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Review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Scope of the Review

This review assesses the performance of the UNDP evaluation function since 2011, the extent to which the organization has responded to the requirements of the policy and the status of policy implementation. It identifies areas that it believes require policy changes and/or management decisions to improve the evaluation function. As required by the Terms of Reference (ToR) and confirmed during its Inception Mission, the Review focuses on three elements of the evaluation policy – the overall UNDP evaluation function, independent evaluations and decentralised evaluations¹. Given reported recurring weaknesses in the coverage and quality of decentralised evaluations and the particular interest of the Executive Board in this issue, the review pays particular attention to this element and verifies the existence of weaknesses, explores reasons for them and ways to go forward. For the associated funds and programmes, namely United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and United Nations Volunteers (UNV), the review assesses how they have implemented evaluation and compares this with the specifications of the Policy and with the approaches adopted by the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO).

The Evaluation Policy assigns key functions to different entities in the overall UNDP system. The Executive Board is custodian of the evaluation policy. The Independent Evaluation Office is custodian of several aspects of evaluation, with particular responsibility for the delivery of independent evaluations (notably Assessments of Development Results, Programme and Thematic Evaluations). The Administrator is accountable for UNDP results, which includes responsibility to ensure that bureaux and country offices, under the oversight of their senior managers, deliver appropriately independent and impartial decentralised evaluations. The Evaluation Units of associated funds and programmes are custodians of the evaluation function for their parent bodies.

2. Methodology

The review has adopted a Theory of Change approach using mixed-methods and triangulation to ensure data quality. Qualitative and quantitative data relevant to the policy and its implementation were generated through several lines of enquiry. These included:

- document review, covering a wide range of documents and files;
- a meta-evaluation (quality assessment) of a sample of decentralised and IEO evaluations completed since 2012, to review the quality of UNDP's evaluations and of the IEO quality assessment process;
- missions to UNDP HQ in New York, Country and Regional Offices (Service Centres) in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and Caribbean and the UNV office in Bonn. These missions included semi-structured interviews and/or focus groups with a wide range of relevant stakeholders in UNDP, multilateral agencies, bilateral donors and partner country institutions. They also produced additional documents for review;

¹ Independent evaluations are conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office, while decentralised evaluations are conducted by independent external experts, commissioned by programme units of UNDP.

- electronic surveys soliciting views from UNDP Resident Representatives, staff with evaluation responsibilities and external consultants who conducted decentralised evaluations for UNDP over the past three years; and
- mini case studies of evaluation within UNV and UNCDF, based on interviews and document analysis.

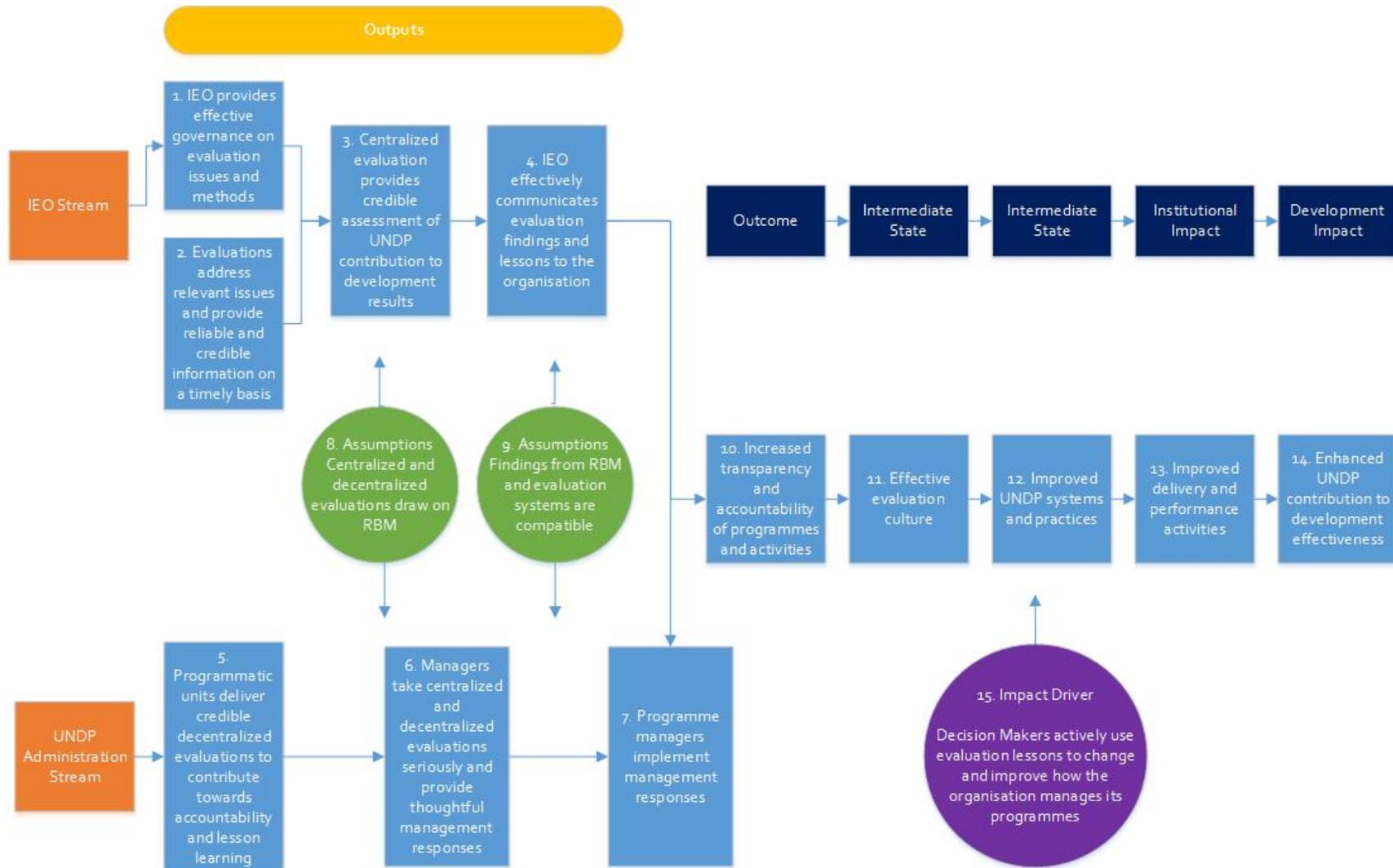
3. Key Findings: The Performance of UNDP and Associated Entities with Responsibilities for Implementing Evaluation Policy against the Theory of Change

The key findings of the Review have been analysed within the framework of a Theory of Change (Figure One). This shows that the Policy provides for two main streams of evaluation output, to be delivered by the Independent Evaluation Office (Boxes 1 to 4) and UNDP Administration/Management (Boxes 5 to 7). According to the theory, these streams are assumed to be interlinked (Boxes 8 and 9). The deliverables from the two streams should merge to produce an effective evaluation culture, which drives improved institutional delivery and performance (Boxes 10 to 14). The main driving force in the later steps of the process is the active use by decision makers of verified evaluation lessons to improve how UNDP works.

The findings for UNCDF and UNV are separately summarised in Section 4.5 below.

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Figure One: Theory of Change for Delivery of UNDP Evaluation Policy



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Table One below provides a detailed rating of progress along the results chain shown in Figure One. This shows that there is minimal movement towards the intended impact of a demonstrably enhanced UNDP contribution to development effectiveness. This is because the main outcome necessary to move towards this impact, namely “increased transparency and accountability of programmes and activities,” has not been delivered. In fact, given the current challenges to the overall evaluation system, even if UNDP were to enhance its overall development effectiveness, it would lack credible information to show that this was the case. The review regards this as a very serious situation, which the Board needs to address urgently through amendments to the Evaluation Policy and careful monitoring of the results of these.

Table One: Rating of Progress Along Causal Pathway of Theory of Change for Evaluation Policy*

Element of Theory (See Figure One above)	Rating	Summary of Analysis
1: IEO provides effective guidance on evaluation issues and methods.	++	Guidance mainly given through handbooks and web-based training and is widely used; but does not meet all needs of staff throughout the organization and is in need of updating.
2: Independent evaluations address relevant issues and provide reliable and credible information on a timely basis.	++	Quality of evaluations generally good, but some problems with timely completion.
3: Centralized evaluation provides credible assessments of UNDP contribution to development results.	++	Quality of evaluations generally good, but some problems with credibility of analysis of UNDP contribution, particularly when drawing on outcome information from Management system.
4: IEO effectively communicates evaluation findings and lessons to the organisation	++	Good quality reports but limited range of dissemination products restricts access to information generated.
5: Programmatic units deliver credible decentralised evaluations to contribute towards accountability and lesson learning	- - -	Over 40% of decentralised evaluation consultants report some form of unacceptable measures by UNDP Managers affecting the independence of their evaluations. Credibility of information in the ERC is thus severely compromised, reducing its value for accountability or lesson learning. There is also uneven quality and a preponderance of low-cost evaluations.
6: Managers take centralized and decentralised evaluations seriously and provide thoughtful management responses.	-	Since many decentralised evaluation reports are compromised, management responses are of widely varying quality and utility. Responses to centralized (independent) evaluations are generally more focussed.
7: Programme managers implement management responses	-	At senior management level, concerted measures are in place to monitor implementation of management responses. However, unreliable quality of decentralised evaluations reduces the effectiveness of this process.
8: Assumption: Centralized and decentralised evaluations draw on RBM system data	++	Despite some issues with availability and quality of data in RBM systems (including ROAR), they are widely used by both centralized and decentralised evaluations.

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9: Assumption: Findings from RBM and evaluation systems are compatible and complementary.	+	Findings are broadly compatible, but many decentralised evaluation reports have been amended to present results desired by management (particularly at CO level).
10: Increased transparency and accountability of programmes and activities.	---	Major flaws in decentralised evaluation system have severely reduced transparency and accountability.
11: Effective evaluation culture.	--	Owing to flawed decentralised evaluation system and excessive opposition to a few independent evaluations, there has been limited progress towards an overall evaluation culture.
12: Improved UNDP systems and practices	-	Although senior management has made substantial efforts to develop improved use of evaluation findings, it has been ineffective at ensuring the veracity of the data upon which its analyses are based.
13: Improved delivery and performance of activities	-	There is insufficient impartial evaluation evidence to verify any reported improvements.
14: Enhanced UNDP contribution to development	-	There is insufficient impartial evaluation evidence to verify any enhanced contribution.
15: Impact Driver: Decision Makers actively use evaluation lessons to change and improve how the organisation manages its programmes.	-	Although there are decision makers who attempt to use lessons to improve programmes, the lack of veracity in the decentralised evaluation system prevents this from occurring throughout UNDP.

Rating key:

+++ Highly satisfactory. ++ Satisfactory. + Moderately satisfactory.

- Moderately unsatisfactory. -- Unsatisfactory. --- Highly unsatisfactory.

* See associated Figure One: Theory of Change for Core Aspects of UNDP Evaluation Policy

4. Major Issues and Options for the Future of UNDP Evaluation Policy

4.1 Introduction

The findings and analysis presented in this report show that there are several issues that the Board needs to address through a revision of the Evaluation Policy. The review recommends that the revised Policy should provide means through which all of the identified challenges can be overcome. However, these challenges are of different magnitudes and will require various levels of inputs and Board attention. This section therefore devotes most of its attention to issues surrounding decentralised evaluations, which are currently the biggest element

preventing UNDP from developing and benefiting from an effective evaluation culture. Unless these issues are overcome, the Board will continue to lack a coherent set of independent and impartial evidence on field level performance upon which to base its decisions.

The Review presents initial (sometimes alternative) approaches to address the issues raised. It recommends that these should be advanced and made specific by detailed discussions among the Board members, and between the Board, UNDP management and IEO.

4.2 Issue One: Overall Reliability of Decentralised Evaluations Severely Compromised

4.2.1 The Challenge

The Policy places the onus for ensuring the quality of decentralised evaluations on the UNDP Administrator and senior management, with a limited "quality assessment" role for the Independent Evaluation Office. This has not worked. The symptoms of this failure are as follows:

- Substantial rate² of interference by management (mainly at CO level) in evaluation reports of "independent" consultants.
- Quality assessment system therefore rates reports of unknown but varying veracity.
- The Evaluation Resource Centre compiles information on and from unreliable reports and is therefore inaccurate.
- Much analysis and reporting in the ERC system on decentralised evaluations is therefore based on inaccurate and unreliable data.
- Management reporting on decentralised evaluations to EB is based on aggregated data from a seriously flawed database, which is not suitable for helping the Board to provide direction to UNDP.

In order to understand how this situation might best be changed, it is necessary to understand which factors have contributed towards it, either as a cause or as part of the institutional environment that has allowed it to develop. These can be summarised as follows:

- Final evaluations often not seen as useful, particularly by Country Offices.
- Few staff dealing with evaluation have any specialised training in the subject.
- High reliance by staff on one Handbook, which is useful, but incomplete and out of date.
- Concept of independence of decentralised evaluations often not understood or supported.
- Evaluations seen as undermining funding efforts.
- Managers believe some consultants are biased against UNDP or do not understand it.
- Often-inadequate resources for quality evaluations.
- Evaluation not a priority for many national counterparts.
- Many managers have not prioritized the development of an evaluation culture (although some have).
- Policy makes UNDP management bodies responsible for quality assurance of decentralised evaluations, but this has not been implemented as intended: there is only quality assessment of reports by IEO.

² About 38% of consultants who responded to a survey (254 respondents, response rate of 50.8% of the population, Margin of Error 3.6%) reported some form of unacceptable interference by management.

- No effective mechanism to resolve disputes between consultants and clients.
- Disputes, plus inadequate resources to address ToR, deter many consultants from bidding for UNDP decentralised evaluation work, leading to restricted choice of consultants.

Underlying this array of contributory factors is the perception among staff at various levels that neither “sticks nor carrots” are in place to encourage desired management behaviour towards independent evaluations (or indeed any evaluation). Each Manager can form a personal approach towards evaluation, since performance assessment rarely rewards positive performance on this dimension or penalizes negative aspects. It is usually only the relatively junior “M&E specialists” who are judged on this aspect and they are not sufficiently senior to make a major difference to overall approaches in the office they serve.

4.2.2 Recommended Approach³

The Policy should require management to introduce and enforce effective quality assurance systems for decentralised evaluations; with verification by IEO and penalties on units⁴ that do not comply with standards. This should be supported by updated and additional guidelines and an assessment by the Board of the value added to available management information by large numbers of low budget evaluations of variable quality.

Currently, it is the Directors of Regional Bureaux who are responsible for “Ensuring quality and implementation of evaluation (plans and) practices”. However, these bureaux have gradually reduced “M&E” staff posts, which would enable them to fulfil this function, even though it is required of them. Furthermore, documents available to the Independent Review suggest that, under the new UNDP structural review, there may be even less staff time devoted to evaluation than at present. Currently, there are around 300 decentralised evaluations per annum requiring effective quality assurance by the 5 regions. Given that “quality assurance” would need to begin with such issues as quality of ToR and evaluability analysis and follow the process right up to the Final Report, the Review believes that UNDP management could not deliver this with less than 10 (Full Time Equivalent) evaluation advisers⁵ actually in post across the regions. These could be either Regional Staff or jointly-funded by IEO and the regions (assuming additional resources were made available). Matrix management would need to be applied, with prime responsibility to the IEO but with some level of operational management supplied by the region.

If the necessary evaluation advisers were in place, the next step would be independent verification of evaluation reports. Two measures would be necessary here, one of which would require further resources. The first measure would parallel a process adopted by the UNDP-GEF Office for terminal evaluations. It would require that the independent consultants should submit their draft reports simultaneously to the commissioning unit (usually Country Office) and to the regional evaluation adviser. This would enable the adviser to later verify that no surprising changes have occurred between the draft and the final version. If they have, this would trigger follow-up enquiries by the Adviser. The second measure would require a follow-up evaluation mission by (or on behalf of) the IEO to a percentage (the Review suggest 10%) of projects. This would verify the quality of the report by re-assessing the project, including its ratings⁶. Since the projects to be verified would not be notified until after the

³ The Final Report of the Review offers alternative options, but this Executive Summary presents only the approach which the Review recommends.

⁴ A way of introducing penalties into the system practiced among some International Finance Institutions is to award “red flags” to management units breaching regulations or standards, which can be accumulated and considered in future performance assessments.

⁵ This means that “M&E” Specialists would be counted according to whether they are full or part time in this capacity and on the basis of the fraction of their time devoted to evaluation.

⁶ This would follow some of the procedures similar to those of the World Bank Project Performance Assessment System. Although the Bank conducts Project Performance Assessment Reports (PPARs) in 20% to 25% of projects previously assessed

original decentralised evaluation has been submitted, this would introduce some “teeth” into the assessment process. This could be strengthened by ensuring comparable verification coverage across regions and issuing “red flags” against regional and country offices, which are found to have submitted inappropriately influenced or amended evaluation reports⁷.

Since there are around 300 decentralised evaluations per annum, this would require roughly 30 follow-up missions each year. Since these missions are primarily for verification they could be shorter than the original evaluation, but this total would still require additional funding.

In support of these “control” measures, IEO and UNDP need to collaborate to update and/or expand the Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results, particularly in such areas as gender equity, creating and maintaining evaluation partnerships, joint evaluation, protecting independence and evaluation ethics for managers. This handbook should be supported with enhanced opportunities for evaluation training, both on-line and in person. IEO should also carefully examine the numerous guidance products developed by UNEG, with a view to preparing and circulating concise applications of their messages for UNDP.

The review feels that, if these measures were all put in place, including with adequate staff actually in post (not “positions”) it could enable UNDP over time to develop a credible decentralised evaluation system, which is currently not in place. This would provide both management and the Board with the essential body of verified data on country level performance to effectively perform their respective roles.

4.3 Issue Two: Unreasonable Disputes over Some Independent Evaluations

4.3.1 The Challenge

The majority of independent evaluations are delivered without major problems. However, several (5 out of 22 ADRs in the last three years) have become embroiled in unreasonable disputes, which have resulted in delays of up to one year in finalization of reports. The Review considers that three of these originated from a Country Office and eventually also involved the relevant Regional Bureau; while two are attributed to delays caused by IEO processes. The symptoms of this issue are:

- Time scales disrupted and delayed
- Evaluations not delivered as planned for management purposes
- IEO resources diverted from other intended work
- Value added from independent evaluations reduced by unwillingness of some managers to encompass external perspective on their work
- Reputational risk, since disputes become public knowledge.

Factors contributing to the challenge are:

by an Implementation Completion Report (ICR) and an Implementation Completion Report Review (ICRR, a Desk Study), this Review proposes that the UNDP process should assess only 10% of projects. This can be justified by the fact that UNDP decentralised evaluations are intended to be conducted by independent consultants, whereas World Bank ICRs are permitted to be conducted by project implementers.

⁷ The Office of Audit and Investigations is already able to raise “audit issues” concerning specific offices, which the offices have to address.

- Managers perceive variable quality of independent evaluations, (which could be true)
- Managers believe some consultants are biased against UNDP or do not understand it, (which could be true)
- Evaluations are less positive than management expects and are seen as undermining “communication” strategies
- Varying interpretation of concept of independence of centralized evaluations by stakeholders in different positions
- Presentation of “negative” findings perceived as “disloyalty” by some managers.

The IEO has accepted that it has contributed to this situation and has introduced measures to strengthen its approach. These include a rebalancing of the role of IEO professional staff and consultants, with a stronger emphasis on direct management by IEO of such evaluations. Also, it has introduced procedures to expedite progress, through enforcement of timelines.

4.3.2 Recommended Approach

IEO should be given clear authority to proceed according to the pre-established timetable with all steps in the independent evaluation process, in the absence of timely feedback from management parties. Enduring objections by management to evaluation findings or recommendations should be reserved for inclusion in the Management Response and should not be allowed to delay national workshops or report publication. UNDP units (e.g. Country Offices), which hinder completion of independent evaluations, should be penalized through institution of a “red flag” system.

This approach should eliminate lengthy disputes and delays with independent evaluations at no additional cost. The potential disadvantage is that national partners (or other parties affected by thematic or global evaluations) may get conflicting messages, if they receive from IEO reports that have not been accepted by UNDP management. On the other hand, this could become an advantage, since it may place pressure on management to respond on time and constructively, thereby enabling evaluations to be completed on time. This pressure would be reinforced by the application of red flags to managers who are seen to obstruct the system. The Review received ample evidence from its contacts with UNDP staff and managers at different levels that one of the key factors seen to reduce the effectiveness of the evaluation function is that the system lacks penalties against those who behave inappropriately towards it.

4.4 Issue Three: Policy Too Vague on Issues Essential to Operational Independence of the IEO

4.4.1 The Challenge

The Policy is vaguely worded or silent on a number of issues, which could together pose serious challenges to the operational independence of the IEO. The symptoms of this issue include:

- The appointment term of the Director IEO is “up to” 4 years, which allows management the possibility of offering less.
- The duration of a possible renewal is not specified.

- EB does not Chair or even sit on Appointment Committee for Director or Deputy Director, while Management has the majority.
- It is not clear how the Director IEO's performance is assessed, which is necessary for quality assurance and confidence in the position.
- Policy does not specify that Director IEO can submit reports directly to EB as necessary, in the event of serious disputes with management.

Factors contributing to this situation appear to include:

- Assumptions of harmonious relationship between IEO and UNDP management not realized.
- Implications of vague wording not appreciated.
- Importance of credibility of IEO Director through appropriate performance assessment not emphasized.

4.4.2 Recommended Approach

The Review recommends that ***the Board should amend the Policy to specify the lead role of the Board in recruitment procedures for the Director of IEO, the duration of the post (subject to performance assessment), renewal processes and duration, and powers of the Director to report directly to the Board as necessary.*** The advantage of these measures would be the strengthening of the structural independence of the Office, in keeping with its new title.

4.5 Issue Four: No Assurance of Independent Evaluation by Associated Funds

4.5.1 The Challenge

The Policy describes IEO as “the custodian of the evaluation function” for independent evaluations in UNDP. “Evaluation units of the associated funds and programmes are the custodians of the evaluation function in their organizations.” This indicates that the roles of the different evaluation entities are parallel in some respects. However, whilst the Policy states that IEO “Conducts independent evaluations in line with best international evaluation standards,” the evaluation units simply “manage and conduct evaluations.” The Review believes that, although the evaluation units cannot have the same degree of structural independence as the IEO, because of the small management systems of the institutions, they should still be required to operate in line with “best international evaluation standards.”

Symptoms of this challenge include:

- Owing to small size of associated fund bodies, evaluation units cannot be structurally independent of management
- IEO and associated fund evaluation units are all defined as “custodians of the evaluation function”
- Evaluation units therefore have parallel status to IE. Their independent evaluations are self-verified, but at lower level than for IEO (P4 as against D2)
- Small size of units means that their evaluations are all commissioned from consultants, so that they are effectively managing decentralised evaluations
- Independence and impartiality of evaluations from associated funds (although currently acceptable) is not guaranteed by the Policy.

Factors contributing to the situation include:

- Structural challenges to independence in small organizations not incorporated in Policy
- Levels of evaluation expertise and authority of Head set at lower level for associated funds than for IEO, with no compensating quality assurance
- Inadequate level of collaboration between evaluation units of associated funds and IEO to develop consistent approaches to quality.

4.5.2 Recommended Approach

The Review notes that the evaluation units of the associated funds and programmes have developed in quite different ways and recommends that the Policy should incorporate new and flexible approaches as follows: ***evaluation units should be required to: either submit their independent evaluations to IEO for quality assurance (to ensure comparable "best international evaluation standards"); or to collaborate directly with IEO to manage and report on their independent evaluations. Associated with these measures, it is also recommended that the Policy should require IEO to pay more systematic attention to the contribution of the associated funds and programmes to UNDP results in all of its independent evaluations.***

The Review considers the proposed quality assurance to be appropriate because it is fundamentally the Director level posts of IEO, which enable it to operate at best international evaluation standards; while appointments at this level are unlikely to be viable in the small associated fund units. The alternative is seen as a form of management collaboration on evaluations, which could be formally agreed between a fund and the IEO and subject to periodic review. This collaboration could, for example, include a fund or programme financing a position (full or part-time) in IEO focusing on its evaluation work, or simply commissioning IEO to conduct (or conduct jointly) major evaluations for the fund concerned.

The Review feels that these measures would validate the independence of evaluations from the units and ensure that there is comparability of standards across the evaluation entities covered by the Policy.

4.6 Issue Five: Relevance of Concepts in the Policy Needs Updating

4.6.1 The Challenge

The Policy contains a section on "Definition" (P5/6), which the Review finds problematical. The definitions are mainly derived from the Glossary of Evaluation and Results Based Management (RBM) Terms, OECD (2000). In the light of discussions and debates within the evaluation community over the last decade, some of the definitions do not fully accord with current thinking, while other important topics are not mentioned.

4.6.2 Recommended Approach

The Review recommends that the section in the Policy on definitions be replaced by a more general text, which indicates that the IEO will periodically update and disseminate current evaluation topics and definitions on the basis of best international standards, through operational handbooks and other appropriate means.

