-2021 One UN Strategic Plan and Country Programme Document (CPD). This is facilitated by the current review of the Harmonized Programme and Project Management Guideline (PPMG) together with UNICEF, UNFPA and Government Aid Coordinating Agencies (GACAs) and the revision of the ODA regulations, under which the non-project assistance is very likely to be accepted. The Policy Advisory Team, programme units and M&amp;E Team are actively contributing to all pillars of the 2017-2021 One UN Strategic Plan, with a focus on ensuring clarity of statements, objectives and means of verification.</p>				

<p>With the support from the regional bureau, UNDP Viet Nam is developing a clear, logical pathway (Theory of Change) for each thematic area under its next Country Programme. This will articulate how UNDP is going to deliver outcome results across the sectors in collaboration with other UN agencies. Based on the longer-term perspective in achieving results and the programme theory of change, we will develop an improved design of UNDP projects/assurances that support the achievement of the planned results.</p>				
Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
2.1 Shift away from project-focused approach in the next programme cycle, enabled by national ODA regulations	2016-2017	Programme units, Programme Support Unit, M&E Team		Initiated
2.2 Support all key pillars of the One UN Strategic Plan formulation, with a focus on ensuring clarity of objectives and means of verification	2016	PAT, programme units, M&E Team		Initiated
2.3 Building on One UN Strategic Plan, develop logical pathways (theories of change) focusing on UNDP outputs in support of UN outcomes	2016	PAT, programme units, M&E Team		Initiated
2.4 Further focus UNDP assistance and improve programme design to support agreed results	2016 onwards	PAT, programme units, M&E Team		Ongoing
2.5 Promote flexibility of programming with due reference to ODA management regulations and HPPMG revision	2016 onwards	PAT, programme units, Programme Support Unit, M&E Team		Ongoing
<p><b>Evaluation recommendation 3.</b> UNDP, in close consultation with national partners and the Regional Bureau, should strengthen its M&amp;E practices in its projects and policy efforts.</p>				
<p><b>Management response:</b> The recommendation is accepted. Under the DaO context, the monitoring and evaluation of the UNDP Country Programme will be an integral part of the One UN Strategic Plan (2017-2021), and aligned to its overarching Results Monitoring Framework. As results-based management (RBM) will continue to be an essential component of Delivering as One, results planning, monitoring, reporting, review and evaluation of the One UN Strategic Plan will continue to be strengthened to ensure evidence-based decision-making and enhanced accountability. Particular attention will be given to measuring the results of UNDP's support to upstream policymaking. UNDP will contribute to the development and monitoring of relevant inter-agency Joint Programming Groups' annual work plans, using UNDP's expertise and agency-specific monitoring tools, while building synergies with the UN agencies in Viet Nam. To ensure harmonized approaches to results-based management, UNDP will make use of UNDG-endorsed tools and guidance in line with Standard Operating Procedures. Joint monitoring and evaluation as well as RBM capacity development will be supported in coordination with the Government and other UN agencies.</p> <p>The monitoring and evaluation of the UNDP Country Programme will also be based on indicators, baselines, and targets defined in the corporate</p>				

UNDP Strategic Plan (IRRF). Indicators will be disaggregated by sex and other variables, where applicable. National data and monitoring and evaluation systems will be used to the fullest extent possible.

UNDP will strengthen its M&E practices in project and policy efforts to generate information and produce data for evidence and analysis through specific actions mentioned below.

Through the use of Theories of Change (ToC) at the programme level, monitoring and evaluation will play a key role in validating the assumptions that are vital to the ToCs, thereby providing inputs for necessary adjustments of programme design during the implementation.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
3.1 Further strengthen implementation of M&E policies and procedures, with an emphasis on periodic reviews and mid-term and/or final evaluations and joint UN actions	2016 onwards	M&E Team and programme units		Ongoing
3.2 CPD 2017-2021 to include an evaluation plan covering all programme areas; at least one outcome evaluation to be pursued with other UN organizations	2016	M&E Team and programme units		Initiated
3.3 Annually-updated evaluation plan to include full evaluations of large-scale projects, if not covered by an outcome evaluation, as per the UNDP Evaluation Policy	2016 onwards	M&E Team and programme units		Ongoing
3.4 Strengthen assessment and measurement of results (research studies, policy briefs and other knowledge products) during planning and implementation, with appropriate resource allocations.	2016 onwards	M&E Team, programme units and PAT		Ongoing

