TERMS OF REFERENCE

Review of ECE collaboration with UN and other partners in delivering on energy for sustainable development

I. Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to review the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of ECE collaboration with UN and external partners from 2016-2020 in delivering on energy for sustainable development. The results of the evaluation are expected to contribute to a long-term vision for collaboration to strengthen the breadth and depth of impact of the energy subprogramme's (ECE Subprogramme 5) activities. The outcomes of the evaluation can be used to enhance the outreach to existing and potential partners.

II. Scope of activities for evaluation

The evaluation will explore the activities of the subprogramme during the period 2016 to 2019 that benefit from engagement with UN and external partners. The activities include all of SED's work on sustainable energy issues:

- Sustainable resource management: extension of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources and initiation of development of a United Nations Resource Management System.
- Reducing the environmental footprint of energy: activities in carbon capture, use, and storage, high efficiency-low emissions technology, methane management in the extractive industries.
- Deep transformation of the energy system: energy efficiency, renewable energy, cleaner electricity systems.
- Assist countries in assessing their strategic options: pathways to ensure energy for sustainable development and tracking progress to commitments.

The universally-recognised 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 process and it will make recommendations on how gender can be included better in the process.

III. Background

The objective of the subprogramme is to improve access to affordable and clean energy for all and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the carbon footprint of the energy sector in the region. Prior to the endorsement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) in 2015, the subprogramme was oriented toward the Sustainable Energy for All initiative launched by the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, to help mobilize achievement of universal energy access, improve energy efficiency, and increase the use of renewable energy. As part of the 2030 Agenda, sustainable development goal #7 broadly reflects the same objectives, but the ECE energy subprogramme is oriented toward a broader set of objectives to help secure the energy needed for sustainable development (including but not limited to SDG7). ECE cooperates with other agencies and organisations through the UN energy coordination mechanism and the SDG7 technical advisory group of the high-level political forum. The Committee on Sustainable Energy is an intergovernmental body that provides member States with a platform for international dialogue and cooperation. Other regional commissions with dedicated energy committees include ESCAP and ESCWA.

The subprogramme engages with other UN entities and other international organisations as well as with NGOs, civil society, academia, and private companies across the range of its activities. The subprogramme implements core interlinked functions, namely:

1. International policy dialogue and cooperation among Governments, energy industries and other stakeholders to foster sustainable energy development;
2. Development and deployment of ECE policy recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools on energy-related issues; and
3. Capacity-building and assistance to member States, at their request, through training programmes, advisory services and technical cooperation projects.

The subprogramme assists countries to secure the energy they require to deliver on their commitments to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Climate Agreement by:

1. reducing the environmental footprint of energy,
2. accelerating deep transformation of the energy sector to meet future needs,
3. ensuring sustainable management of resources, and
4. assisting member States in assessing their options to ensure energy for sustainable development, including tracking progress.

The subprogramme promotes policy dialogue and cooperation among member States, regional entities and other partners on sustainable energy issues, in particular energy efficiency, cleaner electricity systems, renewable energy, coal mine methane, resource management, natural gas and energy security through regional and country-specific initiatives aimed at improving cooperation among countries. The initiatives include establishment of centres of excellence on methane management, high performance buildings, and sustainable resource management, conduct of dialogues on pathways at meetings of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and its subsidiary bodies and at in-country and in-region workshops and fora.

The subprogramme also provides technical assistance, disseminates best practices, improves information sharing, and provides guidance on energy-related topics in ECE member States. These activities are expected to result in more effective integration of sustainable energy into the broader 2030 Agenda, national policies and normative frameworks.

The subprogramme actively promotes participation of and collaboration among public and private sectors that is key to implementing national and regional policies. The promotion includes engagement of stakeholders in the development of normative instruments and activation of private and public actors in the deployment and dissemination of the instruments. The result is enhanced dialogue and cooperation among all energy actors that will boost transformational investment in the energy sector and, consequently, accelerate modernization of the energy system to meet countries' development and climate commitments.