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ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition
ADR	Assessment of Development Results
ARE	Annual Report on Evaluation
CADRI	Capacity for Disaster reduction Initiative
CEPAL	The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CO	Country Office
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFID	Department for International Development
DFS	Department of Field Support
EB	Executive Board
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECD	Evaluation Capacity Development
EO	Evaluation Office. Former title of Independent Evaluation Office
ERC	Evaluation Resource Centre
ERT	Evaluation Policy Review Team
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILPES	Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning
IRRF	UNDP Strategic Plan Integrated Results and Resources Framework
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Funds
MR	Management Response
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NMTPF	National Medium Term Priority Framework
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSG	Operations Support Group
PPAR	Project Performance Assessment Review (World Bank)
QA	Quality Assessment
RBLAC	Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (United Nations Development Programme)
RBM	Results Based Management
RO	Regional Office
ROAR	Results Oriented Annual Report
RR	Resident representative
SPIRE	Special Projects Implementation Review Exercise (UNCDF)
TER	Terminal Evaluation Review
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCP	United Nations Country Programme
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination

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UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UN WOMEN	UN Entity For Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment
WFP	World Food programme

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW

1.1. Background and Context

The revised policy of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for evaluation responds to the General Assembly resolution 59/250 of 2004, which calls for the systematic evaluation of United Nations operational activities, in order to assess their impact on poverty eradication, economic growth and sustainable development. UNDP Evaluation Policy seeks to establish a common institutional basis for the evaluation function within the UNDP and its associated funds and programmes⁸, the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) programme, so as to ultimately increase transparency, coherence and efficiency in generating and using knowledge from evaluations in order to increase accountability and promote effective management for results. More specifically, the policy provides the guiding principles, norms and concepts, and main organization roles and responsibilities for centralized and decentralised evaluations which, in turn, are expected to provide objective assessments of UNDP contribution to development results, which should help improve learning and knowledge development as well as collaboration and innovation.

1.2. Scope of the Review

This review assesses the performance of the evaluation function since 2011, the extent to which the organization has responded to the requirements of the policy and the status of policy implementation. It identifies areas that it believes require policy changes and/or management decisions to improve the evaluation function. As required by the Terms of Reference (ToR) and confirmed during its Inception Mission, the Review focuses on three elements of the evaluation policy – the overall UNDP evaluation function, independent evaluations and decentralised evaluations (See Figure 1 below). The 2013 Peer Review of the Evaluation office noted (P7): “The variability of the quality of decentralised evaluations is recognized as a problem, and many see a negative effect of this on the work of the Office, as decentralised evaluations do not provide reliable building blocks for the evaluations of the Office, which consequently face extra work to assemble evaluative data and evidence”. Given reported recurring weaknesses in the coverage and quality of decentralised evaluations and the particular interest of the Executive Board in this issue, the review pays particular attention to this element and verifies the existence of weaknesses, explores reasons for them and ways to go forward⁹. The need to fully substantiate findings in this area has made the report somewhat longer than anticipated. For UNCDF and UNV, the review assesses how they have implemented evaluation and compares this with the specifications of the Policy and with the approaches adopted by the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO).

⁸ The Policy refers to “associated funds and programmes,” although there is only one fund and one programme. This report follows the Policy usage.

⁹ The issue has not been explored in detail in previous reviews/peer reviews.

Figure 1.1: Criteria for Review of Evaluation Policy

Overall UNDP Evaluation Function	Independent Evaluations	Decentralized Evaluations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Relevance of the policy •Effectiveness of the policy Implementation •Roles and responsibilities of key players •Capacity and Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Independence •Credibility •Utility •Partnership in evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Roles and responsibilities •Compliance and accountability •Capacity and resources •Independence and impartiality •Credibility •Utility •Partnership in evaluation

1.3. Limitations and Risks of the Review

It is important to note that this is a review and not an evaluation and that the number and scale of country and regional missions were scoped on this basis, as was the extent of documentary analysis. Whereas an evaluation would have the resources to undertake a detailed exploration of all aspects of the work of IEO, this review has taken care to focus specifically on issues, which need to be addressed by the Evaluation Policy.

Related to the above, the Review team is well aware of the broader context in which UNDP operates, including UN reform processes such as the reformed United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) rollout and Delivering as One, as well as the changing intentions of development stakeholders outlined in successive international declarations and communications. However, it has not focused on these broader areas, since it is mandated to assess how the Evaluation Policy has been implemented (and with what results) within those areas over which IEO, UNDP and the associated funds and programmes have control; and which can be substantively managed by means of the Policy, including any necessary revisions.

An assessment of such a complex policy area runs the risk of being drawn into focussing too much on specific issues, rather than preparing a balanced overview of how, why and to what extent the Policy is working. The Review has addressed this risk by placing each issue in the context of the overall Theory of Change, which gives attention to the entire process involved in enabling evaluation to have an institutional impact, within which any individual element plays a clearly defined part. As shown in Chapter 6, the detailed attention in the report to area of decentralised evaluation is justified by its importance in the cause and effect chain through which the Evaluation Policy is expected to achieve its objectives, as well as by the emphasis placed on this area by the Terms of reference and during discussions between the Review Team and Board members.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Overview of Review Approach & Methodology

As outlined in the Inception Report¹⁰, the approach and methodology commenced with the development of a Review Matrix (15 pages) that linked the issues and questions to the kinds of indicators and data needed to address them and to guide the team's preparation and utilisation of data collection instruments. The Review Team also developed a Logic Model and Theory of Change to provide the core organising principle and framework for analysis of the broad range of data gathered. This assessed how individual elements of the policy have been developed and implemented through actions by IEO and by the UNDP management system at HQs, regional and national levels. The Logic Model and Theory of Change also enabled analysis of how these elements fed into higher levels of the results chain and moved UNDP towards its vision of an enhanced contribution towards development outcomes. Finally, the Team employed a participatory approach, engaging with a wide range of key stakeholders involved in the evaluation policy and its implementation, both at UNDP Head Quarters in New York as well as in the field through visits to a number of Regional, Sub-Regional and Country Offices.

Qualitative and quantitative data relevant to the policy and its implementation were generated through several lines of enquiry. These included:

- document review, covering a wide range of documents and files;
- a meta-evaluation (quality assessment) of a sample of decentralised and IEO evaluations completed since 2012, to review the quality of UNDP's evaluations and of the IEO quality assessment process;
- semi-structured interviews and focus groups with a wide range of relevant stakeholders in UNDP, multilateral agencies, bilateral donors and partner country institutions;
- missions to the UNV office in Bonn, Country and Regional Offices (Service Centres) in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and Caribbean. These missions included individual semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, document review and observation;
- electronic surveys soliciting views from UNDP Resident Representatives, staff with evaluation responsibilities and external consultants who conducted decentralised evaluations for UNDP over the past three years ; and
- mini case studies of evaluation within UNV and UNCDF, based on interviews and document analysis.

Further details about these lines of evidence and data collection methods are provided in the sections that follow and associated Annexes.

¹⁰ The Inception Report was circulated to an internal reference group consisting of management representatives from UNDP regional and policy bureaux, UNV and UNCDF as well as to IEO and its Evaluation Advisory Panel. Comments received were assessed and incorporated into the main Review phase as appropriate.

2.2. Data Collection Methods

2.2.1. Document and literature review

Following an initial phase of document review to familiarize itself with key information sources on the evaluation policy and its implementation, the Review Team undertook a more extensive and in-depth examination of a broad range of relevant sources, using templates prepared for different major types of documents. This process helped the team gather data, in order to conduct preliminary analysis for testing and to assess information gaps that needed to be filled by the field missions.

This phase included review of a range of relevant sources to collect information on such issues as the Evaluation Policies and Functions of other multilateral and bilateral bodies, to see to what extent (if at all) they could provide any benchmarks, against which to assess the evidence to be gathered on the UNDP evaluation policy and functions on aspects such as the content and coverage of the policy, resources allocated to the function and any methods that may have been used to strengthen decentralised evaluation. Key documents reviewed are listed in Annex 2.

2.2.2. Meta-evaluation (Quality Assessment) of centralized and decentralised evaluations

A key component of the Review was a structured meta-evaluation of a sample of completed evaluation reports from both independent and decentralised streams to assess their quality and credibility.

The IEO itself undertakes quality assessments of UNDP's decentralised evaluations and maintains a Quality Assessment database in the Evaluation Resource Centre. This contains evaluations that have been reviewed and assessed by members of the IEO's independent assessment panel using its Quality Assessment instrument. This panel has conducted quality assessments on 500 decentralised evaluations completed by the UNDP country offices, regional bureaus, policy and practice units since 2011 (including 370 in 2012 and 2013) and 15 IEO evaluations conducted in 2013.

Before using the assessments made by IEO panel members, the Review Team undertook its own quality assessment of a sample of these evaluations in a validation exercise to assure itself of the reliability of the IEO assessments. For this validation exercise, the team used a different quality assessment instrument than that used by the IEO's panel. This was one that was developed as part of the approach and methodology endorsed by the DAC Evaluation Network for assessing the effectiveness of multilateral organizations¹¹ and used in the recent Reviews of the Development Effectiveness of the UNDP and the Humanitarian and Development Effectiveness of the WFP. The instrument, called a **Quality Screening Scoring Guide** and shown in **Annex 3**, was adjusted slightly to take account of the different scope and issues covered in the Terms of Reference for this review. It consisted of 12 key criteria with 36 sub-criteria that are part of the DAC/UNEG quality standards. In order to optimize the reliability and credibility of the Review assessment process, all quality screening was done by the same team member, thus avoiding issues of inter-reviewer reliability that are common in meta-evaluations.

The sample of evaluations chosen for the validation exercise included 30 of the 370 decentralised evaluations from 2012 and 2013, selected to ensure coverage of the 5 regions, the different bureaus (e.g. Development Policy, Crisis

¹¹ Details on the approach can be found on the DAC Evaluation Network website in the document titled: "[Assessing the Development Effectiveness of Multilateral Organizations: Guidance note on the Methodological Approach](#)".

Prevention and Recovery), the UNCDF, UNV and different thematic areas of UNDP's work. The sample also included 6 of the 15 evaluations conducted by IEO in 2013 and all 9 completed by the IEO in 2012 for a total of 15 IEO evaluations. Thus, in total, 45 evaluations were included in the sample used for the meta-evaluation validation exercise.

Of these 45 evaluations, 25¹² (19 decentralised and 6 centralized) were also assessed and rated by IEO's independent evaluation assessment panel. The results from the IEO's and Review Team's quality assessments showed a high degree of convergence, with the ratings on 19 of the 25 exactly the same and the others very close (see Annexes 4 and 5). This provided validation of IEO's Quality Assessment process,¹³ on the basis of which the Review Team was able to make use of the quality assessments done by the IEO. This enabled the Review to use the full set of quality assessments of evaluations conducted since 2012 for its analysis (500 decentralised evaluations and 24 IEO evaluations), instead of the much smaller sample, which would have been available using only the resources of the Review Team.

Overall, the meta-evaluation exercise confirmed the accuracy and credibility of the quality assessment process being used by the IEO on UNDP evaluation reports. However, it is important to note that both processes have made their assessments purely on the basis of report documents and take no account of the processes involved in producing those reports.

2.2.3. Electronic Surveys

Electronic Surveys were conducted with three groups: Consultants who conducted decentralised evaluations for UNDP Country Offices over the past three years, UNDP staff with M&E responsibilities, and UNDP Resident Representatives (RRs). These aimed to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data on a range of aspects of the UNDP Evaluation Policy and its implementation. The surveys were utilised as the most effective and efficient way of reaching a large number of potential respondents, in order to generate a substantial set of reliable quantitative and qualitative data, which could be triangulated with information collected through other lines of inquiry. In view of the potentially sensitive nature of some of the areas under review, a number of measures were taken to reassure respondents that their data, although in writing, would be absolutely confidential. These included:

- A process in which the initial authentication of the review was given through means of an individual invitation to participate by IEO
- Specification in this invitation by IEO that potential respondents would respond directly to the consultants and not to IEO
- Written assurance that all information would be confidentially held by the consultants for the purpose of the Review and would not be shared with either IEO or UNDP¹⁴.

The above measures were both in accordance with the requirements of the United Nations Evaluation Group and considered likely to optimize the response rate, since parties could feel free to share the views without fear of reprisal.

The draft survey questionnaires were developed by the Review Team, tested for coherence and consistency among its members (including its internal Quality Assurance Adviser) and shared with the IEO to ensure that there were no potentially ambiguous or unclear questions. The finalised versions of the questionnaires were then

¹² The difference in numbers is partly explained by the fact that the Review sample contains evaluations, such as those done by UNV and UNCDF, which are not quality assessed by the IEO.

¹³ By comparison with the DAC-approved system, which has wide international acceptance.

¹⁴ This assurance was an important protection of the confidentiality of information obtained, see Annex 6 and Annex 13..

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uploaded by the Review Team onto Fluid Surveys (fluidsurveys.com¹⁵), a software application that provides survey development, diffusion and data analysis services to administer and manage several large surveys at a time. The survey response system was pilot tested by the Review Team members and five Baastel employees in a variety of geographical locations (with different levels of internet connection) to ensure proper functionality.

In addition to preparation and pre-testing of the questionnaire and piloting the survey response system, the process worked as follows :

- The Review Team requested and obtained lists of the names and email addresses of potential respondents in the three survey categories from IEO.
- The IEO sent official letters of invitation to **all potential respondents from the three categories**, informing them of the review and the survey. The letters emphasized that the Baastel team would manage the process as well as the data analysis to protect the privacy and confidentiality of answers given by respondents. An example of the invitation letters sent by IEO is attached as **Annex 7**.
- Once the IEO letters were sent, the Review Team used the e-mail addresses and Fluid Surveys' messaging system (fluidsurveys.com) to send the survey links to the potential respondents. The invitation letters were sent in English, French and Spanish. The invitation letters sent by Baastel to the potential respondents in each category are shown in **Annex 8**.
- Potential respondents were given a little more than a month overall to complete the survey and a reminder was sent two weeks after the survey was launched.
- The questionnaires were automatically saved on Baastel memory space on the Fluid Survey's server after they were accessed. Once the surveys were closed the data were downloaded in their raw state for analysis. These data were accessible only by the Review Team.

Survey Populations and Response Rates

It should be emphasised that none of the three surveys was a sample survey. Each attempted to reach all eligible stakeholders; that is the total population. As is common with electronic surveys, contact lists contained some duplications and e-mail addresses that were no longer valid (shown by the receipt of error messages in response to invitation messages). The number that was therefore considered as the effective "population" for each survey reflects the number of contacts for which the e-mail addresses proved valid (in that they did not trigger error messages), after duplications had been removed from the initial contact lists provided. Some respondents, whose addresses were valid and received the survey, started filling out the questionnaire but did not complete it. After examination of these in comparison with completed surveys the Review team decided that a minimum of half the questions should be answered in order to constitute a usable response. Those responses that covered less than half the questions were therefore considered incomplete and discarded. Table 2.1 below shows the population, response rates and margins of error for the three categories of respondents surveyed.

¹⁵ FluidSurveys is a paid software package that provides survey development, diffusion and data analysis services to enable the simultaneous management of several large surveys (in terms of potential number of respondents) and of many surveys at once.

Table 2.1: Categories of Survey Respondents and Response Rates

Categories of Survey Respondents	Population	Valid Responses	Response Rate	Margin of Error*
External Evaluation Consultants (who conducted decentralised evaluations)	500	254	50.8%	3.6
UNDP Staff with M & E Responsibilities	228	43	19.3%	11.3
UNDP Resident Representatives	121	21	17.4%	16.3

* Calculated at the 90% confidence level.

Data Analysis Process

Quantitative data were analysed following standard statistical methods, particularly using cross tabs to generate comparison tables. The quantitative analyses have been primarily used to show the prevalence of issues or trends, which have also been raised by qualitative methods. Care has been taken not to report sub-sets of data, which could enable identification of sources. Qualitative information collected was content analysed and issues identified were grouped into categories, which allowed aggregation to determine frequency of occurrence. For example, “UNDP Office was helpful in providing documents (12)” indicates that this item was mentioned 12 times by consultants. The qualitative data collected from the surveys were not subjected to quantitative analysis,¹⁶ but were used as a separate sub-set of information, which could be triangulated with data on the same issues emerging independently from qualitative interviews and discussions of missions to headquarters, regional, sub-regional and country offices. Even more so than with quantitative data, qualitative information is often highly context specific and particular care has been taken to respect confidentiality and to focus on findings, which have emerged with sufficient frequency and dispersion as to constitute discernible issues for assessment by the review, rather than individual and possibly isolated phenomena. The analysis and presentation by the Review in this report has been based on a clear understanding that both qualitative and quantitative data sets contain a mix of “fact,” “opinion” and “opinions about facts.” This is common to all social research processes and has been addressed by the process of triangulation, through which evidence and potential conclusions are compared between the results from different methods, data sources and contexts. In addition, the adoption of a Theory Based Approach to data collection and analysis enables the coherent use and interpretation of information within an understanding of the role of different stakeholders, elements and processes of the cause and effect chains under assessment.

2.2.4. Field missions, interviews and focus groups

Inception mission to New York: During the Inception Mission in New York¹⁷, the team held interviews and discussions with members of the Executive Board, Independent Evaluation Office, Regional and Management Bureaux, Office of Audit and Investigation, Operations Support Group, UNCDF, UNV, UNICEF Evaluation Office and others. These discussions helped the team to better understand and interpret the Terms of Reference, the priorities of the Executive Board as client of the Review and the range of views and opinions about the evaluation policy and its implementation.

¹⁶ For example by methods, such as Qualitative Comparative Analysis.

¹⁷ Annex 10 provides a list of persons contacted through each mission of the Review.

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Field Missions to Regional Bureaux and Country Offices: In an attempt to capture as much relevant information as possible about the policy and its implementation in the field, the team undertook missions to the regions and countries shown below. Field Missions included individual semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, document review and observation which, were undertaken in the following regions¹⁸:

- In Europe and Central Asia - the UNV offices in Bonn and the Regional Centre in Bratislava.
- In the Africa region - the Kenya and Nigeria Country Offices
- In Asia and the Pacific region - the Indonesia and Vietnam Country Offices, the latter (a Delivering as One pilot) as replacement for Thailand due to political disturbances there at the time;
- In the Latin America and Caribbean Region - the Barbados Sub-Regional Office, the Chile Country Office and the Panama Regional and Country Offices.

The types of respondents who were interviewed or participated in focus group discussions included:

- Senior staff in the Regional and Country Offices, such as UN Resident Coordinators, UNDP Resident Representatives, Country Directors and Deputy Country Directors;
- Staff in the Regional and Country Offices including specialists, officers and others involved with evaluations (such as gender/poverty/environment/indigenous/local development specialists);
- Staff of the UNV and UNCDF offices; and
- Non-UNDP stakeholders, such as representatives from the offices of other UN agencies, other international partners and national institutions.

To ensure consistency in the capture of information needed, team members were guided by a “Mini-Handbook for Missions to Regional Bureaux/Country Offices” (see **Annex 9**), which outlined aspects such as the rationale and issues for the field visits, the stakeholders to be consulted, and the kinds of questions to be addressed to the different categories of respondents.

Interviews were also conducted through Skype / telephone and e-mail with staff from a few other country offices that could not be visited. These included: Angola, India, Ethiopia and the new Regional Service Centre in Istanbul.

The list of people interviewed/consulted during the field visits and internet/telephone is included as **Annex 10**.

Data Collection Mission to New York: During the second mission in New York, the team again held interviews and discussions with members of the Executive Board, Independent Evaluation Office, Regional and Management Bureaux, Operations Support Group, UNCD and others. These discussions helped the team to collect additional data, fill known information gaps, further clarify and validate issues and perceptions that arose during the field visits and provided opportunities to explore ideas about the feasibility of possible recommendations. The list of persons met during this visit to New York is shown in **Annex 10**.

Mini Case Studies were undertaken of evaluation within UNV and UNCDF, based on interviews and document analysis.

Overall Analysis and Triangulation of Findings: The analysis involved compiling, analysing, comparing and cross-checking the findings from the different lines of inquiry with each other (document review, interviews, survey and meta-evaluation) to address the review questions. Those findings regarded as verified, substantive and important to the Policy Review were analysed within the overall cause and effect chain contained in the Theory of

¹⁸ The distribution of the final set of missions was influenced by comments provided by UNDP on the Inception Report, availability of UNDP teams in specific contexts (e.g., the Thailand Regional Service Centre was unavailable at the time of the intended mission and was replaced by a mission to the Vietnam Country Office) and budget resources of the Review.

Change, enabling the team to arrive at conclusions and recommendations about the current evaluation policy and its implementation and how these might be improved.

2.3. Conceptual Framework and Theory of Change

The review seeks to answer two fundamental overview questions: a) what is the evaluation policy intended to achieve and; b) to what extent has it achieved this, or is it moving towards achieving it? These will naturally lead on to “how” and “why” questions and to lessons learned and ways forward.

The first step was therefore to outline a simple “theory” of the processes, which would be involved in achieving the objectives of the policy. Such theories are commonly presented diagrammatically as “Theories of Change”, “Logic Chains” or similar approaches. There is considerable debate over what exactly constitutes a Theory of Change (ToC) and it is beyond the scope of this review to further this discussion. In presenting a Theory of Change for the evaluation policy, the purpose is to break down its complex processes into simpler cause and effect chains, leading from two intervention streams (implemented by IEO and UNDP Administration) towards a common UNDP-wide stream, that should approach the ultimate objective of an enhanced UNDP contribution towards development outcomes.

The review team fully understands that the diagram greatly simplifies the processes, underplays the complex inter-relationship between elements, presents UNDP approaches outside of their broader context (including the larger UN system and national development processes) and does not adequately specify the dimension of time. Incorporating these elements at the inception stage is regarded as introducing potential bias, since it would bring into the theory a range of issues that are only marginally addressed in the policy itself and which should be considered as important subject areas to incorporate into the ToC as this evolves during the review process.

Despite these caveats, the theory is a powerful instrument, since it indicates elements that will have to be delivered in order for the Policy to achieve its objective. Further, it shows that, however well some elements of the chain are delivered, they will be insufficient for the policy to be effective, if other elements do not also produce results.

The initial and simplified ToC is presented in Figure 7.1 (see Section 7)¹⁹. An examination of this reflects some critical aspects of the evaluation policy. Specifically, the Independent Evaluation Office can only deliver part of the policy and, even then, only up to outcome level. Even at output level, it is the function of the Administrator (and units reporting to that office) to ensure Management Response to centralised evaluations and adequate coverage of UNDP programmes through decentralised evaluations, to which the IEO has only a guidance and quality assessment role. Further, all UNDP evaluations should in principle be able to draw on reliable monitoring data, which are gathered by units ultimately responsible to the Administrator. As shown in the Figure 7.1, it is important that data from the monitoring and evaluation streams should be coherent and not contradict one another. If this does not hold, it will be difficult for managers to respond appropriately to evaluation findings, since they will represent a substantial disconnect from the information and assumptions they have about performance.

The initial ToC contains important lessons. Firstly, the three broad areas delineated in the TOR are appropriate. Secondly, the emphasis on decentralised evaluations should consider that these are only one component of a complex cause and effect chain. Thirdly, the intentions of the Policy can only be delivered if the outputs managed under the stream reporting to the Administrator are delivered, as well as those emanating from the IEO. The

¹⁹ To avoid duplication, The Theory of Change diagram is not repeated in the text.

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outputs from both streams need to merge at the outcome level, moving from there through Intermediate States towards Impact. This aspect needs to be adequately addressed by the review methods, which should have a balanced approach to collecting and analysing data from both streams of the cause and effect chain.

3. FINDINGS ON POLICY RELEVANCE, INDEPENDENCE AND EVALUATION FINANCE

3.1. Relevance of the Evaluation Policy

The main issue with regard to relevance is whether the Policy still meets the needs of the Board in directing UNDP. This focuses in particular on whether the Policy addresses the right issues, whether it offers sufficient guidance to address them and whether it omits any other important areas. These relevance issues will be covered through detailed examination of how evaluation has been implemented, which will make evident any areas that are missing or insufficiently defined and any others that are now out of date.

3.2. Progress in Ensuring an Independent Evaluation Office

At its First Regular Session in 2014, the Executive Board approved the change of name from the Evaluation Office to the IEO. No other formal changes were made, so that in all other respects, the provisions of the Evaluation Policy remain in place.

Structurally, the IEO is organizationally separated from the operations and line management functions of UNDP. The Administrator of UNDP appoints the IEO Director, in consultation with the UNDP Executive Board, which is the custodian of the UNDP Evaluation Policy. The term of the appointment is not specified, but is limited to a maximum of four years, renewable once. This lack of specificity allows management the possibility of issuing a shorter-term contract than would normally be regarded as necessary to enable a new Director to establish any change processes s/he may regard as essential for the optimum functioning of the Office. This appears a potential threat to the independence of the Office.

