

Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of the UNECE project: “Development and implementation of PPP international standards in support of the Sustainable Development Goals”

I. Background

The UNECE project “Development and implementation of PPP international standards in support of the Sustainable Development Goals” was funded by the Bank for Development and Foreign Economic Affairs of the Russian Federation (Vnesheconombank). The project was implemented by UNECE from July 2015 to September 2017. The main objective of the project was to provide member States with international PPP standards based on best PPP practices relevant to the SDGs.

To achieve the project’s objective, the following activities were implemented: The development of international PPP standards in various sectors, including:

- a. Transport (railways, roads, airports);
- b. Renewable energy;
- c. Water and sanitation; and
- d. Procurement (including a zero tolerance approach to corruption in PPP procurement);

II. Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project as established by the objectives and activities outlined in the project document. In particular, the evaluation will assess the mechanism by which the PPP standards are developed by Project Teams working under the auspices of the UNECE Working Party on PPPs, its Bureau and the secretariat.

III. Scope

The evaluation will cover the full period of the project implementation from July 2015 to September 2017, and the project as defined by the project document.

The evaluation will engage international PPP experts, Project Team members and leaders, members of the Bureau of the Working Party on PPPs, and all stakeholders involved in project implementation. UNECE member states will also be a key stakeholder in the evaluation design.

Gender and human rights aspects of the project’s design and results will be considered in the evaluation, taking into account guidance provided by the United Nations Evaluation Group on the matter (available at <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/980> and <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1452>)

IV. Issues

The evaluation will seek to report on relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project. Key questions that the evaluation seeks to answer include:

Relevance

1. To what extent were the project’s outputs consistent with the UNECE mandate to support member States in building their capacity to deliver infrastructure projects and public services through the PPP model?

2. To what extent did the project serve the needs of its main beneficiaries: the member States?

3. To what extent were the project outputs listed above relevant to strengthen the capacity of UNECE secretariat and its network of PPP experts to assist member States to undertake PPP projects?

Effectiveness

1. To what extent were the expected accomplishments of the project achieved?
2. What were the challenges/obstacles to achieving the project objective and expected accomplishments (e.g. the fact that project team members were working pro-bono)?
3. Give advice (if any) on how the expected accomplishments of the project could have been more effectively achieved (e.g. the Bureau of the Working Party on PPPs should be more involved in the work of the project teams; the timeframes for project teams to prepare draft standards were too optimistic; the standard-setting process should be simplified; Project Team leaders should be remunerated etc.)?
4. To what extent did implementation of the project support the overall objectives of the UNECE regular programme of work?
5. Was the standard-setting process sufficiently inclusive?
6. Did the process protect against bias and/or undue influence by one stakeholder?
7. To counter possible threats to independence and neutrality, did the standard-setting procedures become over-bureaucratic and time consuming?
8. Some stakeholders have noted that the process is too slow. Is this a fair comment? How can we accelerate without undermining the credibility of the process?
9. In terms of output, what should be the optimum number of standards managed and produced given the limited human resources available in the UNECE PPP section?

Efficiency

1. Were the available resources appropriate to the scale of the project and the needs identified by member States?
2. Were the human and financial resources allocated to the project used efficiently and commensurate to the project results?

V. Methodology

The evaluation will be conducted by an independent consultant, who will be managed by the project manager in the UNECE PPP team. The evaluation will be carried out using a review of all relevant documents, a survey and targeted interviews of key project stakeholders and UNECE staff.

The consultant will be responsible for the design of the evaluation methodology. This may include:

1. Desk review of all documents related to the work programme and the project . The project manager will ensure that the evaluator receives all relevant documentation to enable a thorough desk review.

2. An electronic **questionnaire** will be sent to all participants in the activities supported by the project, and to the UNECE staff involved in the project. The questionnaire will be prepared by the evaluation consultant, and will be reviewed by the UNECE project manager. It will seek information that would allow addressing the questions listed in section IV.
3. **Interviews with selected relevant staff and stakeholders of the project** will take place via phone and skype. The UNECE project manager will provide the list with contact details.

The UNECE project manager will provide support and further explanation to the evaluation consultant when needed.

The evaluation consultant will write a **report** on the results of the evaluation based on these terms of reference. The draft report will be submitted to the project manager, and the PMU, for comment and quality assurance. The structure, length and quality elements of the evaluation report should follow the guidelines outlined in the UNECE evaluation policy.

VI. Evaluation Schedule

Develop a timetable for the following phases of the evaluation:

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| <i>A. Preliminary research:</i> | February 2018 (by evaluation consultant) |
| <i>B. Data Collection:</i> | February-March 2018. |
| <i>C. Data Analysis:</i> | March 2018 (by evaluation consultant) |
| <i>D. Draft Report:</i> | 31 March 2018 (by evaluation consultant) |
| <i>E. Final Report:</i> | 25 April 2018 (by evaluation consultant) |

VII. Resources

An external evaluation consultant identified through the UNECE evaluation roster will be hired to conduct the evaluation. The evaluation will be managed by a P4 Economic Affairs Officer in the PPP Team (the UNECE project manager). The UNECE Programme Management Unit will provide guidance on design and quality assurance of the evaluation.

VIII. Intended Use/Next Steps

The results will be used in the planning and implementation of new capacity building projects in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in the future and also beyond the region. The results of the evaluation, and the UNECE management response will be made publicly available on the UNECE website.

IX. Criteria for Evaluators

The evaluator should have:

- At least 5 years of experience of evaluation, project management, social and demographic statistics
- Demonstrated methodological knowledge of evaluations, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis for end-of-cycle project evaluations
- Proficiency of written and spoken English