**Annex III**

**UNCDF Strategic Framework 2022 – 2025: Evaluation Plan**

**1. Introduction**

In line with the provisions of UNDP’s Evaluation Policy (to which it is party)[[1]](#footnote-1), UNCDF is required to establish a multi-year evaluation plan that is aligned with its Strategic Framework. It is also required to propose a biennial costed programme of work for evaluation over the period 2022 – 2023 in support of the main objectives of the Strategic Framework and UNCDF’s oversight and accountability obligations to its Member States.

This Annex describes the broader objectives that the evaluation function in UNCDF is expected to meet over this period, as well as the main approaches to be followed, in support of UNCDF’s evolving mandate as a hybrid UN development finance organisation helping the least developed countries to meet the SDGs.

The Annex also describes UNDCF’s plans for continuing its partnership with UNDP’s Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), the continued participation of its Evaluation Unit in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and in UN system-wide evaluation initiatives, as well as collaboration where possible with its key development partners in the design and implementation of UNCDF evaluations. It concludes with a proposed indicative Evaluation Plan for the period 2022 - 2025.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**2. Evaluation in the Strategic Framework 2022 – 2025**

In its Strategic Framework, UNCDF makes clear its intention to continue to ensure an appropriately – resourced evaluation function[[3]](#footnote-3) that can support the independent evaluation of selected key programmes and projects at the mid-term and final points of their implementation. It also commits to increasingly pursue thematic or portfolio evaluations to capture UNCDF’s performance at the organisational level overall and across key themes and priority areas of UNCDF’s work – including with its key partners.[[4]](#footnote-4)

In implementing its Evaluation Plan, UNCDF will continue to seek partnerships with other UN evaluation offices – including UNDP’s Independent Evaluation Office – to commission joint evaluations of UNCDF’s work with its UN partners, and it will seek to contribute, where possible, to new system-wide evaluation initiatives – such as evaluations of the UN’s Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks.

Within UNCDF, the Evaluation Unit will step up its support to help reinvigorate UNCDF’s results reporting and measurement systems following up the recommendations of the Strategic Framework evaluation and as part of a broader approach to improving UNCDF’s monitoring, learning and evaluation (MEL) system.

3. Type of evaluations proposed

The Evaluation Plan proposed below includes sixteen evaluations to be conducted over the coming four years: twelve project and programme evaluations and four thematic evaluations, one of which will be an evaluation of UNCDF’s Strategic Framework to be implemented in collaboration with UNDP’s Independent Evaluation Office.

These evaluations will cover a full range of UNCDF’s substantive work in areas such as digital financial services, local transformative finance and the financing of small and medium-sized enterprises, using the full array of UNCDF’s financial instruments, including loans and guarantees. In so doing, the evaluations will seek to understand the main results – direct and indirect, intended and unintended – of its work with its partner organisations, and of their combined contributions to changes in the market systems, additional flows of public and private capital as well more inclusive, diversified and green economic transformation that UNCDF seeks to support. In doing so, the evaluations will pay close attention to UNCDF’s expected contributions to relevant SDGs such as SDG 1 (no poverty), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) and SDG 17 (partnerships for the Goals).

UNCDF will continue to seek methodological innovation in its evaluation designs, drawing on emerging good practice in UNEG as well as other evaluation communities of practice in which it participates. Such innovations may include use of a greater range of relevant evaluation methods and techniques such as outcome mapping, process tracing or evaluation approaches such as developmental evaluation which involves evaluation teams ‘accompanying’ an organisation in designing and implementing new types of development programme and initiative using an evaluative toolkit.

With a view to better understanding the results of UNCDF’s work at the community and beneficiary level in the countries in which it works, UNCDF will maintain its focus on seeking partnerships with organisations to conduct evaluations of the impact of UNCDF’s work on beneficiaries and the communities that it serves. One example is the ongoing counter-factual impact evaluation by the European Union of the joint UNCDF/SNV Boosting Green Employment and Enterprise Opportunities (GrEEn) programme in Ghana which aims to understand the programme’s effects on the employment, income and resilience of women, youth and their households.

In line with its commitments under the UN’s *System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment*, UNCDF will continue to prioritise gender-responsive evaluation as well as incorporating into its evaluations other key objectives of the ‘Leaving No One Behind’ agenda that underpins the Sustainable Development Goals, such as inclusion of the disabled and vulnerable groups.

Finally, as the United Nations catalytic development finance entity for the least developed countries, UNCDF will continue to support evaluation capacity development initiatives of partner governments, inviting whenever possible our partners to participate in evaluation exercises.

4. Collaboration with UNDP’s Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) and other external partners

UNCDF greatly appreciates its partnership with the Independent Evaluation Office from which it receives support and guidance on evaluation quality and approaches, as well as – where relevant - additional evaluation coverage in areas where UNDP and UNCDF are working closely together.  To this end, and as a complement to the findings emanating from its own evaluation function, UNCDF will continue to seek - wherever appropriate – inclusion of its joint work with UNDP in the IEO’s Independent Country Programme Evaluations, as well as IEO thematic evaluations that touch on areas of UNCDF specialisation.