The Executive Board approves the financial resources for the IEO on the basis of a costed programme of work submitted by the Director. Functionally, the Director of the IOE has full control over the Office's budget, the final say on the recruitment of Evaluation Office staff (in line with UNDP recruitment procedures), the conduct of the Office's evaluations, and the contents of all evaluation reports issued by the Office.

Paragraph 36 of the UNDP Evaluation Policy (DP/2011/3) states that "The Director of the Evaluation Office is responsible for authorizing the dissemination of independent evaluation reports and related material". The Administrator is required to ensure "that the Director has the final say on the contents of all evaluation reports issued by the evaluation office" and more generally: "Safeguards the integrity of the evaluation function and its independence from operational management". Although these general safeguards are in place, the Policy does not specify any mechanisms, which might be used in the event of disagreements (particularly at senior

management level) with the content of independent evaluations or any timescale after which the Director is empowered to issue reports without the final agreement of management. This lack of specificity has opened up the possibility of lengthy delays in the issuance of reports, occasioned by extensive discussions on their final content, as discussed in Section 4.2.

From discussions and interviews with staff at Headquarters, regions and countries, the Review confirmed that there is some awareness within UNDP about the existence of the Evaluation Policy and stated support for the concept of independent evaluations. However, among the countries visited, the level of understanding among staff about the actual contents of the Policy and the role and work of the Independent Evaluation Office was found to be very uneven, with a greater familiarity among the senior and M&E staff than others. Overall, the field missions found that the profile and understanding in the Country Offices visited of the work of the Independent Evaluation Office was low, except in those offices whose activities have been evaluated recently.

3.3. Evaluation Finance

The resources for the Independent Evaluation Office are approved by the Executive Board of the UNDP as part of an overall integrated budget, containing both institutional and programmatic components, in line with a harmonized format, which also applies to UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women. This harmonized format includes a line in the institutional component of the integrated budget with estimated funding levels for oversight and assurance activities covering the costs of both the Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) and IEO. For information purposes, the budget documentation submitted to the Executive Board includes a break down between OAI and IEO.

Based on the Board's most recent decision (2013/28) on the 2014-2017 budget, the Review Team has tried to capture in Table 3.1 below the amounts approved and allocations received by the Independent Evaluation Office for the period from 2012 to 2015. These resources cover expenditures for the procurement of consulting services as well as for staff salaries, travel and administrative costs. The budget outline also notes estimated funding levels for the Office from other (non-core) sources, such as contributions from other donors – an indicative amount.

As shown in Table 3.1, there has been a disparity between the amount of core resources approved by the Board and the amount actually received by the Independent Evaluation Office. Relative to what has been approved; the amounts received have been approximately 17% less for 2012 and 2013²⁰. The amounts in the column for other (non-core) resources show the anticipated contributions from other partners. The amounts actually received in this category were approximately half of what was anticipated for 2012 and 2013. The core budget figures approved for the Independent Evaluation Office also show a decline from 2012 to 2015.

²⁰ The Review found insufficient information to establish why the figure was lower than anticipated.

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Table 3.1: Resources of the Independent Evaluation Office from 2012-2015

Years	Core Budget Approved by Exec. Board	Amount Received	Amount Disbursed	Difference - Received vs. Approved	Received as % of Amount Approved	Other (Non-Core) Budget Anticipated	Other Resources Received	*
2012-2013	\$20,200,000	\$16,801,454*	\$15,783,900*	\$4,189,543	83.2	\$2,400,000	\$1,166,000	These amounts include the
2014-2015	\$18,600,000	?	?	?	?	\$2,900,00	?	

costs of rent and utilities for IEO (\$800,000), which are managed centrally by UNDP.

Putting these reductions in context, the Review Team notes that UNDP’s core institutional budget has been under pressure during the same period. The Team was informed that the core institutional budget for 2012–2013 of \$931.9 million, which was approved by the Executive Board in decision 2011/32 and included the \$20.2 million for the cost of IEO, was set out against estimated core contributions in 2012–2013 of \$2.15 billion. However, actual regular resource contributions in 2012-2013 amounted to only \$1.76 billion – a shortfall of almost \$0.4 billion (or 19%). As a result, UNDP had to respond to this decrease in voluntary contribution levels by adjusting its regular resources expenditure for both the programme and the institutional budget activities to ensure that minimum regular resources liquidity requirements were met. Whilst management aimed to protect the budgets of independent offices such as IEO and the OAI from the impact of such decreases, the budgets of these independent offices were also affected. UNDP disclosed the resulting impact of reduced core budget and expenditure levels to the Executive Board in annual reports on evaluation in DP/2013/16 and DP/2014/14.

Looking at the budget figure for 2014-15, this reflects an 8% decrease (4% per year) for the years 2014 and 2015 as stipulated by the Executive Board. It should be noted that the decrease is much less than that for UNDP overall, whose budget for management activities in 2014-2015 was reduced by 30% (from \$598.3 million in 2012-2013 to \$417.7 million in 2014-2015).

According to some IEO managers interviewed, the connections between independence of evaluation, methodology and finance have not always been appreciated or observed by managers in the finance function²¹. Although the Board has expressed its intention that the IEO budget should be protected as far as possible from system-wide reductions, financial officers have sometimes tried to apply these to the IEO, creating fund-flow delays. Further, they have made such suggestions²² as limiting the number of field missions of major independent

²¹ Review Team discussions with IEO.

²² UNDP management does not accept these observations of IEO senior management, and has stated: “As a practice, UNDP/Finance does not prescribe to units (including the IEO), which costs area they should reduce in case of resource availability constraints. Rather UNDP/Finance outlines the resource availability, and units, such as IEO, then plan their activities against this resource availability”. Source: “Second Review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy. “Draft Final Report” sections and respective Factual Corrections”. Simona Marinescu, Chief Development Impact, Bureau for Policy and programme Support, 19th September 2014.

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evaluations to save costs, which can be seen as directly affecting methodology, an area which should be 100% under the control of the IEO within its approved budget²³.

It is not possible to produce very accurate assessments of the costs of evaluation outside of the IEO. This is particularly so because Human Resource figures are only available for "M&E" which provides inadequate information to determine the actual resources committed to evaluation. However, the Review provides the following estimates based on its interpretation of the best available data, interpreted in the light of time allocations of M&E staff it received through a survey it conducted of such personnel. As shown in Table 3.2 below, figures for 2012 suggest that UNDP spent globally approximately \$24.9 million for evaluation and monitoring. This includes the work of the Independent Evaluation Office and that of the Regional Bureaux, Country Offices and other non-IEO Headquarters positions. Expressed as a proportion of total expenditures, based on a figure of \$5.26 billion for UNDP for 2012 from the audited financial statements, this would amount to 0.47%, of which 0.33% (17,321,848) was spent by the Regional Bureaux, Country Offices and Headquarters on decentralised evaluations and the remaining 0.14% spent by the Independent Evaluation Office on centralized evaluations. Calculated as a proportion of total programme expenditures, which were indicated in the audited financial statements as \$4.39 billion for 2012, these would be 0.57%, 39% and 0.18% respectively. However, as suggested in Table 3.2 below, a more reasonable figure for *evaluation only* is the adjusted amount of \$21,309,608 and the Review therefore considers it more likely that the proportion of UNDP budget actually spent on evaluation was 0.40% overall, of which 0.26% (\$13,691,307) was spent by the Regional Bureaux and Country Offices and 0.14% was spent by the IEO. Calculated as a proportion of total programme expenditures, the proportions would be 0.49%, 0.31 % and 0.18% respectively.

Expressed as a proportion of total programme expenditures, the expenditures for Evaluation would be roughly 0.49% overall, of which 0.18% would be the IEO share and 31% outside of IEO. With the figures for 2013 from the audited financial statements showing slightly lower total expenditures at \$5.24 billion and programme expenses at \$4.35 billion, (compared with \$5.26 and \$3.39 for 2012), the proportions remained largely the same.

Going forward, the proportions are likely to change for 2014-15 as it is anticipated that the expenditures for decentralised evaluations and monitoring will decrease, due mostly to a reduction in M&E posts at the Regional Bureau and Country Office levels²⁴. However, as noted earlier, the 8% decrease for evaluation for the years 2014 and 2015 as stipulated by the Executive Board is also much less than that for UNDP overall and may have a stabilizing effect.

²³ A major barrier to addressing issues of the interface between IEO and management is the absence of systematic written records of such incidences and their resolution, or lack thereof.

²⁴ There is a substantial discrepancy between the number of M&E positions shown in Organograms on the UNDP Structural Reform site and those claimed in the "factual corrections" offered by BPPS.

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Table 3.2: 2012 Total Financial Resources (US\$) for Evaluations (Centralized and Decentralised by Regions)

Resource Components	Africa	Arab States	Asia and the Pacific	Europe and the CIS	Latin Am & Caribbean	Other HQ Units	Total Decentralised Evaluations *2	IEO	TOTAL
Human Resources (HR) *1	2,386,427	681,749	1,518,493	1,019,037	955,474	700,000	7,261,181*	4,123,704	11,384,885
Non-HR Elements**	1,706,896	380,450	2,068,300	4,545,172	1,359,849	560,000	10,060,667	3,494,646	13,555,313
Totals	4,093,323	1,062,200	3,586,793	5,564,209	2,315,322	1,260,000	17,321,848	7,218,350	24,940,197
	Adjusted Total Outside of IEO, assuming roughly 50% of the "M&E" HR costs or about \$3,630,541						13,341,258	7,218,350	21,309,608

*1: The figures for this component were obtained from the integrated work plans for individual decentralised units and aggregated by region. They are considered a substantial over-estimate, as the HR costs are for the decentralised units' M&E staff, the majority of whom spend only a small proportion of their time on evaluation as revealed in the survey of M&E staff. Even 50% of this amount would be an overstatement.

*2: Budgets for decentralised evaluations were obtained from the Evaluation Resource Centre and aggregated by region.

** The Human Resources component covers primarily the salaries and benefits of staff while the non-HR elements cover aspects such as the costs of hiring external consultants to implement the evaluations and other administrative costs such as staff travel, printing, etc.

4. FINDINGS ON INDEPENDENT EVALUATIONS BY THE EVALUATION OFFICE

4.1. The Independence, Quality and Credibility of IEO Evaluations

Regarding the **quality and credibility of IEO evaluations**, the Review examined in detail all of the 24 major evaluations conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office during 2012 and 2013. As shown in table 4.1 below, these included 15 Assessments of Development Results, a global programme evaluation, regional programme evaluations covering the five regions, and three thematic evaluations covering areas such as South-South and Triangular Cooperation, UNDP's Contribution to Poverty Reduction and UNDP's support to conflict-affected countries. It rated them according to the IEO's Quality Assessment System, as well as with an instrument²⁵ specifically developed by the Review team (see Annex 4 and 5). The two systems independently produced convergent results. The quality assessment covered the following main areas:

- Purpose and objectives of the evaluations
- Their scope and whether they addressed relevant issues
- Evaluation criteria used for judging the quality of the investments
- Appropriateness of their methodology
- Quality of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

As shown in table 4.1 below, the majority of the evaluations fell in the "Satisfactory" category, which is equivalent to a score of 5 on a 6-point rating scale. This suggests that their overall quality is good in terms of the aspects mentioned above.

Table 4.1: Quality of IEO Evaluations (2013) as assessed by the Evaluation Team

Ratings/Year and Types of Evaluation	Quality Assessment Ratings**						Total Number of Reports
	HS	S	MS	MU	U	HU	
2013: Assessment of Development Results	-	6	-	-	-	-	6
2013: Global & Regional Programme Evaluations	-	5	1	-	-	-	6

²⁵ The instrument is a slightly adjusted version of that developed for assessing the quality and screening of evaluations used in the Development Effectiveness Reviews of Multilateral Organizations according to a methodology endorsed by the DAC Evaluation Network.

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2013: Thematic Evaluations	-	3	-	-	-	-	3
2012*: Assessment of Development Results	1	7	1	-	-	-	9
Totals	1	21	2				24

* No Global & Regional Programme Evaluations or Thematic Evaluations were presented to the Executive Board by the IEO in 2012, although eight were undertaken and presented in 2013.

** HS = Highly Satisfactory; S = Satisfactory; MS = Moderately Satisfactory; MU= Moderately Unsatisfactory; U = Unsatisfactory; HU = Highly Unsatisfactory

For such an exercise, it would be useful to benchmark the scores attained with those recorded for independent evaluations of comparable agencies. Unfortunately, the Review Team was not able to find any similar or comparable assessments conducted by other organizations, against which to benchmark whether this is a good performance or not. However, the above ratings reflect a consistency of quality in the evaluations conducted by the IEO dating back to 2009, drawing also on a Development Effectiveness Review of the United Nations Development Programme conducted in 2012.²⁶ In that exercise, 37 of the 39 evaluations conducted by the IEO between 2009 and 2011 passed its quality assessment screening. Drawing on these two separate exercises, the Review team assesses that the quality of the independent evaluation reports is sufficient to enable the Executive Board to use them with confidence for the purpose of guiding and overseeing UNDP. With regard to the specific issue of Gender Equity, the meta-evaluation of 24 IEO evaluations conducted by the Review showed that all (ADRs, Thematic and Regional Programme Evaluations) addressed the issue at a satisfactory level, except for the South-South and Triangular Cooperation thematic evaluation.

Although the overall quality of the independent evaluations is assessed as satisfactory, some of the evaluations demonstrated areas of weakness, which could be addressed in future. The most commonly observed were:

- Difficulties in reconstructing the logic model and theory of change behind the investment under evaluation in the absence of clear results frameworks. Admittedly, this is often not an easy task and especially for complex areas, such as thematic and regional evaluations, particularly since the initial designers of the programmes may no longer be available to explain the original intent. Nonetheless, the use of these instruments would be a useful exercise, informing the evaluation design and subsequent data collection strategy in a context where time and resources are always short.
- The failure to acknowledge limitations of the evaluation methodology. While some reports did identify the challenges they faced in this respect, they often did not articulate what measures were taken to address these challenges and with what success. Many of the evaluations did not discuss what effects unresolved challenges had on their findings and conclusions.
- Finally, several of the reports could have focused more effort on identifying lessons that should be learned from the evaluation and how they might be used.

²⁶ See Development Effectiveness Review of the United Nations Development Programme, (2005-2011), Evaluation Directorate, Canadian International Development Agency, April 2012

4.2. Limitations in Evaluation Processes

As shown above, the final products of the IEO's independent evaluation efforts are satisfactory. However, this assessment does not explore the dynamics or the challenges faced in implementing evaluations, either from the IEO perspective or that of the entities whose activities are examined. By its nature, evaluation is difficult for both sides of the process. For managers whose programmes are being evaluated, it can be a threatening exercise to have someone else "pass judgement" on their work, a situation that often elicits reactions of defensiveness. For evaluators, the work presents methodological challenges, such as the absence of clearly defined theories of change; unclear results frameworks and limited availability of data; as well as the need to combine impartiality and independence with maintaining positive relations with the UNDP teams involved in implementation.

These circumstances have presented obstacles to the smooth conduct, completion and finalization of several (although a minority) of independent evaluations. The way in which these obstacles are addressed relates to the responsibilities and obligations of the IEO to ensure the integrity of the evaluation process; to the relevance, credibility, timeliness, utility and cost-effectiveness of the evaluations; and indeed to the overall work of the Independent Evaluation Office. The relevance and credibility of the evaluations have already been covered in the quality assessment above. On the issue of efficiency in completing the IEO evaluations, the Review observed that there have been extensive delays on several of the ADRs within its period of coverage (five of the twenty examined or 25%) relative to their planned schedule. Some delays are inevitable for ADRs, since they are tied in to the specific situations in host countries. These are caused by a broad variety of challenges beyond the control of UNDP managers (such as, for example, in conflict countries where the situation is in a state of flux, or in others where there has been a change of government policies and alignment is affected and the decision has been taken that this requires an extension of the country programme for a significant period of time.). Such extensions are reasonable and completing the ADR if the process is well advanced also makes sense. In such circumstances, the process may face a legitimate slow-down to ensure that the report is valid when the new Country Programme Document is discussed by the Executive Board.

More relevant for this Review are situations where delays have been due to either the failure of management to respond in a timely manner to the requests from IEO for comments and feedback on draft reports, for preparation of management responses to the evaluations and/or for arranging meetings with relevant stakeholders to present findings, (which may also reflect delays in responses from national stakeholders); or to insufficient internal management of the process by the IOE. Both of these situations have occurred with some ADRs over the past two years. The Review assesses that two of the five cases mentioned above were related to delays originating from IEO.

To address the challenges of delays, from whatever source, the IEO has introduced tighter process monitoring. This has included:

- Quarterly reviews of progress to catch problems early
- New process manual, which gives clearer guidance on what to do when things go wrong (e.g. when COs delay responding with comments, there will be an automatic escalation of the issue by the Director after one week of delay)
- Better practical guidance on how to prevent such delays (e.g. follow up/reminder a week before comments are due on reports instead of a week after they were due from stakeholders).

IEO informed the Review that it will hold discussions with the Operations Support Group²⁷, which coordinates management responses to the IEO-led evaluations, to adjust its guidance relating to management responses and that it is also trying out new ways of using these responses. As was started with its thematic evaluations in 2013, IEO intends to include the management response as part of its 2014 reports. It has not yet done this for its ADRs, since experience suggests this could incur publication delays while waiting for the responses. The Review supports the possibility of avoiding such delays by requesting that the draft management response to ADRs be ready for the stakeholder workshop, where it could be presented at the same time as the draft report. As well as presenting efficiency gains, this would improve the transparency for national stakeholders wanting to know what actions the UNDP plans to take to address a report's recommendations. It would also strengthen the stakeholder meeting itself, since this would become an important part of the discussion on ways to take the UNDP programme forward.

Further attention is needed from management to address the timeliness of response to IEO requests on such aspects as logistical arrangements in the field, making data available, comments and feedback on draft reports, preparation of management responses to evaluations and arranging meetings with in-country stakeholders to discuss evaluation findings. The Review team has observed through document review that these are all areas (largely) of Country Office responsibility, which have delayed progress and/or completion of some evaluations. In a small number of cases, the volume and negative nature of comments received, coupled with the length of delays in CO responses have been sufficiently serious as to effectively challenge the independence of the IEO evaluations concerned, contrary to the intentions of the Policy²⁸. These exceptional situations need to be fully addressed through effective implementation by IEO of the tighter process monitoring (see above) it has introduced and detailed documentation of each incident, so that weaknesses in the processes can be addressed.

4.3. The Use of Independent Evaluations

As shown above, the ADRs are a major "product" of the IEO. Their use has been already been assessed in detail by an independent consultant, producing the following key findings²⁹:

- The ADRs are valued by the majority of UNDP stakeholders as important opportunities for retrospective and in-depth analysis of country programmes. The ADRs do serve both learning and accountability purposes although the diversity of uses and users lead to tensions about the purpose and utility of ADR information.
- ADR reports are actively used as inputs for official reports on UNDP's performance and results. They are treated as important information sources but with some provisos. There are pressures to tie the ADRs even more closely to the corporate reporting system, with commensurate challenges.
- ADR reports have provided learning and background information by donor countries to help assess UNDP's overall performance and effectiveness as a development agency

²⁷ The Review is reporting on processes to date and cannot assess how these might be affected by forthcoming UNDP organizational restructuring.

²⁸ Although IEO has substantial files of written correspondence on these cases (which the review team has accessed), it has so far conducted no systematic analysis of the reasons for delays or opposition from UNDP managers, which might promote transparency and improved systems for dispute resolution.

²⁹ Study on ADR Use within UNDP, Draft April 2014, P15 – 30, Anne Gillies. IEO

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- ADR dissemination data via the Evaluation Resource Centre platform indicate strong global access and distribution of ADR reports but it is too general to yield any conclusive detailed information about use.
- ADR reports are used as sources of background and learning information on country programmes within UNDP headquarters, including for audit, external relations, and regional bureaus.
- ADR reports are used as sources for thematic evaluations conducted by the EO and for the recent evaluation of the strategic plan. Based on these experiences, there are already initiatives underway to improve synthesis of information from ADR reports.
- ADRs are considered useful by country offices to provide a retrospective in-depth view of programme accomplishments and areas for improvement. The ADR reports are used mainly for CPD/CPAP formulation, strategic discussions with partners, and to showcase of UNDP's 'value-added' for both lower and middle income countries.
- There is a credible and organized management response system used for the ADRs that meets UNEG norms for evaluation use. But, tracking and follow-up responsibility for the management responses is not officially part of any central bureau's mandate.
- The EO has already worked to increase use of the ADRs through engaging programme countries and building capacities through a partner-focused methodology.

The major possibility of tracking specific actions taken in response to independent evaluations is through the management response system. It is the task of the Executive Office (through the Operations Support Group³⁰) to track the extent to which the committed responses have actually been implemented. This information is collated and has been presented in the Annual Report on Evaluation 2013 (see Table 4.2 below).

Table 4.2: Management Response and Key Actions: Implementation Status for Evaluations Conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP 2008–2013

Evaluation Type	Number of Evaluations With Management Response*	Key actions						
		Planned	Completed	On-going without a due date	Initiated	Not Initiated	No Longer Applicable	Sum of Overdue
ADR	55	951	549 (58%)	105 (11%)	158 (17%)	11 (1%)	21 (2%)	107 (11%)
Global Programme	2	43	14 (33%)	4 (9%)	15 (35%)	0	1 (2%)	9 (21%)
Regional Programme	7	90	30 (33%)	14 (16%)	39 (43%)	0	0	7 (8%)
Thematic	17	286	95 (33%)	88 (31%)	30 (10%)	7 (2%)	2 (1%)	64 (22%)
Total	81	1370	688 (50%)	211 (15%)	242 (18%)	18 (1%)	24 (2%)	

Source: Annual Report on Evaluation 2013, Table 9.

* All evaluations (100%) had a management response.

Table 4.2 shows that OSG is attempting to track the progress of 1,370 actions recommended by 81 evaluations, at an average of 17 per evaluation. This average shows some variation across the different types of independent evaluation, as follows: ADRs (17), Global Programmes (21), Regional Programmes (13) and Thematic (17). The Review expresses some doubt whether progress on so many actions can be effectively and meaningfully tracked

³⁰ The Review reports on the situation obtaining during much of its duration and does not take account of actual or imminent changes in the UNDP structure and system.

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in one global database. Further, given the lack of differentiation between the scope and complexity of actions, there is a danger that the database may encourage doubtful or misleading conclusions. For example, the ARE 2014 proposes that the “data suggests that the Country Offices, responding to the ADRs, have been significantly more successful in completing key actions than the policy and regional bureaux”. Whilst this is true in terms of simple numbers, it fails to take account of the fact that, if delivered on time, ADR recommendations should feed readily into actions, which are an intrinsic part of country programming. On the other hand, actions proposed on the basis of global, regional or thematic evaluations may be more demanding and time-consuming to address; so that the completion of 33% of them may actually be more notable than that of 58% of the less complex actions recommended in response to ADRs. Further, the above Table does not take account of when the Management Responses to the various evaluations were finalized, so that it is not possible to track any relationship between elapsed time and progress on actions.

An underlying issue in the difficulty of interpreting how useful independent evaluations have been is the demonstrated tendency for evaluation reports to generate too many actions, in response to their recommendations³¹. An average of 17 actions per type of independent evaluation seems bound to stretch the implementation capacity of UNDP, even allowing for the dispersal of these among a number of entities. This could be addressed through various measures. The Board could consider imposing a strict limit on the number of recommendations an evaluation could make³². Also, IEO could be more rigorous in separating out key recommendations from all others (such as the type of project specific recommendations countries sometimes request from ADRs), which could be annexed. Another major contribution would be for better spacing of major evaluations, so that management is not placed in the position of having to respond to several major reports at the same time. Whilst IEO has usually managed this, there have been years when this not been the case³³.

From its interviews and document analysis, the Review team noted significant efforts made by management to take IEO evaluations into account and align the UNDP 2014-17 Strategic Plan with their recommendations, in response to a request from the Executive Board. For example, a matrix produced by management provides a detailed summary of how UNDP has systematically addressed the recommendations from three recent evaluations: Evaluation of UNDP Strategic Plan (2008-13); Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Poverty Reduction; and Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to South-South and Triangular Cooperation³⁴.

An important aspect of the utility of evaluations is the range of ways their findings are disseminated. In this respect, numerous respondents in different locations within the UNDP system noted that the IEO does not currently have a very diverse approach, so that staff cannot readily access key findings or directions in its body of work. Currently, its independent evaluations present Final Reports, which include a five page Executive Summary. These are available in hard copy and on the Internet in different languages. However, there has not as yet been any attempt to present short, readable and “non-expert” summaries, highlighting the main findings and issues arising from each evaluation. This is common practice among evaluation offices and the Review considers that this (and other) approaches could enhance the transparency and usefulness of IEO products. It would therefore be appropriate for IEO to review the range of possible additional products and approaches it could develop to

³¹ Such a measure would need to be supported by action from UNDP management, since it determines the number of actions taken in response to any specific recommendation.