Activities over the evaluation period include the extension of the United Nations Framework Classification for Resources (UNFC) to embrace solar, wind, and anthropogenic resources, and to develop a United Nations Resource Management System to help decision-makers manage resources in line with the 2030 Agenda. As a result of this work and related training activities: (a) the European Union has determined to use UNFC to manage critical raw materials for batteries and the shift to a circular economy; (b) African countries have launched a UNFC-based resource management system Africa-wide; and (c) Central Asian and the BRIC countries have decided to use UNFC to enhance investment prospects in their resource sectors.

During the evaluation period, ECE developed, deployed and disseminated products in methane management in the extractive industries (Best Practice Guidance for Effective Methane Recovery and Use from Abandoned Coal Mines, with addition of guidance on Abandoned Mine Methane, and Best Practice Guidance for Monitoring, Reporting, Verifying, and Remediating Methane

Emissions from the Oil and Gas Sector). In 2018-2019, Poland and China launched two centres of excellence to disseminate the guidance on methane recovery which have undertaken extensive capacity building in their areas of work.

During the evaluation period ECE successfully launched the High-Performance Buildings Initiative (HPBI) to deploy its Framework Guidelines for Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings, which aims to improve health and quality of life in the built environment and decarbonize building-related energy requirements. The subprogramme has supported Governments, private sector and other key stakeholders in increasing awareness of the potential for improving the energy performance of buildings through dissemination, capacity building, demonstration and education activities. The subprogramme conducts research on energy efficiency standards and technologies in buildings in the ECE region and, in 2017, developed Framework Guidelines for Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings that underpin the (HPBI). In addition, the subprogramme has undertaken a range of activities on industrial energy efficiency and has issued a range of publications on energy efficiency.

In the area of renewable energy, the subprogramme undertakes reviews of member States' renewable energy policies (hard talks) and publishes a regular appraisal of the state of renewable energy in the region.

Throughout the evaluation period the sub-programme has undertaken a deep appraisal of the choices countries have for delivering on their energy-related commitments under the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement (the so-called Pathways project). In parallel the sub-programme has collaborated with UN Energy and the technical advisory group on SDG7 (part of the HLPF) in the production of regional tracking reports and preparation of policy briefs on the range of energy-related issues.

Finally, throughout the evaluation period ECE has conducted annual International Fora on Energy for Sustainable Development that raise awareness of the trade-offs involved in attaining energy for sustainable development, improve the capacity of countries to develop sustainable energy policies, and align the activities of the UN system in supporting member States in achieving energy-related SDGs. The fora are a collaboration among the UN Regional Commissions that bring together energy experts, representatives from Governments, UN entities, international organizations and other stakeholders to explore how to close the gap between targets of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement and current actions to achieve them.

IV. Issues

The evaluation will answer the following questions:

Relevance

1. Is the collaboration of the ECE Sustainable Energy subprogramme with other entities (UN, other international organizations, NGOs, civil society, academia, and private sector) relevant to attaining the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement?
2. How relevant is the collaboration with other entities (UN, other international organizations, NGOs, civil society, academia, and private sector) in delivering on expected accomplishment and mandated outputs?
3. How relevant is the foregoing collaboration with regards to gender equality and empowerment of women?
4. Does the Sustainable Energy subprogramme incorporate the perspective of vulnerable groups while collaborating with UN system and other partners?

Coherence

5. How coherent is ECE's collaboration with the UN System to deliver on sustainable energy?
6. Has the collaboration among ECE, the UN system and other partners assisted ECE member States in delivering on energy for sustainable development?
7. Are the outputs of ECE's Sustainable Energy subprogramme supported by partnerships with UN System and other partners?

Effectiveness

8. Does the subprogramme contribute to member States' attainment of their commitments under the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement?
9. What outcomes have been achieved through the collaboration with partners (expected/unexpected, positive/negative), in the activities of the sub-programme?
10. What were the challenges/obstacles to achieving the objectives and expected accomplishments set forth?