With a view to ensuring the transparency of UNCDF’s evaluation results, UNCDF will continue to present the key evaluation results and activities of its evaluation function in UNDP’s *Annual Report on Evaluation* to the Executive Board. This report will also include the results of the continued systematic external assessment by the IEO of completed UNCDF evaluations.[[5]](#footnote-5)

UNCDF will also continue to support actively the work of the United Nations Evaluation Group from which it will seek guidance and support in implementing its evaluation plan[[6]](#footnote-6). It will also continue to seek partnerships with other organisations and communities of practice working on topics of interest and relevance to UNCDF such as the OECD’s work on how to better evaluate the results of blended finance interventions.[[7]](#footnote-7) Taken together, this will help ensure that UNCDF’s methods and approaches to evaluation remain up-to-date and relevant to the task of effectively evaluating the development objectives that UNCDF has committed to in its Strategic Framework.

6. Proposed evaluation plan 2018 – 2021

The table below presents the indicative evaluation plan for the period 2018 – 2021. It will be revised as necessary on an annual basis with changes posted to the Evaluation Resource Center.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Year** | **Title** | **Geography** | **Flagship area** | **Type** | **Start** | **End** |
| 2022 | **‘From Innovation to Scale' - Evaluation of UNCDF's performance against its maturity model 2014 - 2022** | Global | Corporate | Thematic Evaluation | **Q2 2022** | **Q4 2022** |
| 2022 | **Burkina Faso Digital Finance Programme** | Burkina Faso | Inclusive Digital Economies (IDE) | Final Project Evaluation | **Q2 2022** | **Q4 2022** |
| 2022 | **Africa Policy Accelerator Programme** | Regional (Africa) | IDE | Final Programme Evaluation | **Q4 2022** | **Q2 2023** |
| 2023 | **Local Finance Initiative** | Global | Local Transformative Finance (LTF) | Final Programme Evaluation | **Q1 2023** | **Q3 2023** |
| 2023 | **Mid-Term Evaluation of UNCDF's *Leaving No One Behind in the Digital Era Strategy*** | Global | IDE | Thematic | **Q2 2023** | **Q4 2023** |
| 2023 | **Build Fund and Builder Technical Assistance Facility** | Global | LDC- Investment  Platform (LDCIP) | Mid-Term Programme Evaluation | **Q3 2023** | **Q1 2024** |
| 2023 | **Women’s Empowerment for Inclusive Growth Program (WING)** | Bangladesh | LTF | Final Project Evaluation | **Q3 2023** | **Q1 2024** |
| 2023 | **Combined evaluation of the UNCDF Remittances & Migration Programmes** | Global | IDE | Mid-Term Programme Evaluation | **Q3 2023** | **Q1 2024** |
| 2024 | **Digital Financial Services For Resilience** | Global | IDE | Final Programme Evaluation | **Q1 2024** | **Q3 2024** |
| 2024 | **Portfolio Review of UNCDF-supported investments** | Global | Corporate | Thematic Evaluation | **Q1 2024** | **Q3 2024** |
| 2024 | **Leaving No One Behind in the Digital Era -Uganda (LNOBU)** | Uganda | IDE | Mid-Term Programme Evaluation | **Q3 2024** | **Q1 2025** |
| 2024 | **Evaluation of UNCDF's Strategic Framework 2022 - 2025 & Gender Policy** | Global | Corporate | Thematic Evaluation | **Q4 2024** | **Q2 2025** |
| 2025 | **Pacific Insurance and Climate Adaptation Programme** | Pacific | IDE | Final Programme Evaluation | **Q1 2025** | **Q3 2025** |
| 2025 | **Financial Health Programme** | Global | IDE | Final Programme Evaluation | **Q1 2025** | **Q3 2025** |
| 2025 | **Pacific Digital Economy Programme** | Pacific | IDE | Final Programme Evaluation | **Q1 2025** | **Q3 2025** |
| 2025 | **MAP Phase 2** | Global | IDE | Final Programme Evaluation | **Q2 2025** | **Q4 2025** |

1. http://web.undp.org/evaluation/policy.shtml [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. It should be noted that in line with the requirements of the Evaluation Policy, the first two years of the Plan are costed. Depending on the size of UNCDF’s portfolio and its success in raising resources to implement the broader objectives of the Strategic Framework, however, the content and focus of the Plan may change. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. In line with the relevant target in the UNDP Evaluation Policy (point 27), UNCDF will aim to continue allocate at least 1 per cent of its combined programmatic (core and non-core) resources to the evaluation function on an annual basis. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *UNCDF Strategic Framework*, 2022 – 2025, point. 93. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. All UNCDF evaluations are published, alongside management responses, on UNDP’s Evaluation Resource Center: <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/units/255>. In seventeen evaluations submitted to the IEO for quality assessment since 2015, sixteen evaluations have received scores of ‘satisfactory’ or ‘highly satisfactory’. UNCDF will aim to maintain this reputation for high-quality evaluation throughout the 2022 – 2025 programming period. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Over the 2018 – 2021 period, UNCDF’s Evaluation Unit played an important role in the **UN Evaluation Group (UNEG)**, co-launching a new *Working Group on Evaluation Methods*, convening since 2020 the *Working Group on UNEG Peer Reviews* and helping in the executive management of the Group with the election also in 2020 of UNCDF’s current Head of Evaluation as one of UNEG’s Vice Chairs. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/evaluating-private-sector-blended-finance.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-7)