³² IEO has provided the following summary information on the number of recommendations: 7 ADRs in 2013 (Mean 8.5), 8 Programme Evaluations 2013 (Mean 6.4, one with 10+), 9 Thematic Evaluations since 2012 (Mean 5.8, one with 10+). This indicates that many recommendations are “compound,” requiring several actions.

³³ In 2011, five thematic Evaluations were presented to one meeting of the Executive Board, but this has not been repeated.

³⁴ The Executive Board has emphasised the importance of alignment between IEO activities (now outlined in its Medium Term Work Programme) and the UNDP Strategic Plan, since this offers a strong possibility of influencing management actions.

increase the transparency of its work and whether it currently has the financial resources and expertise to strengthen this area.

4.4. Measures to Promote National Ownership and Capacity

In line with the mandate set by the UNDP Evaluation Policy, the Independent Evaluation Office provides support to national evaluation capacity development at the request of programme host governments. This effort to help strengthen evaluation functions at country level is pursued in cooperation with respective UNDP regional bureaux, the Bureau for Development Policy and Country Offices, as part of the broader UNDP effort to support government capacity building.

According to the current IEO medium-term plan, “the Evaluation Office will continue to support the development of national evaluation capacities and focus on South-South exchanges among government units responsible for evaluation and government users of evaluation. It will build on the 2013 conferences on national evaluation capacity, where for the first time representatives of government evaluation units came together with those from the evaluation networks to develop an action-oriented set of follow-up activities. The Evaluation Office will continue to support these efforts, with additional conferences scheduled for 2015 and 2017. During the period 2014-2017, UNDP support will evolve as the network is gradually taken over by the participants themselves”.

The importance of national ownership was emphasised in the 2005 Peer Review (and reiterated in the 2013 Peer review). The 2006 evaluation policy took the 2005 Peer review’s suggestions into account and national ownership became one of the four key principles of the UNDP Evaluation policy. One approach adopted by the Evaluation Office has been the establishment of national reference groups for ADRs. These reference groups include UNDP’s national counterpart and other government ministries as appropriate. Their main role is to provide inputs into the design, specifically the ToRs and to review early findings of the Assessment. Stakeholder workshops also promote national ownership. IEO tries to work closely with national evaluation units and in one instance conducted the ADR jointly with government

Since 2009, the Independent Evaluation Office has organized three biannual international conferences on National Evaluation Capacity: one in Casablanca, Morocco (2009), one in Johannesburg, South Africa (2011) and one in São Paulo, Brazil (2013). These have been delivered in partnership with the host country governments, with support and financial contributions from several development partners. For example, the Sao Paulo conference was organized in partnership with the Brazilian government with financial support from the Governments of Finland, Norway and the United Kingdom. It was also supported by such other partners as the UNDP, the World Bank Group, EvalPartners and the Regional Centres for Learning on Evaluation and Results. The conferences have attracted a wide range of participants and focused on such important issues as solving challenges related to the independence, credibility and use of evaluations in decision-making for public policies and programmes.

Based on its assessment of the proceedings of these conferences, the Review team considers that they have been useful for sharing experiences on important topics and for building knowledge among practitioners in those areas. The Sao Paulo conference, for example, brought together 160 participants from 63 countries, including: representatives of national institutions responsible for commissioning, conducting and using evaluations; leading evaluation experts and practitioners; UNDP staff; members of academia, civil society and voluntary

organizations working as evaluation professionals; and several other United Nations and other international development agencies. The Review team could not locate any specific evidence on the perceived quality or usefulness of this event from its participants. However, in a survey completed by some participants, it is reported that 24 participants had also attended the previous such conference. In response to the question: "What were the main lessons learned from your participation in previous NEC conferences? Were you able to apply any of these lessons to your national context?" 75% (18) responded "no." This suggests both the challenges faced by evaluators in many partner countries and difficulties faced by such global events to helping to resolve them.

A number of UNDP programme units, have taken the lead in providing support (particularly to national governments) for (monitoring and) evaluation capacity development. In 2013, such activities were reported in Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Iraq, Tajikistan, Mauritania and Benin and through the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean and the UNV Evaluation Unit. In some instances, IEO collaborated with these efforts.

The review notes that several streams of activity are under way and received viewpoints from stakeholders in different locations in the UNDP system that more could be done. However, it does not appear that there is currently any aspect, which would require any amendment of the policy.

4.5. Enhancing System Wide Progress and Collaboration in Evaluation

IEO works with other UN agencies to enhance UN system-wide progress and collaboration through the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), a voluntary association of the evaluation units of over 40 UN evaluation entities. Participation in UNEG and its activities is essential as it helps UN entities and partners to: 1) adhere to the UNEG norms and standards for evaluation; 2) use evaluation in support of accountability and learning; 3) inform UN system-wide initiatives and emerging demands through their evaluations; and 4) contribute to an enhanced global evaluation profession. UNDP IEO hosts the UNEG Secretariat and provides essential technical inputs, financial and human resources services, including by hosting an Executive Coordinator to manage the UNEG annual work plan and budget. These inputs represent a very substantial contribution from UNDP, which has effectively become the lead agency in the Group. The work of UNEG is recognized by managers and staff interviewed as valuable. However, it would be appropriate for the Board to consider what level of inputs it feels is appropriate from UNDP IEO, so that there is a clear understanding of any limits that IEO should respect to avoid challenging time available for other activities.

The review also notes that UNEG has produced a range of useful guidance documents, including the following:

- Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations Aug 2014
- UNEG Handbook for Conducting Evaluations of Normative Work in the UN System, Feb 2014
- Impact Evaluation Guidance Document, Aug 2013
- UNEG Guidance on Preparing Management Responses to UNDAF Evaluations, Nov 2012
- Frequently Asked Questions for UNDAF Evaluations, Sep 2011
- UNEG Good Practice Guidelines for Follow up to Evaluations, Jun 2010
- UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Terms of Reference and Inception Reports, Jun 2010
- UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports, Jun 2010
- UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN system, Jun 2008
- Standards for Evaluation in the UN System, Apr 2005

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- Norms for Evaluation in the UN System, Apr 2005.

The review missions to country and regional offices found a low level of awareness of advice in these areas. It therefore believes that it would be valuable for the IEO to produce short and straightforward summaries of the key advice contained in these UNEG documents and to circulate this material widely, so that staff commissioning evaluations can be better prepared.

5. FINDINGS ON DECENTRALISED EVALUATION IN UNDP

5.1. Introduction

The Policy defines decentralised evaluations as those that are “commissioned by programme units and conducted by independent external experts³⁵” (Paragraph 17). They fit within the overall intention that: “Evaluation in UNDP provides an objective assessment of contributions to development results” (Paragraph 4). Since they are, by definition, commissioned by entities within the management system of UNDP they are not structurally independent. The intention is therefore that their independence, impartiality and objectivity will derive from the fact that they are conducted by experts from outside of the UNDP system and that commissioning bodies will not compromise these characteristics.

The decentralised evaluations conducted from 2011 to 2013 are shown in Table 5.1 below. This Table uses information from the Evaluation Resource Centre. It does not take account of evaluations completed but not entered into the ERC system, whether conducted on behalf of UNDP or jointly, since there is no way of accurately identifying these. Further, UNCDF and UNV evaluations are not included in the figures for decentralised evaluations. There is currently no Quality Assessment from an independent source on the quality of UNV and UNCDF evaluations. Although these agencies are under the UNDP evaluation policy, there is no Memorandum of Understanding, Board directive or other directive that would have the UNDP IEO play a QA role for these agencies.

³⁵ These evaluations are primarily conducted by consultants. In its discussions at regional level (in particular), the Review Team discovered some interest in the possibility of some form of peer review type of approach to decentralised evaluations, in which qualified persons from some COs would conduct evaluations of the activities of other COs in their region. The Review team does not feel that such reviews would be sufficiently independent to fulfil the current requirements of the evaluation policy

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Table 5.1: Decentralised Evaluations conducted during 2013

Evaluations conducted	All regions			Africa			Arab States			Asia and the Pacific			Europe and the CIS			LAC		
	13	12	11	13	12	11	13	12	11	13	12	11	13	12	11	13	12	11
Year	13	12	11	13	12	11	13	12	11	13	12	11	13	12	11	13	12	11
Number of country offices	137	140	139	46	47	46	18	18	18	24	24	24	23	25	25	26	26	26
Total number of evaluations [†]	298*	245* *	226** *	89	48	63	30	20	16	53	56	59	63	64	40	63	57	48
Outcome evaluation	33	28	63	14	5	31	1	5	3	3	7	14	8	5	10	7	6	5
Project evaluation	249	192	144	70	40	26	27	14	10	48	42	43	54	57	29	50	39	36
UNDAF and other programmatic evaluations	16	25	19	5	3	6	2	1	3	2	7	2	1	2	1	6	12	7
Evaluations with management response	266 (89%)	234 (96%)	188 (83%)	76 (85%)	45 (94%)	61 (97%)	22 (73%)	16 (80%)	13 (81%)	52 (98%)	54 (96%)	48 (81%)	55 (87%)	63 (98%)	36 (90%)	61 (97%)	56 (98%)	30 (63%)
Country Offices conducting at least one evaluation	102 (74%)	89 (64%)	90 (65%)	32 (70%)	20 (45%)	25 (54%)	11 (61%)	9 (41%)	6 (33%)	18 (75%)	17 (71%)	19 (79%)	20 (87%)	21 (84%)	18 (72%)	21 (81%)	22 (85%)	22 (85%)
Evaluations funded by GEF	88 (30%)			16 (18%)			11 (37%)			19 (36%)			27 (43%)			15 (24%)		

Source: Annual Report on Evaluation 2013, 2012 and 2011

* The evaluations presented are based on Evaluation Resources Centre data as of 31 January 2014.

** The evaluations presented are based on Evaluation Resources Centre data as of (January 31, 2013)

*** The evaluations presented are based on Evaluation Resources Centre data as of (January 31, 2012)

[†] Total number of evaluations completed by UNDP country offices that are present in Evaluation Resources Centre, including GEF, the MDG acceleration fund, UNDAF and other joint evaluations. Evaluation reports covering multiple outcomes were counted separately for each outcome to be covered based on the evaluation plan..

5.2. Roles and Responsibilities

A variety of entities in the UNDP system have roles and responsibilities for decentralised evaluations, as outlined in detail in section V, B (Paragraphs 22 to 25) of the Policy. These are briefly summarised below.

5.2.1. The Administrator of UNDP

The Administrator has overall accountability for results, which includes a number of responsibilities with regard to decentralised evaluation, notably:

- Compliance with policy
- Providing resources and capacity
- Ensuring management utilizes evaluation.

5.2.2. Senior Management of Practice and Policy Bureaux, Regional Bureaux and Country Offices

These entities have an even longer set of responsibilities, encompassing:

- Ensuring evaluability of activities
- Effective monitoring
- Developing and maintaining costed evaluation plans
- Institutional arrangements to manage evaluation
- Ensuring adequate resources for evaluation
- Safeguarding the independence of the evaluation process and product
- Ensuring appropriate implementation of evaluation plan
- Advocating country-led and joint evaluations
- Making information available to evaluations
- Promoting joint evaluation
- Preparing management responses and track implementation actions
- Effectively utilizing evaluation findings
- Ensuring transparency and accessibility of evaluation rep
- Using evaluation findings to promote organizational learning.

5.2.3. Directors of Regional Bureaux

These Directors have some additional specific responsibilities with regard to evaluations commissioned by country offices, namely:

- Ensuring quality and implementation of evaluation plans and practices
- Supporting and guiding country office capacity in evaluation
- Reviewing and clearing any changes to country evaluation plans
- Ensuring effective use of evaluations for oversight.

5.2.4. The Independent Evaluation Office

The independent Evaluation Office has a relatively limited set of responsibilities in connection with decentralised evaluations, as follows:

- Setting evaluation standards and assessing quality of evaluation reports
- Disseminating methodology and good practice standards
- Providing a roster of evaluation experts
- Supporting network of evaluation practitioners
- Maintaining public depository of evaluation resources.

In keeping with the above, according to the Evaluation Office Medium Term Evaluation Plan (2014 – 2017)³⁶; “the Evaluation Office will continue to provide limited support to decentralised evaluation in 2014, consisting of: (a) a roster of consultants; (b) the Country Office Support Initiative, in collaboration with the Operation Support Group; (c) quality assessment of decentralised evaluations; (d) maintenance of the Evaluation Resource Centre; and (e) evaluation guidance including on impact evaluation. The latter will include piloting impact approaches with decentralised units of UNDP”.

5.2.5. Evaluation Experts (usually consultants)

Evaluation experts (usually consultants) play a major role in decentralised evaluations, as specified in Paragraph 17 of the policy. The roles and responsibilities of the experts themselves are not detailed in the policy. This specifies only (Paragraph 26) that evaluations should “...produce evaluative evidence to inform decision-making and support accountability and learning.” The responsibilities of UNDP entities, which may be seen as affecting evaluation experts, are as follows:

“23. **The senior management of practice and policy bureaux, regional bureaux and country offices that manage global, regional, country and thematic programmes**

- (d) Establishes an appropriate institutional arrangement to manage evaluation;
- (e) Ensures adequate resources for evaluation;
- (f) Safeguards the independence of the evaluation process and product:
- (i) Makes all necessary information available to the evaluation team”.

The issue of independence is addressed in detail in Section 5.5 below.

5.3. Accountability and Compliance

5.3.1. Accountability

As reported in the 2013 Annual Report, 74 per cent of the 137 Country Offices completed a total of 298 evaluations during the year, including 33 outcome evaluations, 249 project evaluations and 16 of other types³⁷. About 30 per cent of the total consisted of GEF evaluations. The total number of evaluations was 22 per cent up on 2012 (32%

³⁶ Evaluation Office of UNDP: medium-term evaluation plan (2014-2017), New York, 2013. P5

³⁷ Details of the distribution of these evaluations are provided in the 2013 Annual Report on Evaluation, Table 6.

from 2011), with a particular increase across the Africa region (2011, 63 evaluations, 2012, 48 evaluations and 2013, 89 evaluations) and in the Arab States (2011, 16; 2012, 20; and 2013, 30). Looking at these figures we can note that in 2013: a) about one quarter of COs did no evaluations at all during the course of the year; b) for those COs that were active, an average of about 3 evaluations were undertaken and; c) although these numbers represent a substantial increase over the previous two years, it is still too early to report a “trend”³⁸, which could be more clearly established over a five year period. The increases recorded may substantially relate to the project cycles of COs in relation to their Country Programmes, with project completion tending to cluster in certain years; so there is a possibility that after the “peak,” particularly in project evaluations, there could still be a drop, as happened in Africa Region between 2011 and 2012. Across the regions, between 73 per cent (Arab States) and 98 per cent (Asia and Pacific) of these evaluations had a Management Response, with an average of 89 per cent.

The regional and policy bureaux commissioned a total of 18 evaluations in the reporting year, including 15 project evaluations, of which eight were for the GEF. The Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and the Bureau for Development Policy both completed Thematic Evaluations. The majority (15 out of 18) of these evaluations had a Management Response.

5.3.2. Compliance

According to the current UNDP Evaluation Policy, once an evaluation is included in a Country Office Evaluation Plan, it becomes “mandatory” and is thereafter tracked for compliance purposes³⁹. Mandatory evaluations are sub-divided between those, which are required by an external funder (particularly the GEF) and those which are funded from UNDP sources (fully or partly), but which have been entered into an Evaluation Plan. Compliance is measured by the IEO, using data recorded in the Evaluation Resource Centre, at the end of each completed Country Programme period⁴⁰. For the 14 Country Programmes terminating in 2013, 10 were fully compliant. Of the other four programmes, all of which were in Africa Region, three were partially compliant (between 40% and 89.9% of planned evaluations completed) and one was non-compliant (0% to 39.99% of planned evaluations completed).

Over the last three years, there has been increasing compliance, which has mainly been achieved by a move from partial to total compliance (see Table 5.2 below). Non-compliance has remained at a very low level throughout this period.

Table 5.2: Compliance over the Period 2011 to 2013

	2011	2012	2013
Not compliant	5%	10%	3%
Partially Compliant	46%	39%	21%
Compliant	49%	52%	71%

Source: Annual Report on Evaluation 2013, Figure 4.

³⁸ The Review is more cautious than the Annual Report on this point, which does refer to this change as a trend.

³⁹ Evaluation Plans are also required of all Bureaux.

⁴⁰ The review notes that there is no Global Programme evaluation plan

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The Review notes that, although compliance trends provide the Board with some useful information, they do not reflect quality of evaluations completed or the extent to which Evaluation Plans have been amended downwards over time, thereby making compliance more readily achievable. The relationship between compliance and evaluation coverage could not be explored in any detail within the time and resources available to the review. However, the review notes that a large number of low-cost decentralised evaluations are conducted and suggests that this trend may be driven by the need for compliance, rather than by coherent strategies by Country Offices to ensure good evaluation coverage of the key issues they are facing⁴¹.

Completed evaluations included in Regional or Country Office Evaluation Plans are required to have a Management Response and in 2013 89 per cent of evaluations complied with this (as against 97 per cent in 2012). Actions in support of these Management Responses are in principle monitored by Regional Bureaux and are aggregated by the Operations Support Group. As with compliance against Evaluation Plans, it is difficult to establish the quality and realism of Management Responses. Some respondents in Country Offices also expressed reservations about Management Responses, which make commitments that will ultimately have to be delivered by national stakeholders and over which they have little control.

The IEO commenced assessing the quality of decentralised evaluations in 2011, through its Quality Assessment System for Decentralised Evaluations. It reviews all reports submitted by Country and Regional Offices on six dimensions: ToR, evaluation subject, context and purpose; evaluation framework; findings; conclusions; and recommendations and lessons. This detailed assessment leads to a composite rating in the categories Highly Unsatisfactory (HU), Unsatisfactory (U), Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), Moderately Satisfactory (MS), Satisfactory (S) and Highly Satisfactory (HS). This Review cannot explore details of this assessment process⁴², but the overall results for the last three years are shown in Table 5.3 below.

Table 5.3⁴³: Quality of Decentralised Evaluations as Assessed by IEO Quality Assessment System

Score / year	HU	U	MU	MS	S	HS	Total Number of reports
2011	0%	2%	32%	45%	19%	2%	130
2012	0%	7%	18%	40%	32%	3%	191
2013	0%	4%	15%	36%	44%	1%	179

⁴¹ Some other international development stakeholders are emphasizing quality rather than compliance and coverage in decentralised evaluations. This is reflected in their much higher costs than in the UNDP system. For example, a DFID report (Rapid Review of Embedding Evaluation in UK Department for International Development. Final Report, February 2014), notes that: "Externally procured evaluation costs appear to be in line with those of other donors. However, forecasts of future spending on evaluation indicate a likely increase in the median amount that DFID pays directly for evaluations. For non-impact evaluations the median budget is £200,000 and for IEs the median budget is £500,000. This represents a significant under-estimation of evaluation costs".

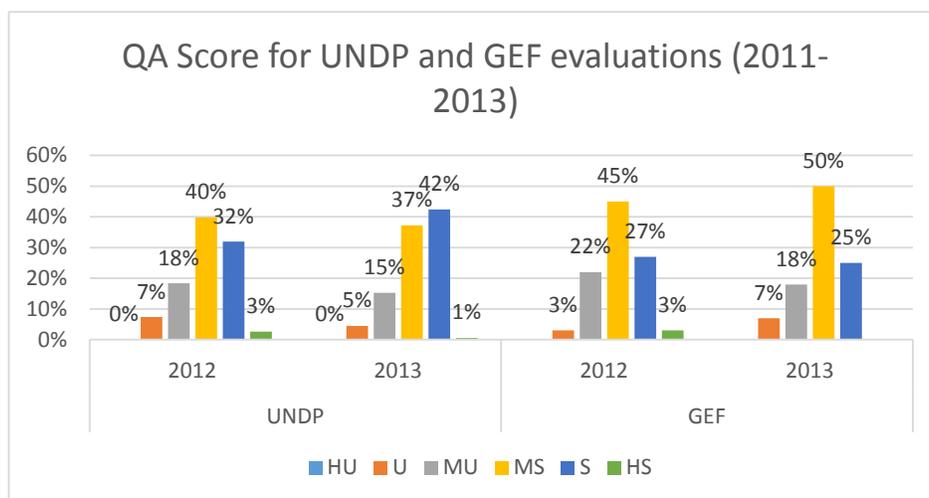
⁴² The quality assessment system has recently been reviewed and some recommendations have been made to strengthen it. See: "Strategic review of the Design, Effectiveness and Efficiency of UNDP's Quality Assessment System for Decentralised Evaluation Reports. Final Report". Thomas Winderl and Josh Brann. 2014.

⁴³ Source: ARE 2013, Table 10.

The most noticeable change⁴⁴ over the three years of reporting is a decline in the proportion of moderately unsatisfactory reports and an increase in the proportion of satisfactory reports. The Africa Region, which produced 28 per cent of the total CO reports in 2013, has shown the largest rating improvement over the 3-year period, moving from 21 per cent satisfactory to 53 per cent satisfactory.

In the same period, 44 GEF Terminal Evaluations were rated and 75% were in the range from moderately to highly satisfactory. This compares with 81% of the evaluations from other funding sources. Further, the GEF reports clustered more in the moderately satisfactory range (50%) than in satisfactory (25%), giving a lower average rating than the UNDP evaluations. The comparative performance is shown in Figure 5.1 below.

Figure 5.1: Comparative Quality Scores of UNDP and GEF Evaluations



The above comparison appears to highlight weaknesses in the current IEO Quality Assessment System, which is actually far less demanding and covers fewer areas than the system used to score the quality of GEF evaluations. An assessment has already been made of the IEO system⁴⁵ and made detailed proposals to strengthen it. The current Review believes that these recommendations should be carefully assessed by IEO and appropriately implemented as part of an overall package of measures to strengthen decentralised evaluation⁴⁶.

5.4. Capacity and Resources

5.4.1. Evaluation Support Personnel

In the Annual Report on Evaluation 2013, it is stated that 45 per cent of Country Offices have at least one “monitoring and evaluation specialist” (P24) compared to 23 per cent in 2012. These officers are also referred to as “dedicated monitoring and evaluation specialists”. However, these terms are not defined in the ARE and there appears to be some divergence on what the term means. Whilst IEO (which produces the ARE) informed the

⁴⁴ A detailed analysis is provided in the ARE 2013, Table 11.

⁴⁵ See: “Strategic review of the Design, Effectiveness and Efficiency of UNDP’s Quality Assessment System for Decentralised Evaluation Reports. Final Report”. Thomas Winderl and Josh Brann. 2014.

⁴⁶ Other major weaknesses in the Quality Assessment process are highlighted in Section 5.5, which deals with the impartiality and independence of decentralised evaluations.

Review that the term denotes “that the office had assigned M&E functions to a specific person”⁴⁷, UNDP management states that “information on M&E specialists in the ARE 2013 refers to the 71 full-time M&E specialists (staff and project personnel) in 62 country offices⁴⁸”. There was substantial variation across regions, with 57 per cent of offices in Africa Region having such a person, down to 17 per cent in Europe and the CIS; which is also the only region which has not reported an increase in its staffing in this area over the past three years. The distribution of these “specialists” is shown in Table 5.4 below.

Table 5.4: Distribution of Decentralised Evaluation Support Personnel in 2013

	UNDP Global	Africa	Arab States	Asia and the Pacific	Europe and the CIS	LAC
Country Offices	137	46	18	24	23 [#]	26
No. of regional M&E specialists	11	2	1	3*	4*	1
No. M&E specialists in COs	71	26	9	14	4	18
COs with M&E Specialist**	62 (45%)	26 (57%)	9 (50%)	9(38%)	4 (17%)	(54%)

Source: *Annual Report on Evaluation 2014, Table 5.*

*1: Staff time not exclusively dedicated to M&E

#: This figure includes 19 Country Offices and four project offices operating in 2013

**The % in parenthesis represents the number of COs with an M&E specialist divided by the total number of COs.

In order to clearly understand whom these “specialists” are and what they do, the Review team administered a self-completion survey to all UNDP staff it could identify with “M&E” in their functional title⁴⁹. It was able to locate and contact 228 such staff. Clearly, there are a lot more staff with some sort of formal role in M&E than is counted under the listing of “specialists” in the Annual Report on Evaluation 2014. From the total of 228 such staff listed and contacted, 43 valid questionnaires were returned⁵⁰. These “M&E” personnel mostly (60.5%) perform this work on a part-time basis, with 39.5% doing so on a full-time basis. Allowing for the margin of error in this survey (11.3%), this means that between 28.2% (64 persons) and 50.8% (115 persons) in the overall population of 228 would be expected to be full-time M&E specialists. As shown in Table 5.4 above, the number of (full-time) “specialists” listed is 82 (including in regional offices), so that the ARE figure and the number estimated to be full-time on the basis of the survey results are consistent.

