

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Evaluation of UNDA Project 1617X

“Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia”

I. Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to review the implementation and assess the extent to which the objectives of the project “Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia” (hereinafter “Project”) to be completed in December 2019 were achieved. The evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the Project in supporting member States in their transition to sustainable energy. The results of the evaluation will support improvement of the services provided as well as future projects and activities implemented by UNECE.

II. Scope

The evaluation will cover the entire period of the project, from June 2016 to December 2019, with no exclusions. The beneficiary countries of this project are: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.

The universally recognized values and principles of human rights and gender equality need to be integrated at all stages of an evaluation, in compliance with the United Nations Evaluation Group’s revised gender-related norms and standards. Therefore, the evaluation will assess how gender considerations were included in the project design and implementation and make recommendations on how gender quality and the empowerment of women can be better included in the process.

III. Background

The overall goal of the project is to strengthen the national capacity of economies in transition to develop National Action Plans for Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) in the context of the post-2015 Sustainable Development agenda. The project is implemented jointly by UNECE and the UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP), with UNECE as the lead agency.

The objective of the project is pursued by achieving the following results:

- (EA1) Improved national capacity for data collection and monitoring of progress on energy related sustainable development goals;
- (EA2) Strengthened national capacities to develop national action plans for sustainable energy based on the best international practices.

Both the objective and the expected accomplishments are achieved by the implementation of the following activities:

- (A1.1) A baseline review of sustainable energy data in each beneficiary country in order to assess the existing gaps in data collection
- (A1.2) Two sub-regional trainings to the national officials and experts responsible for sustainable energy data collection.
- (A2.1) Identification of best practices on sustainable energy for each beneficiary country.
- (A2.2) Multi-stakeholder consultations with the participation of national officials/experts, UNECE, UNESCAP, UNDESA, SE4ALL secretariat and others
- (A2.3) Development of a National Action Plan for each beneficiary country.
- (A2.4) A final validation workshop for the National Action Plans for sustainable energy for each beneficiary country.

The budget of the project is USD 564,000 and was financed from the UN Development Account.

IV. Issues

The evaluation criteria are relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability:

Relevance:

1. Was the project relevant to the objective of UNECE to support member States in achieving sustainable energy?
2. To what extent were the activities consistent with global and regional priorities and the programme of work of the UN Regional Commissions?
3. How relevant was the collaboration with other entities in the UN system and other international organizations?
4. To what extent did the Project respond to the priorities and needs of the beneficiary countries? How relevant was it to the target groups' needs and priorities?
5. Was the project design and implementation appropriate for meeting the project's objective?
6. Did the project apply gender and rights-based approaches in the design, implementation and results of the activities?
7. Did UNECE advocate for gender equality in this area of work?

Effectiveness:

8. Did the project achieve the results expected during the project design in terms of the planned activities, outcome, and impact?
9. What value has UNECE's efforts added in this area of work?
10. What were the challenges/ obstacles to achieving the activities objective and expected accomplishments?
11. To what extent are the outputs consistent with and relevant to the overall objective and expected accomplishments?

Efficiency:

12. Did the project achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources?

13. How could the use of resources be improved? Would you propose any alternatives to achieve the same results? If yes, which ones?
14. Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?
15. Were the activities implemented in the required sequence needed to ensure the greatest impact of the project?
16. Were the resources sufficient to achieve the intended outcomes?
17. How does the project compare with other similar efforts from other actors in the UN System (if any)?

Sustainability:

18. How is the stakeholders' engagement likely to continue, be scaled up, replicated or institutionalized?
19. To what extent do the partners and beneficiaries 'own' the outcomes of the work?
20. To what extent are the objectives of the activity still valid? How can the activity be replicated in the UNECE region or in other regions??

V. Methodology

The evaluation will be conducted on the basis of:

1. Desk study of project materials: all relevant project documents, including project descriptions, reports, publications, etc. and other information will be provided to the evaluator.
2. Interviews with key stakeholders (face-to-face, via telephone and skype) including: relevant Government officials in the beneficiary countries, project consultants, colleagues from UN ESCAP, participants of project trainings and workshops, and other relevant stakeholders (list of contacts and details to be provided by the project manager). This includes personal attendance of the final validation workshop for the draft National Action Plans for sustainable energy for the beneficiary countries.
3. An electronic survey of internal and external stakeholders, in English and, if necessary, in Russian, will be developed by the consultant to assess the perspective of main stakeholders (...); results of the survey will be disaggregated by gender.

UNECE will provide all documentation, support and guidance to the evaluation consultant as needed throughout the timeline of the evaluation. A gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools, and data techniques are selected. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender analysis.

The evaluation report of maximum 15-20 pages will summarize the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. An executive summary (max. 2 pages) will summarize the methodology of the evaluation, key findings, conclusions and recommendations.

VI. Evaluation Schedule

- A. Selection of the evaluation consultant – August 2019
- B. Desk review - September 2019
- C. Delivery of inception report including design of survey – 13 September 2019
- D. Feedback on inception report by the project manager - 20 September 2019
- E. Data Collection – 20 days – September-October 2019
- F. Participation in the final validation workshop for the draft National Action Plans for sustainable energy – 2 days – 7-8 October 2019 (Bangkok)
- G. Data Analysis – 10 days – October 2019
- H. Draft Report sent to project manager – 8 November 2019
- I. Comments back to the evaluator after review by the project manager and the PMU – 22 November 2019
- J. Final Report – 3 December 2019

VII. Resources

The resources available for this evaluation are 2% of the total budget of the project which is USD 11,280 (inclusive of all costs). This amount will be paid to a hired external evaluation consultant identified through the UNECE evaluation roster upon satisfactory delivery of work by 15 December 2019.

The consultant will be managed by the UNECE project manager - P5 staff member Oleg Dzioubinski – who will provide support by ensuring the provision of all necessary documentation needed for the desk review, guide the evaluator on the appropriate recipients for the questionnaire and for follow-up interviews and ensure that the necessary communications with these recipients are introduced by the secretariat.

The UNECE Programme Management Unit will provide guidance to the Project Manager and evaluator as needed on the evaluation design, methodology for the evaluation, and for quality assurance of the draft report.

VIII. Intended Use/Next Steps

The evaluation results will be used in the planning and design of future sustainable energy capacity building projects in the UNECE region.

The findings of the evaluation will inform follow up actions and guide initiatives already started and required to disseminate the knowledge created and enhance its use. The outcomes of the evaluation will also contribute to the broader lessons learned, by being made available on the project website (UNECE sub-page).

IX. Criteria for Evaluators

Evaluators should have:

- An advanced university degree or equivalent background in relevant disciplines
- Specialized training in areas such as evaluation, project management, social statistics, advanced statistical research and analysis.

- Demonstrated relevant professional experience in design, management and conduct of evaluation processes with multiple stakeholders, survey design and implementation, and project planning, monitoring and management.
- Good knowledge of and experience in energy-related capacity building projects.
- Demonstrated methodological knowledge of evaluations, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis for end-of-cycle project evaluations.
- Fluent in written and spoken English. Knowledge of Russian is highly desirable.
- Demonstrated experience in applying gender perspective and human-rights based approach to evaluations.

Evaluators should declare any conflict of interest to UNECE before embarking on an evaluation project, and at any point where such conflict occurs.