Efficiency

11. Have the available resources been used efficiently to foster fruitful collaboration with UN System and other partners to deliver results?
12. Are there sufficient resources to achieve the intended outcomes, including in a timely manner?
13. How could enhanced engagement with partners improve efficiency?

Sustainability

14. What is the likelihood that the benefits of the subprogramme's activities delivered through collaboration with UN System and other partners will persist over time?
15. To what extent do partners engage with the work in an enduring way?

Impact

16. How has the collaboration of the ECE Sustainable Energy subprogramme with UN System and other partners contributed to impact at the ECE or global levels?
17. Have the outcomes of this collaboration led to new policies or policy changes in member States?
18. To what extent is the work of the subprogramme taken up by other countries outside of the region as a result of the collaboration with UN System and other partners?
19. Did the collaboration and indicated activities contribute to enhance Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in energy?
20. Has the collaboration between the ECE Sustainable Energy subprogramme, UN System and other partners helped to strengthen the application of gender mainstreaming principles and contribute to substantial and meaningful changes in the situation of the most vulnerable groups?

V. Methodology

The evaluation will be conducted based on:

1. A desk review of all relevant documents over the period including:
   - All relevant documents including materials developed in support of the activities (agendas, plans participants, documents, final reports)
   - Reports of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and subsidiary bodies; Quarterly Performance Reports
   - Proposed programme budgets covering the period
   - Relevant UN and ECE resolutions on the matter

2. An electronic questionnaire will be developed by the consultant to assess the views of stakeholders: experts, members of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and its relevant subsidiary bodies and staff from ECE, other regional commissions, other relevant counterparts in UN System, and other international organizations.
   Other stakeholders will be invited to answer the questionnaire as appropriate to assess the perception of the energy sub-programme from outsiders and experts. Potential names to be added to the list of interviewees would be provided by the ECE project manager. The results of the survey will be disaggregated by gender.

3. The questionnaire will be followed by selected interviews (methodology to be determined by the evaluator in consultation with ECE). The interviews will take place via phone and Skype, or face-to-face when possible.

The report 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.

All material needed for the evaluation, will be provided to the consultant: EPR activities documents and reports, meeting reports and publications, list of involved experts that can be interviewed by telephone. ECE will provide support and further explanation to the evaluator as needed.

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the ECE Evaluation Policy. A gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools, and data techniques are selected. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender analysis.

VI. Evaluation Schedule[1]

15 Feb 2020	ToR finalized, and evaluator selected
16 Mar 2020	Desk review of all documents provided by ECE to the evaluator
30 Mar 2020	Delivery of inception report including design of survey
10 Apr 2020	Feedback on inception report by the project manager
16 Apr 2020	Launch of data gathering
5 May 2020	Conducting telephone interviews
19 May 2020	Analysis of collected information
1 June 2020	Draft report sent to Programme Manager
15 Jun 2020	Comments to evaluator after review by PM and PMU
29 Jun 2020	Final report

VII. Resources

Mr. Scott FOSTER, the Project Manager, will manage the evaluation with the support of the SED section chiefs and Regional Advisor. The Programme Management Unit (PMU) will provide guidance to the Project Manager and evaluator as needed on the evaluation design, methodology and quality assurance of the final draft report.

VIII. Intended Use/Next Steps

The results of the evaluation will be used in the planning and implementation of future evolutions of Sustainable Energy subprogramme in support of Agenda 2030, the Paris Climate Agreement, and Gender Equality.

A management response to the evaluation will be prepared by ECE, and relevant recommendations implemented as scheduled in the management response. Progress on implementation of recommendations will be available on the ECE public website.

[1] Final timetable to be agreed following engagement of the evaluator

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.
- 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 another language (for example Russian) may be desirable depending on the countries included in the project (for the purpose of being able to seek inputs from national authorities in their native tongue).

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