According to the self-assessment made by the (39.5%) full-time M&E staff responding to the survey, about 29% of their time is spent on evaluation, with the majority of their tasks associated with monitoring. Part-time M&E

⁴⁷ A. Fox. Independent Evaluation Office, personal communication.

⁴⁸ “Second Review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy, “Draft Final Report” sections, and respective Factual Corrections,” P7.

⁴⁹ This included staff in Country Offices and Regional Bureaux.

⁵⁰ The response rate of 19.3% provided a margin of error of 11.3%. The response rate was substantially lower than the response rate from consultants (51%), but slightly higher than that from Resident Representatives (17%).

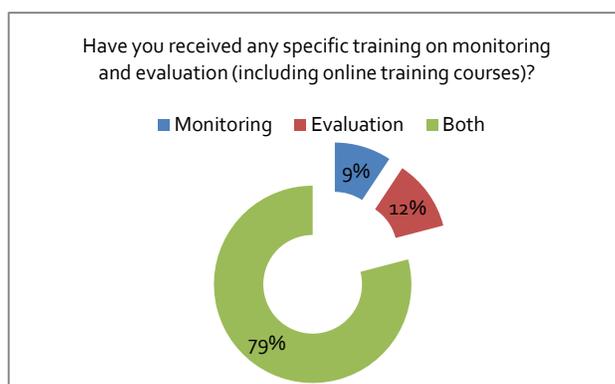
personnel estimate that they spend an average of about 10% of their total time on evaluation. The Review therefore estimates that there are a total of 26.1 Full Time Equivalent persons working on evaluation in 137 Country Offices⁵¹. The ERC shows that in 2013 (the period covered by the 2014 ARE), Country Offices conducted 298 evaluations, which gives a ratio of 11.4 evaluations per Full-Time Equivalent Evaluation Specialist. Even allowing for (limited) support available from Regional Bureaus, this seems to indicate that Country Offices are substantially under-resourced in terms of evaluation-related personnel.

The survey responses showed that M&E responsibilities are vested in staff with a variety of formal positions including:

1. Country director/Deputy Country Director
2. Senior Manager/Chief, Strategic Management Unit/Programme Advisor/Team Leader, Programme and Partnership Support
3. Monitoring and Evaluation Analyst/specialist
4. Programme Assistant, RBM support/Monitoring and Evaluation/RBM Focal Point.

Some 58% of the M&E staff surveyed consider themselves to have a formal qualification related to the area. The extent to which the "specialists" have undertaken specific training in M&E is shown below. The great majority of training received seems to have been broad-based, covering both monitoring and evaluation. Very few have received specialized training in evaluation.

Figure 5.2: M&E Training received by "Specialists"



If we consider that few of the staff formally responsible for evaluation have received specific training in it and that the time actually used on evaluation is very limited, it is clear that even those COs with an "M&E Specialist" may not have substantial expertise or resources in evaluation "in-house". However, based on the team's discussions at Regional Centre and CO level, it is clear that these "specialists" try to draw on support from a variety of resources, based on their experience of which officers may or may not be helpful. This includes support that the Regional Service Centres provide to the COs. Furthermore, some programme staff in country offices and in Regional

⁵¹ Applying the survey data to the information on "M&E Specialists" in the ARE 2014, the Review makes the following estimations: 137 Country Offices; 62 of which have one or more evaluation specialists, while 75 have no evaluation specialist. The 62 offices have an average of 1.1 M&E specialists, which means that they have an average of 1.1 x 29% of one person's time working on evaluation. This gives an average of 0.3 full-time persons working on evaluation for each CO with a full-time "M&E Specialist". If we then assume that the other 75 Country Offices have someone working part-time on M&E, this gives an average of 0.1 full-time persons for each of these Offices working on evaluation. Adding these together, the review estimates a total of 62 Country Offices x 0.3, plus 75 Country Offices x 0.1; which gives the totals in the text.

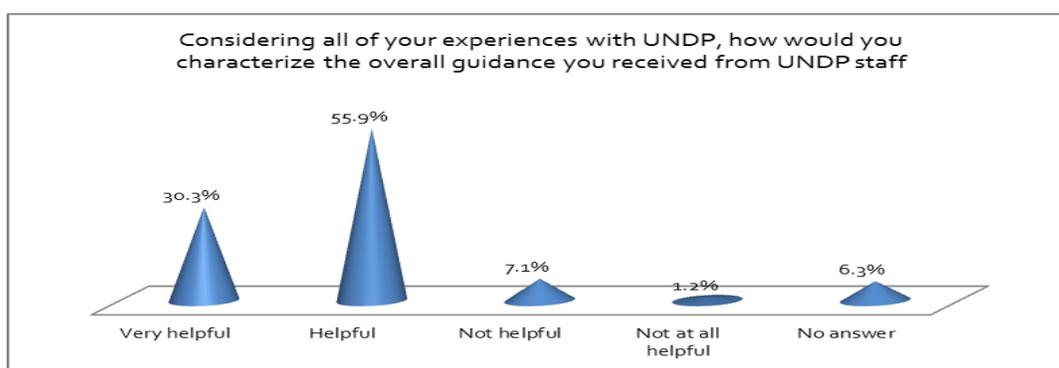
Centres have accumulated experience of dealing with evaluations and may take the lead in dealing with consultants on evaluations (with or without any “M&E specialist”).

In its (limited) country missions, the Review observed that Country Offices have the discretion to approach evaluation in very different ways. Whilst some had minimal engagement with the issue, another had established a specific M&E Unit, with some capacity to manage evaluations. The decisive factor in this difference appeared to be the commitment of individual senior managers to the area.

5.4.2. Guidance and Support Received by Consultants

To assess whether, despite the evident limitations of actual specialist evaluation expertise in the Country Offices, there is sufficient support to enable consultants to prepare credible evaluations, the survey asked decentralised evaluation consultants for their assessment of the overall support they received from the COs (and some ROs or HQ bodies) served⁵². Their response is shown in Figure 5.3 below, with some 86% rating the guidance received from the UNDP staff as helpful or very helpful.

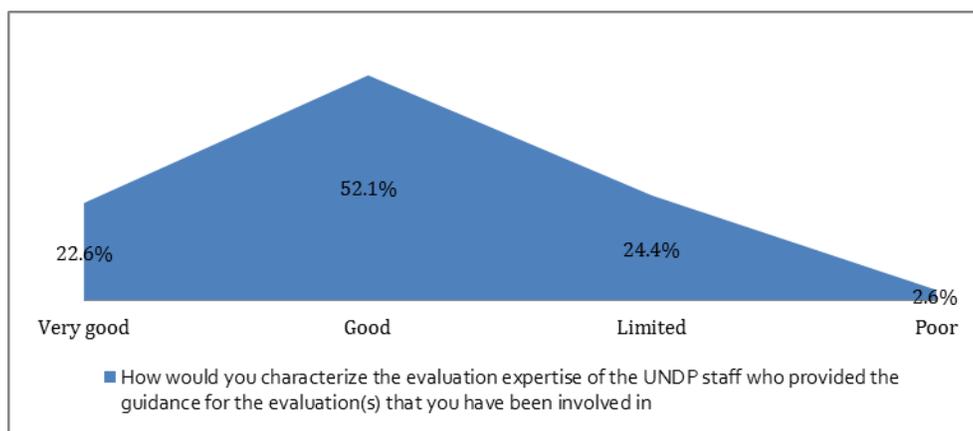
Figure 5.3: Assessment of Guidance received by Evaluation Consultants from UNDP Staff



Furthermore, the consultants also rated the evaluation expertise available to them from the CO quite highly, with 75% scoring it as good or very good (see Figure 5.4). Considered overall, this suggests that the combination of specialist external consultants and evaluation experience (if not actual technical specialization) in the COs (supported by Regional Service Bureaus) could be useful parts of an overall system to support production of decentralised evaluations of satisfactory quality. However, as shown later, this system is currently only partially in place and several additional elements are needed before it could be effective.

⁵² This survey received responses from 254 decentralised evaluation consultants, a response rate of 51%, with a margin of error of 3.6%.

Figure 5.4: Consultants' Assessment of UNDP Evaluation Expertise Supporting Their Work



5.5. Independence and Impartiality

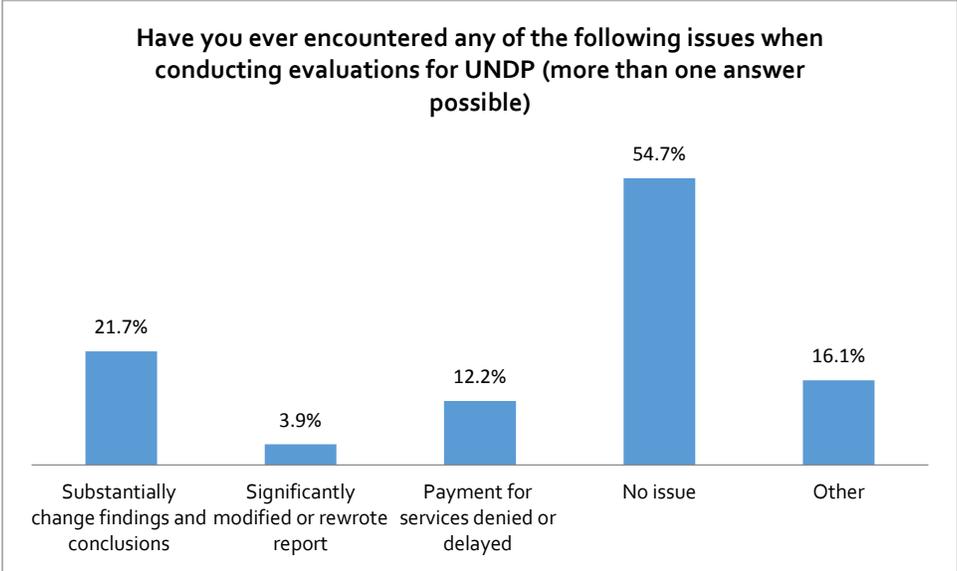
As noted in Section 5.2.2 above, the responsibility for ensuring the independence and impartiality of decentralised evaluations falls on the senior management of practice and policy bureaux, regional bureaux and country offices. No other party has specific responsibility in this area. The role of the IEO is limited to “assessing quality of evaluation reports”. This is done through the Quality Assessment System for Decentralised Evaluations. However, this system has virtually no capacity to assess the independence or impartiality of evaluations undertaken. This is because of the following factors:

- It is only able to assess reports in terms of their internal consistency and apparent quality. It has no insights into how the evaluation was conducted, how the report was generated, who actually wrote it and whether there was any interference in the process.
- The QA system can only review those evaluations that are submitted to it. The possibility exists and is used (to an unknown extent) for the office, which commissioned an evaluation, not to submit it to the QA process or the Evaluation Resource Centre, managed by the IEO.
- The issue of conflict of interest could not be extensively addressed within the resources of the review. In order to explore it systematically, it would be necessary to have details of the work history of the lead consultants for each evaluation and to relate this information to the Terms of Reference. Consultant CVs would need to be stored on the ERC with other evaluation documents, which is currently not the case. The Review Team conducted a limited scoping exercise to assess whether this might be an issue, which may need more detailed analysis and response by IEO in future. Using the personal knowledge of the Review Team members of recent consultants and staff of UNDP and GEF, the team explored the list of consultants for 500 evaluations in the ERC system since 2011. This “light touch” exercise immediately identified 8 evaluations showing substantive and obvious conflicts of interest. It is possible but unlikely that the Review Team members fortuitously observed the only such instances in the system, but since the majority of listed consultants were unknown to them, it is far more likely that there are other instances in the overall ERC database. Since the examples spotted were very clear, this suggests that the importance of avoiding conflicts of interest to ensure the impartiality of decentralised evaluations should be re-emphasised by IEO and UNDP management, supported by the circulation of clear guidelines.

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Discussions with Board Members, the IEO team, UNDP headquarters, regional service centres and Country Offices, as well as detailed review of documents and correspondence files, all revealed an awareness of a range of challenges with the quality and independence of some decentralised evaluations. The IEO Quality Assurance System does not adequately flag these challenges, because this is document-based and does not consider the processes, which have been followed to produce final evaluation reports. In order to gain an understanding of the prevalence of such issues, the review asked the consultants conducting decentralised evaluations whether they had ever encountered issues imposed by any party in UNDP to the impartiality or independence of their Evaluation work and reports. As shown in Figure 5.5 below, about 45% of consultants reported some such challenge. This finding refers to the proportion of consultants citing an issue rather than to the proportion of evaluations. The Review therefore assessed to what extent this percentage might reduce, if applied to the number of evaluations. According to the ERC database, the modal and median number of evaluations conducted per consultant (n=913) are both 1, while the mean is 1.3. Taking account of the margin of error (3.6%), this indicates that the range of evaluations affected⁵³ will be between 32% and 37%. Within the 45% of consultants reported above, about 16% reported issues, which the Review regards as borderline in terms of their acceptability: such as the need for “softening” of text; UNDP eventually accepting text after lengthy discussions, even though the evidence was clear in the first place and “hot disputes” without any request to change the report. These borderline cases are not analysed further, although they should be seen as inappropriate. Outside of the borderline cases, 37% of consultants reported issues, which the Review regards as unacceptable, notably the three shown on the left in the Figure 5.5 below⁵⁴. Applying the same calibration shown above, this means that the expected proportion of individual evaluations affected⁵⁵ is between 26% and 31%.

Figure 5.5: Issues Challenging the Impartiality and Independence of Decentralised Evaluations



As shown by the three bars on the left of the chart, the unacceptable methods used by UNDP offices included:

- UNDP Office refusing or extensively delaying payments to force changes in report

⁵³ 45% + or – 3.6%/1.3 (mean number of evaluations per consultant).

⁵⁴ Some consultants reported both “borderline” and unacceptable issues.

⁵⁵ 37% + or – 3.6%/1.3.

- UNDP Office team simply rewriting parts of the text themselves
- UNDP Office insisting that the consultant change findings and conclusions in contradiction to the evidence cited.

The Review regards this as an extremely important finding, which needs to be viewed in the light of a number of contextual factors. The Review did not find any information from other international agencies (multilateral or bilateral), which could be used to benchmark this phenomenon. Thus, we cannot say for certain whether the citing of these issues by 37% of consultants is high, medium or low compared with other organisations. This is because there are many reports detailing measures taken to strengthen the decentralised evaluation system of organisations, but no attempt paralleling that taken by this Review, to assess in detail what results these measures have produced in terms of independence and impartiality.

Also, for the most part, we cannot identify why these issues arose. In written survey responses from a small number of Resident Representatives, the view was advanced that some programme staff are reluctant to bring negative findings to their superiors and therefore tend to make sure that evaluation reports are positive. In the review team's meetings with members of Regional Offices and Service Centres, a different view was sometimes advanced, namely that some Resident Representatives and Country Directors may insist that consultants do not produce negative findings. Frequently, staff at different levels of the organisation informed the Review that consultants "do not understand" or "are biased against" UNDP, so that at times it is necessary to "correct" their findings.

Overall, although there are individual correspondence files in which consultants' complaints have been circulated and discussed, neither UNDP management nor IEO has made any attempt to systematically record or analyse these issues; although on the basis of surveys, Review Mission discussions and correspondence files, they are well-known. The UNDP-GEF Office has introduced the measure of requiring consultants to submit their draft evaluation reports simultaneously to that Office and to the commissioning unit, which provides a starting point for bringing any potential interference into the open.

In a presentation to an informal meeting of the Board⁵⁶, a representative of UNDP management stated that the issues raised above by more than 30 independent consultants are unlikely to exist. As confirmation of this, he cited the absence of presentation of any such case to formal UNDP investigative systems. The main offices, which could potentially be involved in such procedures, would be the Ethics Office and the Office of Audit and Investigations.

According to the Ethics Office's own website⁵⁷, its functions are as follows:

1. Developing and communicating **standards on ethics issues**
2. Providing **training** and education opportunities to staff and other personnel
3. Offering **guidance** and **confidential advice** to staff and management to prevent conflicts of interest and other ethics matters
4. Administering the **financial disclosure programme**
5. **Protecting staff against retaliation** for reporting misconduct.

The Ethics Office is therefore a service to the staff and management of UNDP. Since it is not mandated to provide a service to persons external to UNDP, it should be no surprise that it has not done so. The Ethics Office has not and has not been asked to develop ethics statements concerning the management of decentralised evaluations.

⁵⁶ Paraphrased from the presentation of Mr. Magdy Martinez-Soliman, Director a.i., Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, to the Informal Meeting of the Executive Board, 2nd September 2014.

⁵⁷ <http://www.un.org/en/ethics/>

According to the document, United Nations Development Programme Office of Audit and Investigations, Investigation Guidelines (October 2012, P4), OAI conducts investigations into allegations of:

- Procurement fraud
- Corruption and bribery
- Theft and embezzlement
- Entitlements fraud
- Misuse of UNDP resources
- Misrepresentation
- Failure to comply with financial disclosure requirements
- Improper recruitment
- Retaliation against whistleblowers¹³
- Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse
- Assault and threat
- Workplace harassment
- Abuse of authority
- Failure to comply with local laws/abuse of privileges and immunities
- Any other misconduct, such as wilful, reckless or grossly negligent disregard of UNDP regulations, rules and administrative instructions.

Clearly, the areas for which the Office of Audit and Investigations provides expert assessment do not provide an obvious channel for the resolution of disputes concerning evaluation findings and recommendations. The review therefore regards it as highly unlikely that any independent consultant would take a dispute to this body.

A further area, which the review has assessed, is the clarity of the provisions for dispute settlement contained in contracts issued to decentralised evaluation consultants by UNDP. Such contracts contain the following standard provision with regard to settlement of potential disputes, outlined in an Annex entitled: UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME GENERAL CONDITIONS OF CONTRACTS FOR THE SPECIAL SERVICES AGREEMENT.

“16. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

Amicable Settlement: UNDP and the Individual contractor shall use their best efforts to amicably settle any dispute, controversy or claim arising out of the Agreement or the breach, termination or invalidity thereof. Where the parties wish to seek such an amicable settlement through conciliation, the conciliation shall take place in accordance with the Conciliation Rules then obtaining of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (“UNCITRAL”), or according to such other procedure as may be agreed between the parties in writing.

Arbitration: Any dispute, controversy or claim between the parties arising out of the Agreement, or the breach, termination, or invalidity thereof, unless settled amicably, as provided above, shall be referred by either of the parties to arbitration in accordance with the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules then obtaining. The decisions of the arbitral tribunal shall be based on general principles of international commercial law. For all evidentiary questions, the arbitral tribunal shall be guided by the Supplementary Rules Governing the Presentation and Reception of Evidence in International Commercial Arbitration of the International Bar Association, 28 May 1983 edition. The arbitral tribunal shall be empowered to order the return or destruction of goods or any property, whether tangible or intangible, or of any confidential information provided under the Agreement, order the termination of the Agreement, or order that any other protective measures be taken with respect to the goods, services or any other property, whether tangible or intangible, or of any confidential information provided under the Agreement, as appropriate, all in accordance with the authority of the arbitral tribunal pursuant to Article 26 (“Interim Measures of Protection”) and Article 32 (“Form and Effect of the Award”) of the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules. The arbitral

tribunal shall have no authority to award punitive damages. In addition, unless otherwise expressly provided in the Agreement, the arbitral tribunal shall have no authority to award interest in excess of the London Inter-Bank Offered Rate (“LIBOR”) then prevailing, and any such interest shall be simple interest only. The parties shall be bound by any arbitration award rendered as a result of such arbitration as the final adjudication of any such dispute, controversy or claim”.

The Review finds it difficult to believe that any consultant would consider that the above section provides a clear, concise and simple path towards resolving any evaluation-related disputes. Overall, the Review team therefore feels that the evidence provided above shows that there is currently no system available to independent consultants, which could provide a simple, impartial, timely and cost-effective solution to any disputes that might arise from their evaluation work for UNDP entities, whether at HQ, regional or country level. Since there is no appropriate system, written or verbal complaints⁵⁸ have been made to entities with which consultants are familiar, mainly the IEO, the GEF Office and Regional Service Centres.

In summary, no measures have been taken to establish a formal system for documenting and resolving disputes affecting decentralised evaluations, although this would seem to be a basic and essential measure to protect their integrity. Decentralised evaluation consultants are not informed in their contracts of any plausible and accessible mechanism to redress disputes, nor are there any specific information on the interpretation of independence in respect of such evaluations.

The review believes that even quite simple measures could help to reduce the level of interference with the independence of evaluations. For example, a recent call for evaluation consultants by the Canadian Red Cross contains the following text, which can be seen as advice to both consultants and commissioners of evaluations⁵⁹:

“The evaluation process will be followed to ensure stakeholder input while maintaining the integrity and independence of the evaluation report according to the following lines:

- **Inaccuracy:** Inaccuracies are factual, supported with undisputable evidence, and therefore should be corrected in the evaluation report itself.
- **Clarifications:** A clarification is additional, explanatory information to what the evaluators provided in the report. It is the evaluators’ decision whether to revise their report according to a clarification; if not, the evaluation management response team can decide whether to include the clarification in their management response.
- **Difference of opinion:** A difference of opinion does not pertain to the findings (which are factual), but to the conclusions and/or recommendations. These may be expressed to the evaluators during the evaluation process. It is the evaluators’ decision whether to revise their report according to a difference of opinion; if not, the evaluation management response team can decide whether to include the clarification in their management response”.

In view of the substantial level of interference with evaluation reports experienced by “independent” consultants, the Review expresses serious reservations concerning the overall independence and impartiality of decentralised evaluation reports lodged in the ERC. This in turn raises substantial doubts about the credibility of the overall scoring of reports entered and rated in the Quality Assessment System for Decentralised Evaluations. Whilst a substantial proportion (over half) of reports in the system may not have faced any challenges to their independence, it is not possible to tell from the reports themselves which these are. Thus a rating may refer either to an original report submitted by an independent consultant or to one, which has been significantly modified by

⁵⁸ As shown by correspondence files and through the Review team’s discussions in different UNDP Offices and with IEO.

⁵⁹ Similar distinctions are made by some UN agencies (e.g. UNESCO) and would be a simple additional element in consultancy contracts, which would help clarify processes for all stakeholders.

the country office after this submission. Further, some reports are not submitted to the ERC at all. No estimate can be given of how many or why. On the basis of discussions with stakeholders, it appears likely that those not submitted include a proportion that drew conclusions perceived by the CO to be negative. In line with this, a reason mentioned by staff in COs themselves (in interviews and discussions with the Review team) is that some evaluation reports are not submitted because the quality is not acceptable⁶⁰; which would also give a positive bias to scores in the QA system⁶¹.

5.6. Credibility

5.6.1. Defining Credibility

The issue of the credibility of decentralised evaluations is not specifically addressed in the Policy or in the Annual Report on Evaluation (2013). Furthermore, neither UNEG norms and standards nor the DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management offer any definition. The Framework for Professional Peer Reviews of Evaluation Functions in Multilateral Organizations refers to two criteria: the expertise and independence of the evaluators and the degree of transparency of the evaluation process. The 2013 Peer Review of the UNDP IEO notes that (P4) "Credibility requires that evaluations should report success, as well as failures." The current Review applies some additional criteria to the above⁶² and draws specific attention to the issue of independence and its implication that both positive and negative findings should be reported, as appropriate. Indeed, it could be argued that credibility is fundamentally a perceptual issue, so that the same evaluation report could be deemed credible by one set of stakeholders but quite differently by others. In the light of this uncertainty, the review does not propose a specific definition of credibility, but proposes that the following factors (among others) are important to establish this characteristic and addresses them in the following sections:

- Focussed and realistic ToR
- Availability of informed and effective guidance from UNDP to consultants
- Availability of secondary data for evaluators
- Quality of consultants
- Independence and impartiality
- Adequate time, resources and access for consultants to conduct an authoritative evaluation.

5.6.2. Terms of Reference

The IEO's Quality Assessment System for Decentralised Evaluations specifically rates their ToR. For the 2013 cohort, the average score was 4.4 out of 6 (moderately satisfactory). The Annual Report on Evaluation 2013 notes that there has been a consistent failure to adequately follow the recommendations for TORs provided in the IEO-OSG-BDP jointly produced handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results. For those

⁶⁰ This could well be true. However, one of the purposes of the Quality Assurance System and the ERC database should be to assist in identifying and addressing issues, which may challenge the overall quality of the decentralised evaluation function. If reports deemed by the commissioning unit to be of poor quality are simply excluded, this cannot be achieved.

⁶¹ On the other hand, since an evaluation that has not been submitted to the ERC cannot be regarded as completed, this could have a potential negative effect on compliance.

⁶² The issue of the degree of transparency of decentralised evaluations would require substantial fieldwork in countries where these have been recently undertaken and could not, therefore, be addressed in any depth by this Review.

evaluations achieving an overall rating of unsatisfactory (2) or moderately unsatisfactory (3), the average quality of TOR was 3.9. For satisfactory (5) evaluations, the corresponding average was 4.8. An additional important factor, which appears not to be addressed by the QA system, is the relationship between the TOR and the time and resources available for the evaluation. This is addressed in Section 5.6.7. Overall, it can be summarised that the quality of TORs is barely sufficient to promote credible evaluations.