**Evaluation recommendation 4.** UNDP should build more effective partnerships with development partners within the UN system and with international financial institutions when taking an issue-based approach to its interventions, to enhance programme complementarity and a leadership role for UNDP

**Management response:** This recommendation is accepted and being addressed. UNDP is strengthening partnership at all levels to address the common development challenges. We are also actively participating in the JPGs and currently the convener of two JPGs (Governance and Rule of Law, and Climate Change and Environment) as well as facilitating development partners' policy coordination in select areas (e.g. in ethnic minority development, legal reform, human rights, climate change, etc). In addition, UNDP will prioritise the mobilisation of domestic resources for development cooperation in line with Viet Nam's status as a Middle Income Country.

We are also drawing important lessons on management of joint programmes/projects with other UN and government agencies and will apply these lessons in the next programme cycle.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
4.1 Strengthen effective partnerships at all levels to build on complementarities, and develop new innovative partnerships (institutions, groups and sectors)	2016 onwards	Programme units and PAT		Ongoing
4.2 Offer policy reform and development services to facilitate investment and budget support programmes of partners, including lending institutions	2016 onwards	Programme units and PAT		Ongoing
4.3 Develop and implement an action plan for the mobilization of domestic resources to support development cooperation, including increased government cost-sharing.	2016 onwards	CO wide, under leadership of Country Director		Ongoing
4.4 Continue to serve as convener of UN joint mechanisms, and facilitate development partners' policy coordination in select areas.	2016 onwards	Programme units and PAT		Ongoing
4.5 Apply lessons on management of UN joint programmes from the current cycle of support.	2016 onwards	Programme units and PAT		Ongoing
<b>Evaluation recommendation 5.</b> UNDP, in close consultation with the government and the UN agencies, should facilitate innovations in inter-ministerial coordination to address specific problems associated with overlapping mandates and programmes, and engagement of non-government organizations for enhanced delivery of government services.				
<b>Management response:</b> This recommendation is accepted. Inter-ministerial coordination is a system-wide bottleneck that transcends UN/UNDP programmes; UNDP response has been to bridge institutional gaps and promote whole-of-the-government action but this has not always been possible due to institutional mandates. In the coming time, we will focus our efforts on bringing different actors together to address institutional fragmentation and overlaps and promoting the role of civil society as an important partner in development.				
The next Country Programme will place a high priority on promoting a whole-of-government approach to tackling the increasingly complex development challenges that Viet Nam faces, along with supporting a framework for measuring and reporting on national SDG performance.				
Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
5.1 Continue to support participatory policy forums bringing state and non-state actors together to identify integrated solutions to issues and address institutional fragmentation and overlaps.	2016 onwards	Programme units and PAT		Ongoing

