

TERMS OF REFERENCE

EVALUATION OF UN DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT PROJECT 1415-AF

“Strengthening Governments’ and water operators’ capacity ensure equity of access to water and sanitation in countries with economies in transition in the Economic Commission for Europe region, with a particular focus on small-scale water supplies and sanitation in rural areas.”

I. Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to review the implementation and assess the extent to which the objectives of the UN Development Account project “Strengthening Governments’ and water operators’ capacity to ensure equity of access to water and sanitation in countries with economies in transition in the Economic Commission for Europe region, with a particular focus on small-scale water supplies and sanitation in rural areas.” (hereinafter “Project”) were achieved. The evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project in enhancing the capacity of the project countries with regards to ensuring equitable access to water and sanitation, with a particular focus on small-scale water supplies and sanitation in rural areas.

The evaluation should also:

- identify good practices from the implementation of the project that could be replicated in possible future similar projects, and/or issues that need further attention in possible future projects;
- develop practical recommendations for future similar projects to enhance the impact of activities.

II. Scope

The evaluation will be guided by the objectives, indicators of achievement and means of verification established in the logical framework of the project document. The evaluation will consider the extent to which the Project built the capacity of beneficiary countries to ensure equity of access to water and sanitation. The evaluation will include the full period of implementation from 2014 to 2017.

III. Background

The UNECE-WHO/Europe Protocol on Water and Health requires that Parties ensure universal access to water and sanitation by adopting national targets and setting timeframes specific for the country’s situation, needs and capacity. The 2014-2016 programme of work of the Protocol adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its third session in 2013 and then the 2017-2019 programme of work adopted at its fourth session in 2016 recognized “Equitable access to water and sanitation: translating the human right to water and sanitation into practice” and “Small-scale water supplies and sanitation” as priority areas of work. In particular, during meetings of intergovernmental bodies under the Protocol, representatives from countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus, South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia expressed their interest to receive assistance to implement the provisions of the Protocol on Water and Health, particularly with regards to equitable access to water and sanitation and small-scale water supplies and sanitation in rural areas.

The project was implemented from 2014 to 2017. UNECE led on the execution of the project together with WHO/Europe. Project activities included 13 beneficiary countries: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, either through national, regional or intergovernmental activities.

The objective of the project was to strengthen the capacity of national and local authorities as well as water operators to develop policies and measures aimed at providing access to clean and safe drinking water and adequate sanitation in countries with economies in transition in the UNECE region, with a particular focus on small-scale water supplies and sanitation in rural areas.

IV. Issues

The evaluation should review the following aspects of the project implementation and results:

- *Relevance:*
To what extent was the project relevant to the objective of the UNECE – WHO/Europe Protocol on Water and Health to support Member States in improving equitable access to water and sanitation?
To what extent did the project respond to the specific needs of member States covered by the project's activities?
Was the project design and implementation appropriate for meeting the project's overall objectives?
- *Effectiveness:*
Did the project achieve the results expected during the project design in terms of the planned activities, outcome, and impact?
What were the challenges/ obstacles to achieving the project objective and expected accomplishments?
- *Efficiency:*
Did the project achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources?
Were the resources (financial and human) appropriate to the design the project?
Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?
Were the activities implemented in the required sequence needed to ensure the greatest impact of the Project?
- *Sustainability:*
To what extent will the benefits of the project continue after completion of the project?
How is the stakeholders' engagement likely to continue? How will the capacity built ensure that institutions will take over and sustain the benefits of the project?

V. Methodology

The evaluation will be conducted on the basis of:

1. A **desk review** of all the relevant documents obtained from project files including:
 - Programmes and materials (presentations, background documents) developed for national and regional workshops as well as lists of participants;
 - Reports of workshops;
 - Meeting webpages;
 - Country reports including the outcomes of national assessments of equitable access to water and sanitation of rapid assessment of small scale water supplies and sanitation;
 - Publications developed in the framework of the project
 - Yearly interim progress reports (for 2014, 2015 and 2016).
2. An electronic **questionnaire** will be developed by the consultant for dissemination to assess the perspective from member States targeted by the project, after consultation with UNECE and WHO/Europe.
3. This questionnaire will be followed up by **selected interviews** (methodology to be determined by the evaluator in consultation with UNECE and WHO/Europe). The interviews will take place via phone and Skype. The UNECE project manager will provide the list and contact details.

The report will summarize the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. An executive summary (of no more than 2 pages) will briefly summarize the project, the methodology of the evaluation, key findings, conclusions and recommendations.

All material needed for the evaluation, will be provided to the consultant: project document and reports, meeting reports and publications, list of involved experts that can be interviewed by telephone. UNECE project manager and WHO/Europe project staff will be contacted to obtain clarifications and any missing data. They will provide support and further explanation by Skype and phone to the evaluation consultant when needed. The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the UNECE Evaluation Policy.

VI. Evaluation Schedule

- Desk review of all documents provided by UNECE to the evaluator (by 10 December 2017)
- Delivery of inception report including design of survey (by 10 December 2017)
- Feedback on inception report by the project manager and PMU (by 15 December 2017)
- Launching the survey (15 December 2017)
- Conducting in-person and telephone interviews (by 15 January 2018)
- Analysis of collected information (by 25 January 2018)
- Draft report (25 January 2018)
- Comments back to the evaluator after review by the project manager and the PMU (5 February 2018)
- Final report (15 February 2018).

VII. Resources

The requirement for an external evaluation is specified in the project document. An external evaluation consultant identified through the UNECE Evaluation Consultants' Roster will be hired and managed by the project manager P3. In addition, one P3 staff member will provide support to the consultant by ensuring the provision of all necessary documentation needed for the desk review. The staff member will also 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 on the evaluation requirements, design, and review of the draft evaluation report.

The resources available for this evaluation are USD 12,000. Payment will be made upon satisfactory delivery of work on 20 February 2018.

VIII. Intended Use/Next Steps

The evaluation will be consistent with the UNECE Evaluation Policy. The results will be used in the planning and implementation of future similar projects in the region and possibly beyond.

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 of the UNDA, by being made available on the UNECE public and internal websites, as well as submitted to UN DESA in UNHQ.

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) is 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 UNECE before embarking on an evaluation project, and at any point where such conflict occurs.