5.6.3. Quality of Advice Provided by UNDP to Consultants

As discussed in Section 5.4.2 above, the consultants rate the advice provided by UNDP COs quite highly. In terms of the expertise provided, about 75% regarded this as good or very good. With regard to its helpfulness, 86% rated it as very helpful or helpful. These findings show that in most cases, COs have made a serious effort to advise independent consultants. However, the review accepts the note of caution provided by UNDP management⁶³ that perceptual data from surveys should be carefully triangulated with other data sources. In this respect, as shown in Table 5.2 above, triangulation shows that only 12% of "M&E Specialists" have received specific evaluation training (as opposed to broader "M&E" training), which would appear to limit the technical quality of the advice they are able to give. In this respect, the Review feels that the limited range of systematic evaluation training available to staff in country, regional or HQ offices is a fundamental factor in the overall weakness of the system⁶⁴.

5.6.4. Availability of Secondary Data for Evaluators

Over 80% of evaluations commissioned by Country Offices are project evaluations, with smaller numbers of outcome evaluations and participation in UNDAF evaluations. Secondary evaluation data therefore consist largely of project documents, which need to be placed in the context of the country programme through Country Programme material and broader performance related documentation. These documents did not emerge as a pervasive problem mentioned by evaluation consultants.

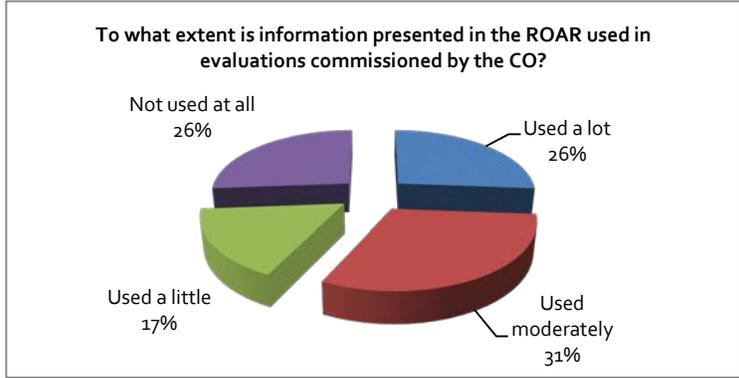
A major source of overall performance information at country level is the Results Oriented Annual Report (ROAR). In order to assess and cross-check the potential contribution of the ROAR to the credibility of decentralised evaluations, specific questions were asked in the surveys administered to both evaluation consultants and UNDP "M&E" staff.

From the survey conducted by the review of "M&E" staff, some 90% of them indicated that they are involved in completing the ROAR for their CO. Their tasks include leading the process, organising briefings/explaining the requirements, data entry, responsibility for evaluation related parts and undertaking the first quality assurance check. Some 59% of the M&E staff stated that there are insufficient data (e.g. baselines, progress indicators) to ensure that the ROAR is complete and accurate. Despite this shortcoming, roughly 85% of the M&E staff maintains that the ROAR is useful to the work of the Country Office. However, although it is seen as useful, some staff mentioned that the COs do not take advantage of the information it provides. Having ascertained that the ROAR is regarded as a generally useful source of information for COs, the survey then asked the M&E staff to what extent they feel that the ROAR is specifically used by evaluations commissioned by the COs. The results are shown in Figure 5.6 below.

⁶³ Paraphrased from the presentation of Mr. Magdy Martinez-Soliman, Director a.i., Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, to the Informal Meeting of the Executive Board, 2nd September 2014.

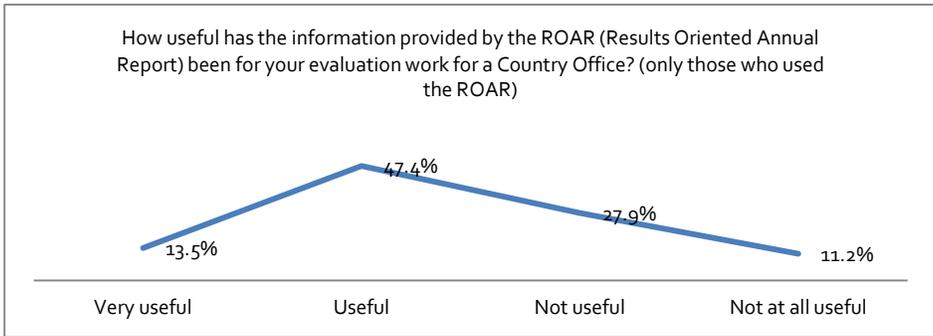
⁶⁴ By comparison, for example, in 2013 ILO's Evaluation Unit introduced an Evaluation Managers Certification programme.

Figure 5.6: Extent to Which ROAR is used by Decentralised Evaluations. (“M&E staff “ perspective)



In order to crosscheck this perception of the extent to which the ROAR is used (and useful) to evaluations, a related question was asked to the independent consultants. As can be seen from Figure 5.7 (see below), the two perception profiles are very close, particularly if one takes out from the M&E staff perspective those regarding the ROAR as “used a little.” For the question “How useful has the information provided by the ROAR been for your evaluation work for a Country Office,” 61% of consultants responded either “Very useful” or “Useful”.

Figure 5.7: Use of ROAR for Decentralised Evaluations (Consultants’ perspective)



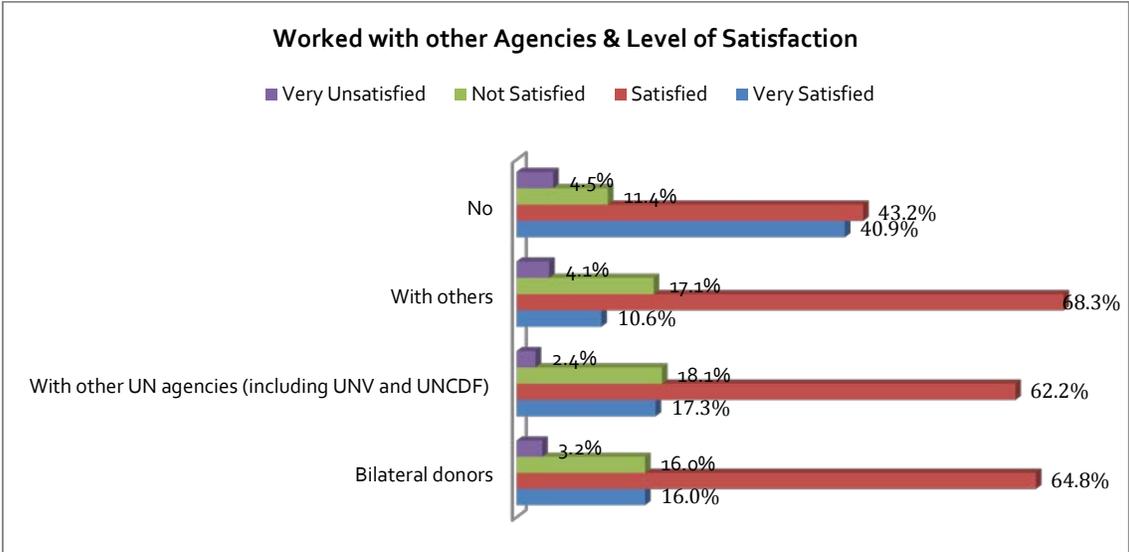
5.6.5. Quality of Consultants

Data in the ERC on consultants are not yet used to provide any systematic analysis of the quality of work by categories or individuals. In some regional and country offices, the Review team was informed that there are difficulties in finding consultants with strong technical and evaluation skills, while in others the supply seems better. According to information from discussions in Regional Service Centres and Country Offices, commissioning offices draw on various sources, including word of mouth, the IEO roster, Regional Rosters, Regional Service Centre teams and the GEF support office. In other cases, they simply post a call for consultants, mostly on the UNDP job site.

The survey of consultants found that half have conducted evaluations for no other institution than UNDP, while the rest have worked for one or more other institutions, including UN agencies (50%), bilateral donors (50%) and others (49%). These data do not give any conclusive information concerning the relative quality of consultants. It might be expected that those who have worked with other agencies will have broader experience and expertise than those who have only worked for UNDP. It would be difficult to test this directly. However, the Review

approached this from another direction by asking consultants how satisfactory they found the experience of conducting decentralised evaluations for UNDP. Figure 5.8 shows the responses to this question. It is noticeable that 40.9% of respondents who have not worked with any agency other than UNDP indicated they were very satisfied with this experience, compared to an average of only 14.6% of consultants who have worked with any other institution. This suggests that consultants who have worked for a range of international institutions have a more adverse response to negative aspects of UNDP evaluation processes than those who have not, but this cannot be directly related to the credibility of their work.

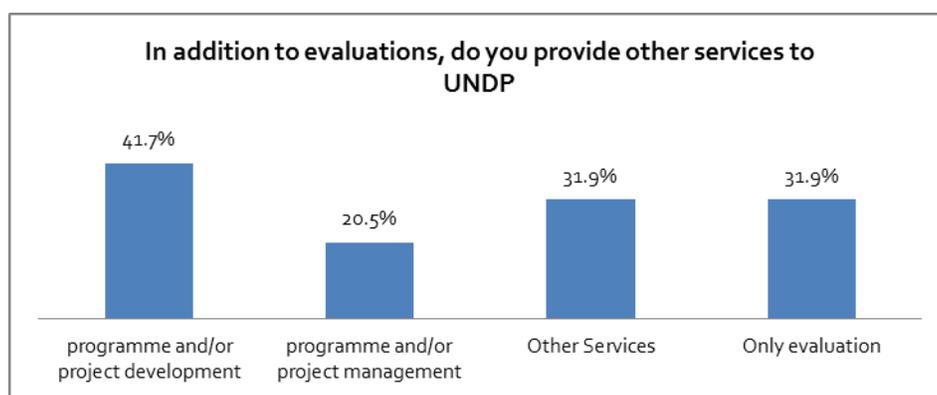
Figure 5.8: Diversity of Evaluation Experience and Satisfaction with UNDP Experience



In missions to Regional and Country Offices, the Review Team often heard that one reason for dissatisfaction with the quality of some consultants’ work⁶⁵ was that they “did not understand UNDP”. Although this could not be directly tested, survey results showed that only about one third of the consultants have conducted exclusively evaluation work for UNDP (See Figure 5.9). The majority has also conducted other services, including programme or project development or management. This would suggest that most have a reasonable grasp of how UNDP works and that the issue is not a substantial challenge to the overall credibility of the body of consultants. The Review notes that this range of services provided by consultants gives some cause for concern about possible conflicts of interest, particularly in countries with a small body of potential consultants. However, the extent to which actual conflicts arise could only be confirmed by more detailed analysis than the Review could conduct.

⁶⁵ This also was also said to apply for some consultants undertaking work in Independent Evaluations.

Figure 5.9: Range of Services Consultants Provide to UNDP



5.6.6. Independence and Impartiality

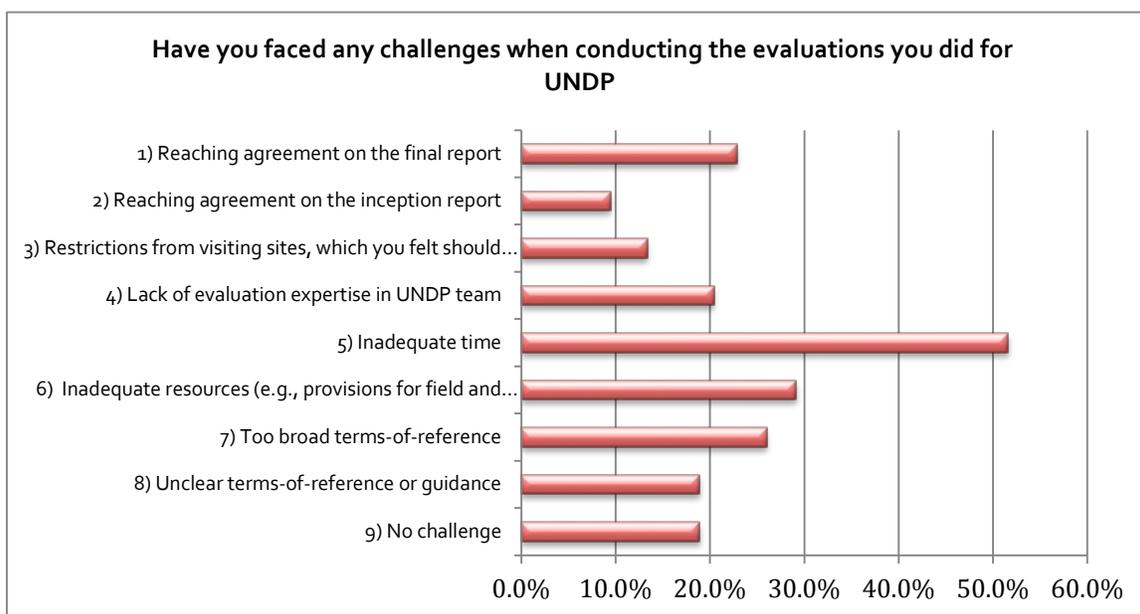
Section 5.5 has specifically addressed the issue of independence and impartiality. The Review finds that there is sufficient evidence to state that major deficiencies in this area substantially challenge the credibility of the overall body of decentralised evaluations.

5.6.7. Time and Resources Available for Decentralised Evaluations

In order to assess the adequacy of time and resources available for decentralised evaluations, the consultants' survey placed these issues in a broader framework of potential challenges to credible evaluation work. Figure 5.10 summarises the responses. Respondents had the possibility of listing more than one challenge and the 254 respondents gave a total of 535 responses. It can be seen that the predominant issue was inadequate time to conduct their evaluations, followed by inadequate resources, particularly for fieldwork deemed necessary by the consultants⁶⁶. Other issues raised have been addressed earlier.

⁶⁶ This is an area where benchmarking would have been particularly useful, but the Review did not find systematic independent comparative evidence on resources made available by different international organisations for comparable types of evaluation.

Figure 5.10: Challenges to Evaluation Quality faced by Consultants



Full title of categories in Figure 5.10 above:

- 3) Restrictions from visiting sites, which you felt should have been allowed
- 6) Inadequate resources (e.g., provisions for field and project visits)

The issue of inadequate time, resources and fieldwork might be expected to relate closely to the budget available for an evaluation. The Review could not directly test this, but checked whether there is an empirical relationship between budget and evaluation quality, drawing on data in the QA system, as shown in Table 5.5 below. The ratings do not show a strong relationship between budget and the quality rating of evaluations. This finding should be treated with some caution, since costs listed in the ERC database may be the actual budget spent or the unrevised initial budget estimate⁶⁷. Even more significant is the absence of information in the ERC on the cost of the intervention under evaluation. It might be assumed, for example, that a budget of \$30,000 would generate a more satisfactory evaluation of a project worth \$250,000 than of one worth \$5 million. However, this cannot be assessed on the basis of information in the current ERC database. In the case of UNDP-funded evaluations, the quality score improves slightly but steadily up to an evaluation budget of \$40,000, but drops off after this. A rapid assessment of the ratings suggests that there is higher quality variation within the lowest budget categories.

For the GEF, evaluations of \$40,000 and over attained a higher rating than those with lesser budgets, but scores for reports costing less than this did not show a clear trend.

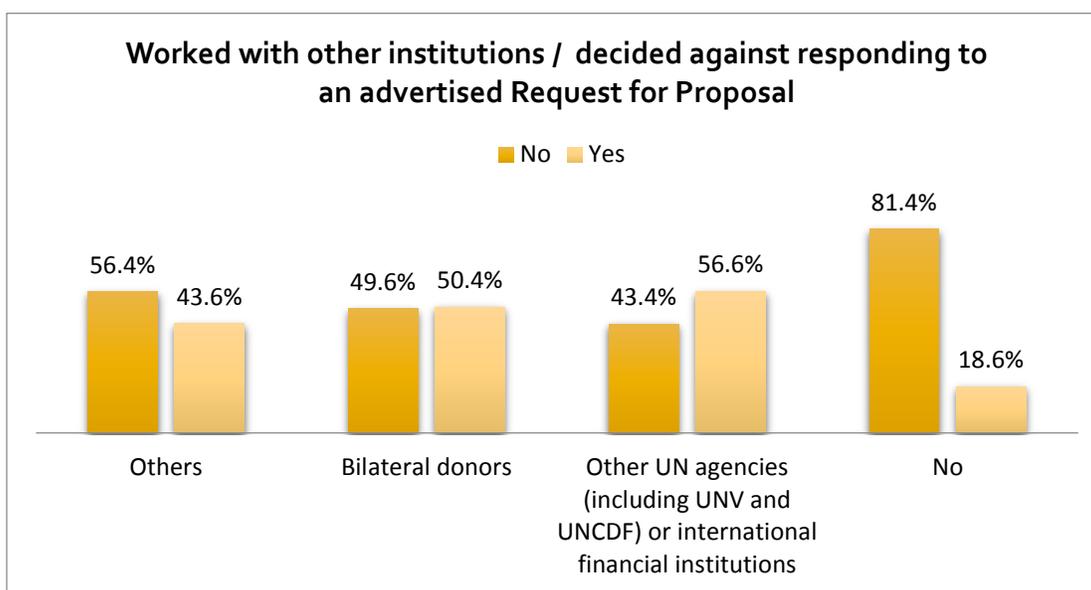
⁶⁷ Information based on discussions with IEO.

Table 5.5: Average Quality Assessment of UNDP and UNDP/GEF Decentralised Evaluations in the ERC database by Evaluation Budget

Evaluation Budget in \$US	Average Quality Score and Rating UNDP	Average Quality Score and Rating UNDP/GEF
0 - 10,000	3.89 (rating =4) (n= 86)	3.57 (rating =4) (n=19)
10,001 - 20,000	3.97 (rating =4) (n=135)	4.12 (rating = 4) (n=54)
20,001 - 30,000	4.19 (rating = 4) (n=94)	3.97 (rating =4) (n=36)
30,001 - 40,000	4.35 (rating = 4) (n=37)	3.77 (rating =4) (n=9)
40,001 - 50,000	4.56 (rating = 5) (n=32)	5.0 (rating =5) (n= 2)
50,001 - above	4.29 (rating = 4) (n=41)	4.6 (rating =5) (n=5)
Average budget	UNDP = \$ 30,317.37	GEF = \$23,853.09
Average Quality Score	4.11 (n= 425) Rating: (4) Moderately Satisfactory	4.008 (n=125) Rating: (4) Moderately Satisfactory

Another issue related to the credibility of evaluations concerns the extent to which the problems experienced by consultants (see Figure 5.10 above) deter them from undertaking further decentralised evaluation work for UNDP. The survey asked whether consultants had ever decided not to bid for evaluation work for which they were both qualified and available. In response, 42% of consultants stated that they had taken such a decision. This suggests that the challenges identified, including those concerning time and resources, as well as problems in retaining their independence have substantially deterred consultants. This proportion is regarded as high by the Review and appears to pose a threat to the credibility of the body of decentralised evaluations, since many eligible consultants are declining to bid for this work, thereby reducing the competitiveness of the selection process. Additional analysis suggests a further worrying dimension of this issue. As shown in Figure 5.11, only 18.6% of consultants who exclusively work for UNDP have been deterred from doing so again by their previous experience, as against between 43.6% to 56.6% of consultants with a broader range of experience. This suggests that the group with UNDP as its sole client for evaluation work has a much higher tolerance of inappropriate standards, whether in terms of interference or inadequate resources, than the group with broader experience. This tolerance can be expected to lower the independence and credibility of the work they conduct. Further, this is likely to have an iterative effect, as the less marketable consultants stay in the UNDP evaluation system and the more broadly competitive opt out.

Figure 5.11: Consultants Who Have Chosen Not to Bid for UNDP Evaluation Work by Range of Experience.



5.6.8. Utility

According to ERC data⁶⁸, 89% of 2013 reports in the system obtained a management response, with minor variation across regions. The Review notes that the Senior Management of UNDP is making substantial efforts to make quantitative analysis and use of the information from evaluations. In addition to the information presented on the management response to evaluations, it has created an “evaluation knowledge base” to foster utilization, building on the information contained in the Evaluation Resource Centre established by the Evaluation Office. This knowledge base currently draws on 1,806 evaluation reports of UNDP's programmatic activities at the global, regional and country levels from 2008 to 2013 (the period of the previous UNDP Strategic Plan). It captures findings, conclusions, recommendations and/or lessons from these reports, along with the ratings assigned by evaluators to the programme/outcome/project in question, under each evaluation criterion used by the IEO (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, impact).

In early 2012, within the scope of the cumulative review of UNDP's performance in the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan, the Operational Support Group of UNDP extracted, coded, systematized and produced aggregated analyses on the learning available from these evaluation reports to complement experiences and good practices shared by Country Offices. Constructed using Excel and searchable for knowledge extraction by categories (such as by country office, region, country typology, thematic area, keywords), this knowledge base constitutes a potentially valuable and relevant source of knowledge for performance and results analysis, which could provide key inputs into evidence-based decision-making. It has already been used for analysis to underpin senior management strategic decisions on substantive programme planning, prioritization of policy support services, investments in guidance and capacity development, design of the new Strategic Plan and sharing key analytical findings with the Executive Board as part of the Cumulative Review of the UNDP 2008-2013 Strategic Plan.

There are four factors that limit the utility of the evaluation knowledge base as it stands and which require attention. The first of these is that the database appears to be extraordinarily complex. According to information

⁶⁸ See ARE 2013, Table 6, page 27.

supplied by UNDP management to the Review⁶⁹: “The dataset differentiates evaluations in terms of evaluation type, quality score in each criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability), country, region, and corporate outcome to which it relates. In addition, the Evaluation Tool works in tandem with the ROAR Tool, which presents results and financial information for all UNDP country programmes, allowing to differentiate between simple and complex programmes and to triangulate performance analysis on the basis of evaluative and other evidence”. The second, clearly related to the above is that the production and use of the knowledge base does not appear to be widely known across the UNDP, especially in the country offices visited. For example, not a single mention was made of it by CO and RO stakeholders interviewed in response to questions about how the findings of evaluations are used. The third is that the ERC includes relatively little information on joint evaluations and excludes evaluations of UNV and UNCDF. About 5% of the evaluations included are listed as “UNDAF and other programmatic evaluations”. During its missions, the Review Team was informed that several COs and RSCs have sent joint evaluations commissioned by external parties (such as the European Union) to IEO for inclusion, only to be told that they are not eligible. This they found inappropriate, since such evaluations are often well funded and provide high quality information about UNDP’s work, which they feel should be included in the database. The fourth, and by far the most important, is that the assurance of the independence and impartiality of the decentralised evaluations that form a major part of the content of the knowledge base needs to be radically improved, before it can be treated as an appropriate and reliable system for any management purposes.

Review missions to country and regional offices explored the perceptions of the utility of decentralised evaluations at these levels. Stakeholders mainly discussed this issue openly and gave some clear messages. Although it is not possible to quantify the proportions holding specific views, the broad range of stakeholders contacted suggests that the messages are an accurate reflection of how these levels of the system view the utility of the decentralised evaluations as currently conducted. The most prominent perspectives from the Review missions include:

- Project final evaluations often assess activities, which are not going to be repeated or extended. In such cases, the evaluations are rarely useful to COs, since any lessons are usually too specific to have broad applicability. Country offices place more value on the (relatively rare) Mid Term Evaluations, since these present actionable findings that can help improve implementation.
- According to interviews conducted in HQ, RSCs and COs, final evaluations are often undertaken when mandatory under funding agreements, or for flagship activities funded from UNDP resources. In many cases, according to respondents, they are regarded simply as an obligation (“for headquarters”) to be met, with limited commitment of time and resources by the CO, since these can be more productively used on other tasks.
- Outcome evaluations have proved very difficult to implement effectively. On the one hand, UNDP is often one player among many (including government) contributing towards intended outcomes and it has proved difficult to convincingly measure its contribution. On the other, many UNDP activities have moved “upstream,” for example into policy advice, and the pathways towards specific outcomes may be long and complex.
- UNDAF evaluations have raised major practical difficulties. Officers engaged with them have noted that even such basics as definitions and intended results chains are rarely common across the numerous bodies that participate, causing evaluations to flounder from an early stage.
- According to respondents in some Country Offices and written submissions from some resident representatives, such offices often perceive themselves to be under severe pressure to generate funds for

⁶⁹ “Second Review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy, “Draft Final Report” sections, and respective Factual Corrections”, P8.

future programmes. This process is largely built on a positive projection of the role and contribution towards results of UNDP, which is often not based on a comprehensive analysis or presentation of data. Where evaluation results can support this effort, they may be welcomed and used. Indeed, this was often cited as the main benefit of conducting them. But where their findings might lead to mixed or unclear messages, they are not seen as useful.