5.2 Build on successful NGO service delivery models, and promote role of civil society as a partner in development, including through an enabling CSO framework.	2016 onwards	Programme units and PAT		Ongoing
5.3 Next CPD to include focus on whole-of-government approaches and support to SDG implementation framework.	2016 onwards	Programme units and PAT		Ongoing
<b>Evaluation recommendation 6.</b> UNDP should develop and implement a clear office wide gender plan/strategy with accountability mechanisms in place for implementation and achievement of set objectives.				
<b>Management response:</b> This recommendation is accepted and being taken on board. The Viet Nam Country Office has identified gender as a priority for alignment with corporate UNDP Strategic Plan, and will develop Gender Strategy and Action Plan for the new Country Programme Document. We are also undergoing a rigorous Gender Seal certification programme to strengthen gender equality programming, and promote gender mainstreaming across development and organizational goals. A Gender Seal Action Plan has been drafted, encompassing 37 mandatory benchmarks, and implementation is expected to continue through October 2016. A Country Office Gender Focal Team, with representation across all programme and operational units and headed by the Country Director has been appointed.				
Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
6.1 Develop Gender Strategy and Action Plan for the new Country Programme Document.	2016	Gender Focal Team		Ongoing
6.2 Undergo a Gender Seal certification programme, including develop and implement a Gender Seal Action Plan encompassing 37 mandatory benchmarks.	Oct 2015-Oct 2016	Whole Country Office		Ongoing
6.3 Appoint a Country Office Gender Focal Team, with representation across all programme and operational units and headed by Country Director	August 2015	Senior Management		Done
<b>Evaluation recommendation 7.</b> UNDP should assess the existing knowledge development options, including South-South cooperation practices and research/analytical work produced by the Policy Advisory Team and the projects, and develop an effective knowledge management strategy for the office.				
<b>Management response:</b> This recommendation is accepted and being addressed. Knowledge management and innovation are key aspects of re-thinking UN comparative advantage in the middle-income-country context of Viet Nam. An UN-wide examination of appropriate modalities is underway. The Country Office has planned to capitalize on numerous knowledge products and exchange with different stakeholders through improved online access and reach using IT solutions, applications and social media. A knowledge management strategy will be developed, possibly in partnerships with other UN agencies for the implementation of the 2017-2021 One UN Strategic Plan. The next Country Programme will include a more strategic approach to South-South cooperation and exchange on knowledge products and innovations on priority themes linked to One Strategic Plan and CPD outcomes,				



with support from the Bangkok Regional Hub and Head Quarter.				
Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
7.1 Improve online access and reach using IT solutions, applications and social media, and engage stakeholders on the role of data for sustainable development.	2016 onwards	Programme units, PAT, and Communications Team		Ongoing
7.2 Develop a knowledge management strategy to guide knowledge generation and dissemination, possibly in partnerships with other UN organizations.	2016 onwards	Communications Team, Programme units and PAT		Ongoing
7.3 Access corporate and regional support to promote south-south cooperation and exchange on knowledge products and innovations.	2016 onwards	Programme units, PAT, and Communications Team		Ongoing

\* Status of implementation is tracked electronically in the Evaluation Resource Centre database (ERC).

**INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO USE THE TEMPLATES:****Clearance routing**

*All parties involved in preparing and clearing the management response before final review by the Administrator or Associate Administrator are requested to enter their name(s), position and units. All management responses should be reviewed by the Division for UN Affairs/PB before completion.*

Prepared by:	Include person preparing matrix
Contributors:	Include the names and units that contributed actions to the response. At minimum, this should include all 'responsible units'
Cleared by:	Enter senior most-person in CO, unit or bureau who cleared the draft response on behalf of management
Reviewed by:	Enter name of person in Division for UN Affairs/PB who reviewed the response in light of Executive Board priorities
Input into and update in ERC:	Specify person in unit or bureau responsible for entering approved responses into <a href="#">Evaluation Resource Centre</a> (ERC) database and periodically updating the information.

**Template for UNDP Management Response to Independent Evaluations**

*The template is the format required for the submission to the Executive Board of management responses to independent strategic and corporate programme evaluations. The matrix should also be used for management responses to ADRs.*

*Please DO NOT CHANGE any formatting such as font type, font size and margins. Please do, of course, extend the matrix and adjust the numbering to match the number of recommendations and responses.*

*The entire cover sheet will be removed by the Executive Board Secretariat before formal distribution. The Executive Board Secretariat will also remove the two columns on 'Tracking', which are for internal use only.*

*Management responses to evaluations should be clear and comprehensive, and consist of the following elements:*

- Key conclusions and recommendations: *Are conclusions and recommendations relevant and acceptable? (The Management Response should address all recommendations)*
- Key actions: *What are the concrete proposed actions? Who are the key partners in carrying out the actions?*
- Implementation of actions: *Who are the responsible units? What is the timeframe for implementation?*