- Respondents in Regional Bureaux (whether in HQ or Service Centres) informed the Review Team that they have no mandate to adopt a “policing” role with regard to how COs handle decentralised evaluation. Rather, their mandate and interest is to provide advice and assistance on request, to manage regional programme evaluation plans and conduct decentralised evaluations of the Regional Programme only
- In some cases, staff in Regional Bureaux and Service Centres stated an awareness of certain “issues” with particular COs, but saw it as outside of their mandate to intervene in these.

Overall, it is clear that some Country Offices (particularly at management level) have decidedly limited enthusiasm for decentralised evaluations as currently implemented and generally do not find them useful for their own purposes; whether for managing or for generating new funding partnerships.

A final issue is that Table 5.5 has shown that 52% of UNDP evaluations and 58% of UNDP-GEF evaluation in the ERC database⁷⁰ have an estimated budget of up to \$20,000. These would be regarded in most international agencies as very small evaluations. It can therefore be asked whether it is useful to collate such a high proportion of data from so many small studies. The review suggests that it would be better for UNDP to do less of these very small evaluations and rather allocate its scarce resources to fewer and better-resourced evaluations of key interventions and of joint programmes and projects, which are likely to play an increasing role in future UNDP work.

5.6.9. Partnerships in Evaluation

UNDP develops partnerships in evaluation with government entities in different manners and depth depending on the country and region. The most common link comes through specific evaluations, in which government representatives often play an important role as information sources for the evaluators. In some cases, responsibility for the overall evaluation process is also shared (to varying degrees) with government representatives:

- ToRs might be shared with them for comments,
- The selection of external evaluators may be conducted in consultation with them and
- They may be asked to comment on draft evaluation reports (usually through membership of reference groups).

Government officers⁷¹ contacted informed the Mission that they feel that their engagement has improved the specific initiatives concerned. Furthermore, the overall message emerging from these interviews is that the relevant Government Departments are generally satisfied with their involvement in the UNDP evaluation exercises⁷². Some respondents noted that their Government’s own *internal* evaluation systems are mainly

⁷⁰ The database does not have data on the confirmed budget of all evaluations as implemented.

⁷¹ 17 Government officials were interviewed.

⁷² The Review had resources for only a limited set of country missions (out of the total of 137 Country Offices) and in these missions, it primarily focused on UNDP offices, in keeping with its Terms of Reference. Unlike with other aspects of its assessment, the Review did not find sufficient detailed documentary sources on country level partnerships to adequately triangulate its findings from interviews. It therefore regards its observations on partnerships as preliminary and suggests that, in fact, national partnerships would be a suitable and important topic for a future full evaluation by IEO.

oriented towards finance/audit and management performance approaches so that UNDP's evaluation processes have not been internalized. However, other countries are further ahead in institutionalising evaluation.

UNDP evaluations are seen as ways to keep the country informed on projects' results. Governments appreciate this because it represents UNDP's transparency, an important element of the institution's overall approach. However, the government representatives interviewed did not see themselves as co-managers of the evaluations and did not express a high degree of ownership.

To some degree, middle income countries contacted showed stronger interest in engagement in the evaluation process. Since such countries may be developing their own policies and practices with regard to evaluation, ensuring that UNDP's approaches are aligned with these becomes important. In such countries, much of the UNDP budget may come from the government itself, which provides a major incentive for the UNDP COs to increasingly integrate them into their processes, as well as to ensure that UNDP evaluation activities are coherent with those of Government. Joint evaluation also becomes a strong option.

The government representatives contacted emphasised that UNDP should not just conduct evaluations to comply with its policies, but should focus on learning from past project implementation experience to improve future planning and delivery of its support. In this respect, they suggested more widespread and accessible dissemination of evaluation findings, lessons learned and recommendations, particularly to all stakeholders involved with UNDP programmes.

Government representatives rarely stated that their staff has received any formal capacity development support in evaluation from either the UNDP COs or the IEO. Some respondents said that they were not aware that UNDP intends to provide evaluation support to its partners. The UNDP's engagement with the government entities in terms of evaluation was sometimes described as "ad-hoc" and not continuous. For now, the respondents reported limited results from any efforts the COs have made to disseminate an evaluation culture among government bodies. Some depicted efforts to build evaluation capacity mainly in terms of "learning by doing". In this area, some respondents from government entities mentioned that mid-term evaluations are more useful to them than are terminal evaluations, because from this involvement they learn directly from the recommendations how best to re-orient continuing projects. This has helped them understand the value added from evaluation. However, implementation of recommendations or UNDP Management Responses is often complicated by national political dimensions, particularly since a new Government may not feel ownership of any measures supported by its predecessors.

5.7. Gender Equality in Decentralised Evaluations

The meta-evaluation grid used by the Review team to assess the sample of evaluations included the criterion of crosscutting issues of gender and the environment. This was an area of some weakness: evaluations which scored particularly well on either gender or the environment, tended to be those that specifically targeted these themes. The IEO Quality Assurance system contains useful information on the coverage of gender. One of its criteria is "Coverage of Mainstreaming of UNDP's Principles," which asks the question "Does the report discuss how Gender Equity⁷³ is addressed in the project or programme?" In answer to this question, the ratings on 404 decentralised evaluations show that 65% were satisfactory and 35 % Unsatisfactory. (The precise report ratings were distributed

⁷³ The closely-related, but not identical, concepts of gender equity and gender equality are both used in documents of UNEG and UNDP. This report follows the terminology used in each specific system or report.

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as follows: 18 Highly Satisfactory, 184 Satisfactory, 62 Moderately Satisfactory, 44 Moderately Unsatisfactory, 40 Unsatisfactory, 36 Highly Unsatisfactory and 20 not addressed). Building on suggestions of respondents, particularly in Country Offices, the review suggests that a major contributory factor to unsatisfactory evaluation performance is that the “yellow handbook” on planning, monitoring and evaluation, which was issued in 2009, is already out-dated and does not address these aspects in sufficient detail. Indications from field interviews suggest that, in guiding decentralised evaluations, CO staff follow this handbook very closely, so that any deficiencies it has will be carried over into evaluations, especially through the preparation of the TORs. CO teams reported that both the ROAR and the Atlas system provided more systematic information on gender in UNDP activities than does the decentralised evaluation system.

6. FINDINGS ON EVALUATION IN THE ASSOCIATED FUNDS

6.1. Introduction

The Policy describes IEO as “the custodian of the evaluation function” for independent evaluations in UNDP. It also states: “Evaluation units of the associated funds and programmes are the custodians of the evaluation function in their organizations.” This indicates that the roles of the different evaluation entities are parallel in some respects. However, whereas IEO “Conducts independent evaluations in line with best international evaluation standards” the evaluation units simply “manage and conduct evaluations.” The evaluation units also “quality assure mandatory evaluations outsourced or managed by programme staff”. With regard to decentralised evaluations, they therefore have a stronger role than the IEO, which only “assesses the quality of evaluation reports,” which are quality assured by UNDP management.

There are therefore some variations in the roles and responsibilities of the two evaluation units when compared with IEO and it is not clear why this would be so. Is it, for example, the intention of the Policy that evaluations by the associated funds should be at a lesser standard than those of the IEO? Why, with regard to decentralised evaluations, do the evaluation units provide quality assurance, when this is defined as a management (not evaluation) function in UNDP?

How these aspects play out in the work of the evaluation units is explored in the following sections.

6.2. Evaluation in UNV

6.2.1. Introduction

UNV has a very specific operational approach. Only about 4% of the value of its activities is led by UNV itself (from the Special Voluntary Fund). All of the rest is expended through partnerships (with 27 UN agencies) in which its approximately 6,300⁷⁴ volunteers contribute towards the objectives of “host” agencies. In terms of assignments, UNDPKO (Department for Peacekeeping Operations)/DFS (Department of Field Support) is the largest partner, followed by UNDP and UNHCR. In terms of funding expenditure on UN Volunteers, UNDPKO/DFS provides 65%⁷⁵, UNHCR 16% and UNDP 12%, with a range of much smaller inputs from other bodies.

6.2.2. Roles and Responsibilities

Evaluation Policy and the UNV Evaluation Unit

74 In 2013

75 According to UN Volunteers: Statistical and Financial Information for 2012

The UNDP Evaluation Policy overall applies to UNV⁷⁶. Section VI of the Policy deals specifically with the roles and responsibilities of the evaluation units of associated funds and programmes, and assigns the following to the UNV Evaluation Unit, acting as custodian of the evaluation function:

- Review and revise Evaluation Policy
- Submit to their own management a biennial evaluation plan
- Support the elaboration of well-defined results frameworks
- Coordinate development of annual agenda of evaluations
- Manage and conduct evaluations
- Evaluate jointly as possible
- Quality assure mandatory evaluations outsourced or managed by programme staff
- Ensure that evaluations are publicly assessable
- Ensure dissemination of evaluation findings and lessons
- Track management response and follow up
- Alert senior management to important issues raised by evaluation
- Provide input to the Annual Report on Evaluation
- Contribute to development of evaluation capacity
- Ensure consistency with UN policy and reforms
- Contribute to improving UN evaluation including through participation in UNEG.

Within these overall responsibilities, the following evaluations are mandatory:

- One thematic or strategic assessment per year
- Mid-term or final evaluations of Special Voluntary Fund activities
- Project evaluations required by partnership protocols
- Participation in joint evaluations where design requires this.

6.2.3. Compliance and Accountability

The UNV Evaluation Unit has to submit an evaluation plan to its own management. As shown above, there are also a number of mandatory evaluations. The Policy does not relate these evaluations to the role played by IEO or discuss whether any of them can be considered as covered under the heading Independent Evaluations. By analogy with the requirements for “independence” of UNDP evaluations, this Review regards evaluations directly commissioned and managed by the Evaluation Unit as independent (i.e. thematic and strategic assessment and some joint evaluations), while project evaluations (and possibly Special Voluntary Fund evaluations) are seen as decentralised.

In 2013, as reported in the ARE, the UNV Evaluation Unit managed or supported the following evaluations:

- Summative and Forward – Looking Evaluation of the Marking of the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers
- 12 decentralised evaluations (mostly joint) funded from project or programme resources.

It therefore appears to have complied with its mandatory requirements. The Unit also participated in development of the first UNV Strategic Framework and helped track Management Responses (MRs).

⁷⁶ Paragraph 1.

An issue arises in terms of the accountability of the UNV Evaluation system. UNV evaluations (both centralized and decentralised) are submitted to the ERC and their management responses are recorded in this system. However, they are not subjected to the IEO Quality Assessment system⁷⁷, since this is defined as a responsibility of the UNV Unit. Although the ARE includes a summary section on the evaluation activities and products of UNV, this includes no information on the comparability of evaluation standards across the agencies covered by the Policy. The Review regards this as a weakness, since the Board does not have oversight of the quality and credibility of all of the evaluation work covered by the Policy for which it is responsible. It is also a challenge for the ARE, since it includes sections on the work of the associated agencies, which have not been subjected to the same verification or assessment processes as are required of UNDP evaluation activities.

6.2.4. Capacity and Resources

In 2013, the Evaluation Unit had two full-time and one part-time staff members: the Chief of Unit, an Evaluation Specialist and a part-time Administrative Assistant. Its operational budget was \$407,500, which was an increase of 49% over the previous year, much of which was accounted for by a specific allocation for a major Summative Evaluation⁷⁸. However, over this period and into 2014 the staffing positions have gradually been vacated, so that the Unit was effectively “phased out” by June 2014, retaining just one (P3) M&E position in its new Results Management Support Section. This means that the references to an Evaluation Unit in the Policy are now an anomaly.

The appropriate status of evaluation in UNV and the resources, which might be required to support an adequate function, have been regarded as problematic within the organisation for some years. On the one hand, it is understood that UNV has similar responsibilities to those of larger UN agencies in terms of the need for reporting on results. On the other, its managers have not regarded a full-scale unit as affordable. This concerns both the number of potential staff and their seniority. With the probable maximum seniority of a Unit Head as P4 grade, it has been regarded as difficult to establish sufficient independence, when reporting findings to the Executive Coordinator of UNV.

In 2009, an evaluation was conducted of the Facility for Evaluation (the support mechanism for the function in UNV). This recommended strengthening the Unit from its complement of two staff to a level of 2 P4s and 1 P3. This did not find favour with management and was not adopted because:

- Given the budget pressures throughout the organisation, the cost was regarded as too high and it was not felt appropriate to make an exception for evaluation
- It was not felt that the seniority of staff would be sufficient to manage the consultants necessary for major evaluations
- The relatively junior staff would have insufficient status to ensure that management accepted findings and recommendations.

The Unit continued to function as a modest entity, but staff contracts have expired and UNV has not decided how to proceed. Several options have been considered, including:

- Keeping it at the level at which it has been operating

⁷⁷ There is a discrepancy in the Policy between UNDP decentralised evaluations, which are “quality assessed” by IEO and UNV outsourced (decentralised) evaluations, which are “quality assured” by its Evaluation Unit. Whilst the latter process implies the possibility of requiring improvements in reports to meet certain standards, the “assessment” process does not.

⁷⁸ “Evaluation of the Marking of the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers”, 2013

- Retaining one evaluator to manage outsourced evaluations and commissioning major evaluations through its Volunteer Knowledge and Innovation Section (or the EC's Office)
- A new form of arrangement whereby IEO plays a major role in UNV evaluation, possibly through a staff member located in its office, with some level of supporting funding from UNV for the incremental costs; probably with one P4 remaining in-house at UNV for outsourced evaluations. Discussions concerning this possibility have made limited progress and there is nothing to suggest that such collaboration has been high on IEO's priorities.

6.2.5. Independence and Impartiality

Several 'independent evaluations' have been commissioned in recent years; including the Evaluation of the International Year of Volunteers +10, the Evaluation of UNV'S Contribution to National Volunteer Infrastructures and the Joint Evaluation of DPKO/UNV. These have been substantial evaluations (\$80,000 plus), which have been managed by the Evaluation Unit on behalf of UNV. An examination of the reports suggests that they have been conducted with an appropriate degree of impartiality and independence.

The decentralised evaluations managed through the Evaluation Unit have mostly been small-scale and UNV is usually a minor partner in them, with the lead agency for the relevant interventions controlling the assignments. This being so, UNV itself often has little information on how they were conducted so that their independence and impartiality are largely unknown.

6.2.6. Credibility

The independent evaluations commissioned have been conducted by reputable consultants and have mainly produced credible final reports⁷⁹. It can be noted, however, that in the case of the evaluation of Volunteer Infrastructures, the consultants themselves noted difficulties in forming definite conclusions in the absence of adequate field-level data in the management reporting system.

The many joint activities have presented a major challenge to UNV evaluation work to date. Since the organisation is often a minor partner in any collaboration, its specific contribution is usually largely ignored. When evaluations are conducted of the broader activities, UNV is sometimes not even informed and its contribution towards results is not adequately assessed. Management therefore feels vulnerable to criticism that UNV has little hard evidence of its effectiveness and that it is over-reliant on anecdotes.

Since UNV provides some 2000 volunteers to UNDP, it feels that it would be appropriate for their contribution to be evaluated, but this has not occurred. Further, UNV collaborates with 5 Global Programmes and 120 country programmes. It feels that IEO may be able to help influence UNV's partners to include the volunteer contribution in their evaluations. This will be particularly important if the Executive Board increases its focus on impacts.

Since the IEO Quality Assessment System does not assess the decentralised evaluations in which UNV participates or which it conducts, there is no coherent information available to the Review (or the Board) to assess their credibility. Although in principle the UNV Evaluation Unit performs quality assurance on them, no summary is made available in the ARE to enable comparison with UNDP evaluations. Further, the Unit has generally not received strong support from portfolio managers, who often do not respond to requests for information on upcoming evaluations, so that these can be entered in the plan.

⁷⁹ The Review independently rated 4 UNV evaluations: 3 were rated 5 (satisfactory) and 1 scored 2 (unsatisfactory)

In summary, in the light both of the limited evaluation coverage of UNV's contribution and of the largely unknown quality of its evaluations, it would appear that the Policy has not led to a situation in which the Executive Board could claim adequate knowledge of the results to which UNV contributes.

6.2.7. Utility

An important way of tracking whether evaluations have proved useful concerns the extent to which they have stimulated change. This is in principle accessible through following up on Management Responses and on whether these are actually implemented. According to tracking coordinated by the UNV Evaluation Unit, 29 out of the 38 UNV evaluations in the system have received a Management Response, representing about 75%. This is somewhat less than for UNDP decentralised evaluations (89%). As reported in the UNV Strategic Framework 2014 – 2017, Integrated Results and Resources Matrix, the implementation rate of the Responses was 38% in 2013. The Framework sets a target of 100% implementation by its completion. The independent evaluations are used by management and are circulated through summary newsletters called "evaluation in action", which adequately address both the strengths and challenges that have been identified. However, since almost all of the evaluations are of joint programmes, with UNV in a supporting role, even good evaluations with recommendations for strengthening the contribution of volunteers have often been ignored by the host organisation.

UNV would face some difficulties in responding to any increase in the number of evaluations, since its Volunteer Knowledge and Innovation Section, which might be asked to coordinate this, has only three members. It is possible that imminent reforms may lead to a strengthened Results Management Support Unit, which could incorporate part of the role of the previous evaluation unit. However, resources to deal with evaluation results will probably still be scarce, which highlights the need to focus on key policy-oriented evaluations of high quality. UNV does not feel that it currently has the right evaluation function to deliver on this need; which is true, since the human resources of the function have steadily reduced and consisted of only one person at the time of the Review mission.

6.2.8. Partnership in Evaluation

UNV evaluations are mostly conducted in partnership with other UN agencies. Often, it is the junior partner and has a relatively low level of engagement. Furthermore, it has limited resources to expend on evaluation and therefore feels that it should develop a partnership relationship with IEO, which would help raise the technical standards of its independent evaluations and enable it to benefit from the greater networks and influence of IEO in UNDP and broader UN evaluation circles. Against this, some UNV managers feel that IEO lacks an understanding of the way UNV works, which might reduce the scope for it to play a constructive role in taking evaluation forward⁸⁰. However, UNV can be considered as a highly developed example of an agency, which conducts almost all of its work jointly with other agencies. Since this is increasingly the model for UNDP (and more broadly UN) activities, IEO will have to focus more strongly on this aspect in future, which will place UNV more in the mainstream of emerging UNDP evaluation approaches.

⁸⁰ It could also be noted that there are currently no IEO staff resources specifically available to work with the associated funds and programmes.

6.3. Evaluation in UNCDF

6.3.1. Introduction

UNCDF provides investment capital and technical support to the public and private sector to assist developing countries to strengthen their economies. It is mandated to focus in particular on Least Developed Countries and currently supports 37 out of 49 of these, as well as regional and global programmes. UNCDF receives about \$16m per annum as its core contribution, which covers operating costs and some pilot programmes. Non-core funding is about \$65m pa, with an overall portfolio of about \$400 to \$450m at any time. It has two main programme areas: inclusive finance and local development finance. Within these areas, most activities are conducted jointly with UNDP. UNCDF has about 40 staff in HQ and 120 in the field. The field personnel are technical specialists, who are embedded in UNDP Country Offices. It has three Regional offices, located in Bangkok, Dakar and Addis Ababa.

6.3.2. Roles and Responsibilities

Evaluation Policy

The UNDP Evaluation Policy overall applies to UNCDF⁸¹. It also contains a specific section (VI), which covers UNCDF (and UNV) in further detail.

Independent Evaluation Office

In addition to its over-arching responsibilities, the Policy specifically requires the IEO to:

- Report annually to the Executive Board on the “function, compliance, coverage, quality, findings and follow up to evaluations conducted by ... associated funds and programmes.” This requirement is listed under “Independent Evaluations” and would therefore appear to apply to evaluations conducted by the Evaluation Unit of UNCDF.
- Develop an annual programme of work for independent evaluations, in consultation with associated funds and programmes (including UNCDF).

UNCDF Evaluation Unit

Section VI of the Policy deals specifically with the roles and responsibilities of the evaluation units of associated funds and programmes, and assigns the following to the UNCDF Evaluation Unit, acting as custodian of the evaluation function:

- Review and revise Evaluation Policy
- Submit to their own management a biennial evaluation plan
- Support the elaboration of well-defined results frameworks
- Coordinate development of annual agenda of evaluations
- Manage and conduct evaluations
- Evaluate jointly as possible
- Quality assure mandatory evaluations outsourced or managed by programme staff

⁸¹ Paragraph 1.

- Ensure that evaluations are publicly assessable
- Ensure dissemination of evaluation findings and lessons
- Track management response and follow up
- Alert senior management to important issues raised by evaluation
- Provide input to the Annual Report on Evaluation
- Contribute to development of evaluation capacity
- Ensure consistency with UN policy and reforms
- Contribute to improving UN evaluation including through participation in UNEG.

Within these overall responsibilities, the following evaluations are mandatory:

- One thematic or strategic assessment per year
- Mid-term or final evaluations of selected projects in critical areas of relevance to the two UNCDF practice areas of local development and inclusive finance
- Project evaluations required by partnership protocols
- Participation in evaluations of joint programmes as required by approved joint programme documents.

6.3.3. Compliance and Accountability

The UNCDF Evaluation Unit has to submit an evaluation plan to its own management. As shown above, there are also a number of mandatory evaluations. The Policy does not relate these evaluations to the role played by IEO or discuss whether any of them can be considered as covered under the heading Independent Evaluations. By analogy with the requirements for “independence” of UNDP evaluations, this Review initially regards evaluations directly commissioned and managed by the Evaluation Unit as independent. This is because the Policy describes IEO and the evaluation Units of associated agencies as “custodians of the evaluation function,” so that evaluations directly managed by them should have the same status in the system. In the case of UNCDF, this classification appears to cover all of the evaluations conducted, since the Unit’s staff work on its two main programmatic areas and directly manages all evaluations conducted on behalf of UNCDF. It therefore appears that there are no freestanding “decentralised” projects to evaluate.

In 2013, as reported in the ARE, the UNCDF Evaluation Unit managed or supported the following evaluations:

- A mid-term evaluation of the Youth Start Programme
- A final evaluation of the Gender Equitable Local Development Programme (joint programme with UN Women)
- Final evaluation of a decentralization and local development programme (pilot).

Comparing this set with the mandatory evaluations, it does not seem that UNCDF has complied in 2013, since there does not appear to be anything, which could be classified as “strategic” or “thematic;” which is in fact the only requirement that needs to be met every year. However, it did conduct a strategic evaluation in 2012 (inclusive finance).

In addition to its work in managing evaluations, the Unit spent much of its time supporting programme staff to integrate evaluation into programme design and oversight, as well as in activities related to the Strategic Framework 2014-2017. Other contributions included methodological work to strengthen results measurement and lesson learning. Unlike in the other associated programme, UNV, the Unit is not engaged in assistance or quality assurance for decentralised evaluations, since there are none. A previous policy that required all projects

to be evaluated has been modified, as it did not make sense for small pilot projects. All UNCDF evaluation work is therefore directly managed by its evaluation Unit.

An issue therefore arises in terms of the accountability of the UNCDF Evaluation system. UNCDF evaluations are submitted to the ERC. However, they are not subjected to the IEO Quality Assessment system, since they are in one sense, independent evaluations. However, they are also not “signed off” by the IEO Director, so there is no routine verification of their quality within the system⁸². The Review therefore describes them as “self-verified” by the Head of Unit (at P4 level). The Review regards this as a structural weakness, since it means that the Board does not have comparable oversight of the quality and credibility of all of the evaluation work covered by the Policy for which it is responsible. It is also a challenge for the ARE, since this includes sections on the work of the associated agencies, which have not been subjected to the same verification or assessment processes as are required of UNDP evaluation activities.

Management responses to evaluations delivered by the Evaluation Unit can be tracked on the Evaluation Resource Centre, whilst the evaluations themselves are published on the UNCDF website. However, there was no analysis of compliance or progress with regard to actions listed in management responses in the ARE 2013. UNCDF has informed the Review that this information was not requested for the ARE 2013 and that it can be supplied in future.

6.3.4. Capacity and Resources

In 2013, the Evaluation budget was \$547,944, from core and non-core resources. This covered the cost of the Evaluation Unit and of the three evaluations listed above. The Unit had a Head of Evaluation and one Evaluation Officer; supported by two part-time M&E Officers (at HQ and in the West Africa Regional Office). As noted in the ARE (P37), limitations of core funding proved a challenge to the work of the Unit and contributed towards a shift “from mandatory evaluation criteria to a looser requirement”. It is planned to recruit one new M&E officer in each Regional Office to assist with anticipated increased evaluation activity in 2014 and 2015.

6.3.5. Independence and Impartiality

The head of Unit reports directly to the Executive Secretary of UNCDF. In such a small organization, it is difficult to talk of structural independence. In recognition of this, the Unit is embedded within the management structure and participates fully in key decision-making processes and in raising the understanding and acceptability of evaluation throughout the organization. This makes it inherently stronger in the lesson-learning stream of evaluation than in independent accountability. The independence element is therefore mainly formalised in the recruitment of external consultants with no conflict of interests and in ToR and briefings, which emphasise the importance of independent processes and judgements. The same approach also aims to ensure that evaluations are not conducted in a biased manner.

Given the small size of UNCDF headquarters staff and its flat structure, it is not possible to envisage a truly independent evaluation function within the organisation. Although the Review initially considered the UNCDF evaluations as “independent,” its research has found that the evaluation unit is actually nearer to managing a set of decentralised evaluations, since the onus of independence is placed on the consultants recruited⁸³. Although the Review found the evaluations recently conducted to reflect impartial assessment, the challenge with the

⁸² Although this task is undertaken by periodic external reviews.

⁸³ The Evaluation Unit is actively engaged in overall management of the evaluations and provides quality control, and therefore offers some support to their independence.

current system is that it is heavily dependent on the personalities involved. Independence and impartiality could come and go with staff changes, outside of the information available to the Board, thereby reducing its capacity to effectively direct the associated body.

6.3.6. Credibility

Since the evaluations conducted by the UNCDF are not formally decentralised, they are not subject to the UNDP Quality Assessment System. There is therefore no coherent overview information available to the Review (or the Board) to assess their credibility. The Review team assessed some 2012/2013 evaluations and found them to be credible and of appropriate quality⁸⁴. They covered both the achievements and challenges of the activities covered in detail and based their conclusions on detailed findings. They also noted limitations in terms of availability of data, short time in country and other factors.

6.3.7. Utility

In view of the embedded nature of the evaluation Unit, the function as a whole has become an integral part of the management and planning system. Evaluation findings are incorporated into the Strategic Framework 2014-2017 document, drawing upon both reported successes and challenges encountered. Innovations such as a focus on evaluability assessment and a system of theory-based evaluation (SPIRE) have made evaluation an important component of UNCDF's efforts to develop "cutting-edge" approaches. It is therefore concluded that evaluation is useful and used by UNCDF as part of an explicit effort to develop an "evaluation culture within UNCDF, via targeted support at different stages in the project cycle⁸⁵".

6.3.8. Partnerships in Evaluation

UNCDF evaluations in the Review period do not feature evaluation partnerships. Indeed, given the small size of the Unit it would be unrealistic to expect a major portfolio of partnership-based evaluation work. Partnership approaches have been more evident in the areas of intersection between evaluation and results-based management, notably through its piloting of the Donor Committee on Enterprise Development's Standard on Measuring Results in Private Sector Development. The UNCDF Evaluation Unit also informed the Review that it is taking an increasingly active role in supporting UNDP decentralised evaluations where UNCDF activities are included in the analysis and where UNCDF is invited to sit on Evaluation Reference Groups. This role includes broad methodological support to evaluation processes where that is requested and technical inputs where necessary. While this has not been formalised as joint evaluation, it can be seen as a pragmatic move towards this.

⁸⁴ The Review assessed four evaluations conducted within its period and found that all scored 5 (satisfactory)

⁸⁵ Evaluation Policy and Practice in UNCDF, Section 1b.

7. ACHIEVEMENTS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE EVALUATION POLICY

7.1. Introducing the Theory of Change

A ToC enables us to readily identify progress towards intended long-term effects, whether at outcome or impact level. It identifies what needs to be delivered in order to move along the cause and effect chains, which will ultimately lead to impact. There are many approaches to the use of Theories of Change and debates about what constitutes an acceptable theory and how it should be used. This Review cannot explore these complex issues and has worked with a very simple approach. Figure 7.1 shows diagrammatically the theory, which has been used to explore the extent to which the Policy has moved UNDP towards delivering its intended outcomes, intermediate states and development impact. There are many additional elements that could be added to the theory and its diagram. In particular, it could be placed within the much wider context of the changing world of international development institutions, varying relationships with national governments, joint working (including Delivering as One) and UNDP structural reform. These elements have not been included, because this Review has a very specific focus on assessing whether the Evaluation Policy is delivering as anticipated and/or whether it needs amending in any way(s). If it had the mandate and resources to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the changing role of UNDP in the international development landscape, a more complex theory could well be justified. For the task at hand, the Review team assessed that the simple theory outlined would be sufficient to bring key issues to light and this has proved to be the case.

7.2. Performance of UNDP and Associated Entities with Responsibilities for Implementing Evaluation Policy against the Theory of Change

As shown in Figure 7.1 below, the Policy provides for two main streams of evaluation output, to be delivered by the IEO (Boxes 1 to 4) and UNDP Administration/Management (Boxes 5 to 7). These streams are assumed to be interlinked (Boxes 8 and 9). The deliverables from the two streams should merge to produce an effective evaluation culture, which drives improved institutional delivery and performance (Boxes 10 to 14). The main driving force in the later steps of the process is the active use by decision makers of verified evaluation lessons to improve how UNDP works.

Section 4 of this report assessed the IEO stream, while section 5 examined the UNDP Administration/Management stream (decentralised). Section 6 has presented findings on evaluation in the associated funds (UNV and UNCDF). These funds do not fit the main Theory of Change model for UNDP, but the Review considers that their relationship to the Evaluation Policy can be assessed for the purposes of this exercise without creating separate theories of change. This is because the underlying principles and issues of

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independence, centralized and decentralised evaluations, and the development and use of an evaluation culture are the same; so that conclusions can be readily drawn on progress and measures necessary for improvement.

Table 7.1 provides a detailed rating of progress along the results chain shown in Figure 7.1. This shows that there is minimal movement towards the intended impact of a demonstrably enhanced UNDP contribution to development effectiveness. This is because the main outcome necessary to move towards this impact, namely “increased transparency and accountability of programmes and activities,” has not been delivered. In fact, given the current challenges to the overall evaluation system, even if UNDP were to enhance its overall development effectiveness, it would lack credible information to show that this was the case. The review regards this as a very serious situation, which the Board needs to address urgently through amendments to the Evaluation Policy and careful monitoring of the results of these.

In Section 8, the Review outlines its assessment of the measures, which the Board could take through the Evaluation Policy to address the challenges identified by the findings and analysis of the intended results chain identified in the ToC.

Figure 7.1: Theory of Change

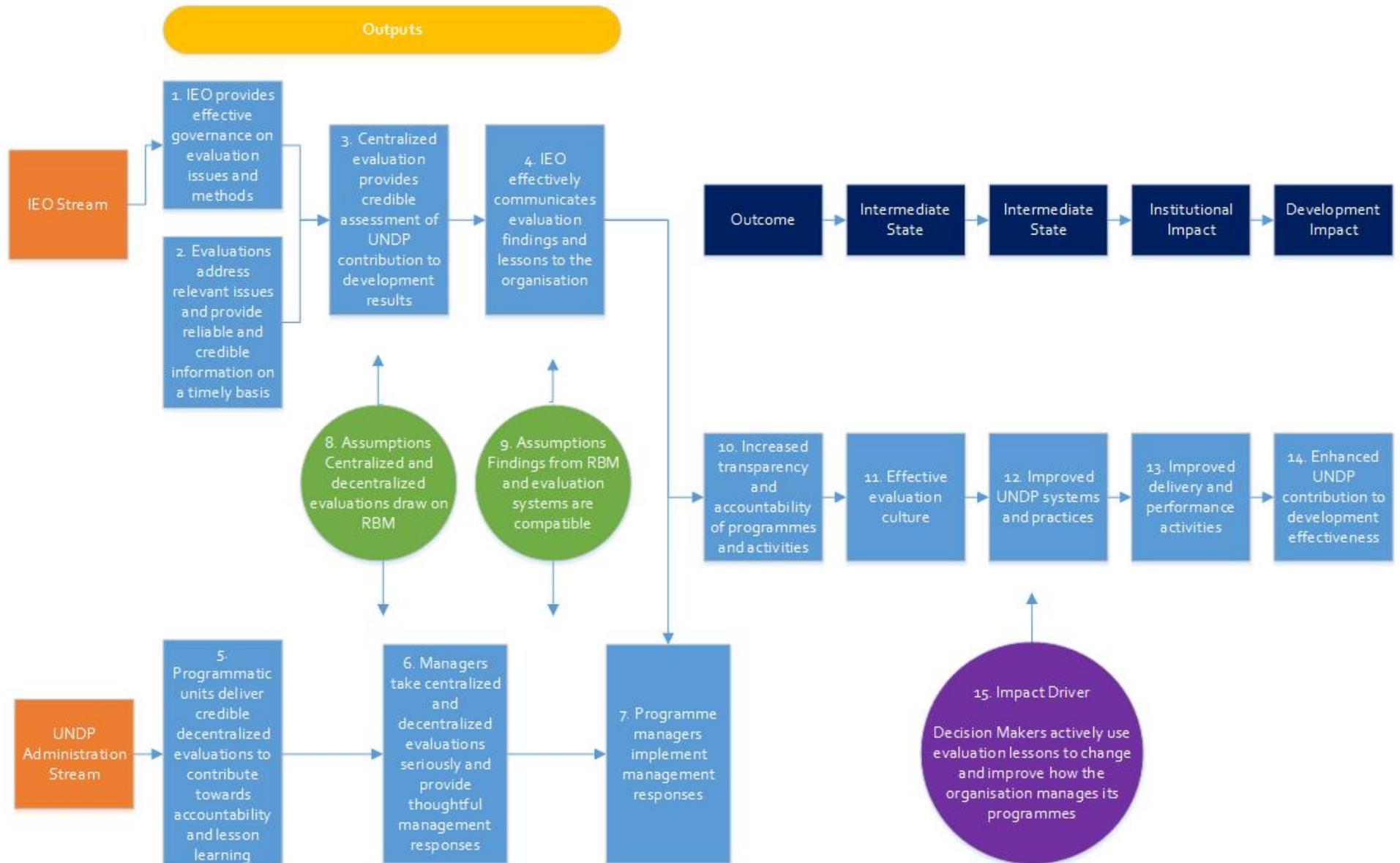


Table 7.2: Rating of Progress Along Causal Pathway of Theory of Change for Evaluation Policy*

Element of Theory (See Figure 7.1 above)	Rating	Analysis (For details, see Sections 4 and 5)
1: IEO provides effective guidance on evaluation issues and methods.	++	Guidance mainly given through handbooks and web-based training and is widely used; but does not meet all needs of staff throughout the organization and is in need of updating.
2: Independent evaluations address relevant issues and provide reliable and credible information on a timely basis.	++	Quality of evaluations generally good, but some problems with timely completion.
3: Centralized evaluation provides credible assessments of UNDP contribution to development results.	++	Quality of evaluations generally good, but some problems with credibility of analysis of UNDP contribution, particularly when drawing on outcome information from Management system.
4: IEO effectively communicates evaluation findings and lessons to the organisation	++	Good quality reports but limited range of dissemination products restricts access to information generated.
5: Programmatic units deliver credible decentralised evaluations to contribute towards accountability and lesson learning	- - -	Over 40% of decentralised evaluation consultants report some form of unacceptable measures by UNDP Managers affecting the independence of their evaluations. Credibility of information in the ERC is thus severely compromised, reducing its value for accountability or lesson learning. There is also uneven quality and a preponderance of low-cost evaluations.
6: Managers take centralized and decentralised evaluations seriously and provide thoughtful management responses.	-	Since many decentralised evaluation reports are compromised, management responses are of widely varying quality and utility. Responses to centralized (independent) evaluations are generally more focussed.
7: Programme managers implement management responses	-	At senior management level, concerted measures are in place to monitor implementation of management responses. However, unreliable quality of decentralised evaluations reduces the effectiveness of this process.
8: Assumption: Centralized and decentralised evaluations draw on RBM system data	++	Despite some issues with availability and quality of data in RBM systems (including ROAR), they are widely used by both centralized and decentralised evaluations.
9: Assumption: Findings from RBM and evaluation systems are compatible and complementary.	+	Findings are broadly compatible, but many decentralised evaluation reports have been amended to present results desired by management (particularly at CO level).
10: Increased transparency and accountability of programmes and activities.	---	Major flaws in decentralised evaluation system have severely reduced transparency and accountability.
11: Effective evaluation culture.	--	Owing to flawed decentralised evaluation system and excessive opposition to a few independent evaluations, there has been limited progress towards an overall evaluation culture.
12: Improved UNDP systems and practices	-	Although senior management has made substantial efforts to develop improved use of evaluation findings, it has been ineffective at ensuring the veracity of the data upon which its analyses are based.
13: Improved delivery and performance of activities	-	There is insufficient impartial evaluation evidence to verify any reported improvements.

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14: Enhanced UNDP contribution to development	-	There is insufficient impartial evaluation evidence to verify any enhanced contribution.
15: Impact Driver: Decision Makers actively use evaluation lessons to change and improve how the organisation manages its programmes.	-	Although there are decision makers who attempt to use lessons to improve programmes, the lack of veracity in the decentralised evaluation system prevents this from occurring throughout UNDP.

Rating key:

+++ Highly satisfactory. ++ Satisfactory. + Moderately satisfactory.

- Moderately unsatisfactory. - - Unsatisfactory. - - - Highly unsatisfactory.

* See associated Figure 7.1: Theory of Change for Core Aspects of UNDP Evaluation Policy

8. MAJOR ISSUES AND OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF UNDP EVALUATION POLICY

8.1. Introduction

As evidenced by the findings and analysis presented in this report, there are several issues that the Board needs to address through a revision of the Evaluation Policy. The review recommends that the revised Policy should provide means through which all of the identified challenges can be overcome. However, these challenges are of different magnitudes and will require various levels of inputs and Board attention. This section therefore devotes most of its attention to issues surrounding decentralised evaluations, which are currently the biggest element preventing UNDP from developing and benefiting from an effective evaluation culture. Unless these issues are overcome, the Board will continue to lack a coherent set of independent and impartial evidence on field level performance upon which to base its decisions.

The Review presents initial (sometimes alternative) approaches to address the issues raised. It recommends that these should be advanced and made specific by detailed discussions among the Board members, and between the Board, UNDP management and IEO.

8.2. Issue One: Overall Reliability of Decentralised Evaluations Severely Compromised

8.2.1 The Challenge

As presented and analysed in Section 5 above, the Policy places the onus for ensuring the quality of decentralised evaluations on the UNDP Administrator and senior management, with a limited “quality assessment” role for the Independent Evaluation Office. This has not worked. The symptoms of this failure are as follows:

- Substantial rate⁸⁶ of interference by management (mainly at CO level) in evaluation reports of “independent” consultants.
- Quality assessment system therefore rates reports of unknown but varying veracity.
- The Evaluation Resource Centre compiles information on and from unreliable reports and is therefore inaccurate.
- Much analysis and reporting in the ERC system on decentralised evaluations is therefore based on inaccurate and unreliable data.

⁸⁶ About 38% of consultants reported some form of unacceptable interference by management.

- Management reporting on decentralised evaluations to EB is based on aggregated data from a seriously flawed database, which is not suitable for helping the Board to provide direction to UNDP.

In order to understand how this situation might best be changed, it is necessary to understand which factors have contributed towards it, either as a cause or as part of the institutional environment that has allowed it to develop. These have been explored in detail in Section 5 and can be summarised as follows:

- Final evaluations often not seen as useful, particularly by Country Offices.
- Few staff dealing with evaluation have any specialised training in the subject.
- High reliance by staff on one Handbook, which is useful, but incomplete and out of date.
- Concept of independence of decentralised evaluations often not understood or supported.
- Evaluations seen as undermining funding efforts.
- Managers believe some consultants are biased against UNDP or do not understand it.
- Often-inadequate resources for quality evaluations.
- Evaluation not a priority for many national counterparts.
- Many managers have not prioritized the development of an evaluation culture (although some have).
- Policy makes UNDP management bodies responsible for quality assurance of decentralised evaluations, but this has not been implemented as intended: there is only quality assessment of reports by IEO.
- No effective mechanism to resolve disputes between consultants and clients.
- Disputes, plus inadequate resources to address ToR, deter many consultants from bidding for UNDP decentralised evaluation work, leading to restricted choice of consultants.

Underlying this array of contributory factors is the perception among staff at various levels that neither “sticks nor carrots” are in place to encourage desired management behaviour towards independent evaluations (or indeed any evaluation). Each Manager can form a personal approach towards evaluation, since performance assessment rarely rewards positive performance on this dimension or penalizes negative aspects. It is usually only the relatively junior “M&E specialists” who are judged on this aspect and they are not sufficiently senior to make a major difference to overall approaches in the office they serve.

8.2.2 Recommended Approach

The Policy should require management to introduce and enforce effective quality assurance systems for decentralised evaluations; with verification by IEO and penalties on units⁸⁷ that do not comply with standards. This should be supported by updated and additional guidelines and an assessment by the Board of the value added to available management information by large numbers of low budget evaluations of variable quality.

Currently, it is the Directors of Regional Bureaux who are responsible for “Ensuring quality and implementation of evaluation (plans and) practices”. However, these bureaux have gradually reduced “M&E” staff posts, which would enable them to fulfil this function, even though it is required of them. Furthermore, documents located by the Independent Review suggest that, under the new UNDP structural review⁸⁸, there could be as few as 2.5 (Full Time

⁸⁷ A way of introducing penalties into the system practiced among some International Finance Institutions is to award “red flags” to management units breaching regulations or standards, which can be accumulated and considered in future performance assessments.

⁸⁸ The Review derived these figures from charts on a UNDP website outlining forthcoming structural reform. However, UNDP management has stated that the figures are incorrect. The Review requested, through IEO, a definitive account of the intended future positions and was informed that the no decision has yet been taken on the final version of the reformed structure. The Review notes that the number of future positions necessary to support an effective decentralised evaluation system will need to increase from the current level. Further the tendency by UNDP management to count “M&E Specialists” as a major resource for

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Equivalent) M&E posts in Regional Headquarters and Service Centres combined, with a total of 0.5 at P5 level and the rest below this. At the same time as evaluation could suffer this severe reduction, a total of 11 new communication posts have been proposed in Regional HQ and Service Centres, including four at P5 level. This suggests that there could be increasing numbers of communicators dispensing decreasing amounts of verified evaluative data.

The approach recommended by this Review would require a complete reversal of this potential direction. In fact, with a total of around 300 decentralised evaluations per annum requiring effective quality assurance by the 5 regions, it can clearly be seen that the level of evaluation expertise in regional bureaux and Service Centres is currently and is likely to remain wholly inadequate. Given that “quality assurance” would need to begin with such issues as quality of ToR and evaluability analysis and follow the process right up to the Final Report, the Review believes that UNDP management could not deliver this with less than 10 (Full Time Equivalent) evaluation advisers⁸⁹ actually in post across the regions. These could be either Regional Staff or jointly-funded by IEO and the regions (assuming additional resources were made available). Matrix management would need to be applied, with prime responsibility to the IEO but with some level of operational management supplied by the region.

If the necessary evaluation advisers were in place, the next step would be independent verification of evaluation reports. Two measures would be necessary here, one of which would require further resources. The first measure would parallel a process adopted by the UNDP-GEF Office for terminal evaluations. It would require that the independent consultants should submit their draft reports simultaneously to the commissioning unit (usually Country Office) and to the regional evaluation adviser. This would enable the adviser to later verify that no surprising changes have occurred between the draft and the final version. If they have, this would trigger follow-up enquiries by the Adviser. The second measure would require a follow-up evaluation mission by (or on behalf of) the IEO to a percentage (the Review suggest 10%) of projects. This would verify the quality of the report by re-assessing the project, including its ratings⁹⁰. Since the projects to be verified would not be notified until after the original decentralised evaluation has been submitted, this would introduce some “teeth” into the assessment process. This could be strengthened by ensuring comparable verification coverage across regions and issuing “red flags” against regional and country offices, which are found to have submitted inappropriately influenced or amended evaluation reports⁹¹.

Since there are around 300 decentralised evaluations per annum, this would require roughly 30 follow-up missions each year. Since these missions are primarily for verification they could be shorter than the original evaluation, but this total would still require additional funding.

In support of these “control” measures, IEO and UNDP need to collaborate to update and/or expand the Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results, particularly in such areas as gender equity,

evaluation should be placed in the context of the low proportion of time that such personnel spend on evaluation, as opposed to monitoring.

⁸⁹ This means that “M&E” Specialists would be counted according to whether they are full or part time in this capacity and on the basis of the fraction of their time devoted to evaluation. This issue has been explored in detail in Section 5.4.1 above.

⁹⁰ This would follow some of the procedures similar to those of the World Bank Project Performance Assessment System. Although the Bank conducts Project Performance Assessment Reports (PPARs) in 20% to 25% of projects previously assessed by an Implementation Completion Report and an Implementation Completion Report Review (Desk Study), this Review proposes that the UNDP process should assess only 10% of projects. This can be justified by the fact that UNDP decentralised evaluations are intended to be conducted by independent consultants, whereas World Bank ICRs are permitted to be conducted by project implementers.

⁹¹ The Office of Audit and Investigations is already able to raise “audit issues” concerning specific offices, which the offices have to address.

creating and maintaining evaluation partnerships, joint evaluation, protecting independence and evaluation ethics for managers. This handbook should be supported with enhanced opportunities for evaluation training, both on-line and in person. IEO should also carefully examine the numerous guidance products developed by UNEG, with a view to preparing and circulating concise applications of their messages for UNDP.

The review feels that, if these measures were all put in place, including with adequate staff with evaluation expertise actually in post (not “positions”), it could enable UNDP over time to develop a credible decentralised evaluation system, which is currently not in place. This would provide both management and the Board with the essential body of verified data on country level performance to effectively perform their respective roles.

8.2.3 Alternative Approaches

Remove decentralised evaluations from Management Information Systems

At the opposite end of the scale in terms of management information and resource requirements is the option of simply removing all decentralised evaluations from reporting to the Board. They would be treated as part of the management process at Country Office (or other entity) level, but not verified or aggregated centrally. Those that are mandatory because of funder requirements might be aggregated by the relevant offices (such as the UNDP-GEF Office) but would not be presented to the Board⁹².

The advantage of this system is that it removes all challenges of quality assurance in terms of presenting information to the Board. The IEO Quality Assessment System would be abolished and the ERC would serve purely as a collection of unverified reports, for access by interested parties. It would not be used for the aggregation or analysis of data or for presentation to the Board. Overall, the approach would present substantial cost savings compared with the current situation, since there would be no quality assurance system. Further, the number of evaluations could be reduced and there would be no need for Evaluation Plans and their monitoring, since commissioning units would simply conduct those evaluations that are mandatory for funders or which they regard as useful. The disadvantage of this approach is that the Board would receive minimal verified information from the field level. Further, UNDP management would not be held accountable for decentralised evaluation standards and would be largely divorced from evaluation processes. Given the demonstrated trend for the reduction of evaluation positions in the UNDP management structure, the Review team considers that this approach would eventually lead to a system in which IEO becomes the only source of demonstrably valid information for the Board.

The Board would therefore guide the organization on the basis of Independent Evaluations and self-reported data from the UNDP RBM system.

Give IEO overall responsibility for the quality of decentralised evaluations

Under this approach, a unit would be established within IEO to provide support and quality assurance for decentralised evaluations. It would assist commissioning units in consultant recruitment, TORs, defining appropriate resources and commenting on draft reports. Responsibilities would therefore be shared between the commissioning unit (usually a Country Office) and IEO, with no role for the Regional Offices. The most effective structure would probably comprise a small IEO unit in New York, with other IEO staff posted in Regional Service Centres, reporting to the Director IEO, in close liaison with regional managers.

The advantage of this approach is that IEO would assume direct responsibility for the quality of decentralised evaluations. In terms of resources, it would require sufficient new posts in IEO to oversee 300 evaluations per

⁹² This approach is adopted in the UN-OCHA Evaluation Policy.

annum. This would be about 2 or 3 posts centrally, with about 7 in the regions. The disadvantage is that it would enable UNDP management, particularly at regional level, to divorce itself from pursuing and using quality evaluation as a source of information.

Require UNDP management to introduce and enforce effective quality assurance systems

The Board would require management to effectively fulfil the role and responsibilities it already has under the Policy. It would be left to management to decide how to do this, presenting its proposal to the Board, including additional human and financial resource needs. Given the poor performance of management in this area to date, it would be necessary for the Board to instigate a system of regular independent reviews of progress to ensure that the desired improvements are actually occurring.

The advantage of this approach is that it would require management to effectively engage with decentralised evaluation. Evaluation positions originally in the management structure, which have been gradually phased out, would have to be re-established and filled. The disadvantage is that the record of management to date in this area is poor, reinforced by the recently announced structural changes, which place an increasing emphasis on communications, while evaluation to the periphery of the organization.

8.3. Issue Two: Unreasonable Disputes over Some Independent Evaluations

8.3.1 The Challenge

The majority of independent evaluations are delivered without major problems. However, several (5 out of 22 ADRs in the last three years) have become embroiled in unreasonable disputes, which have resulted in delays of up to one year in finalization of reports. The Review considers that three of these originated from a Country Office and eventually also involved the relevant Regional Bureau. The symptoms of this issue are:

- Time scales disrupted and delayed
- Evaluations not delivered as planned for management purposes
- IEO resources diverted from other intended work
- Value added from independent evaluations reduced by unwillingness of some managers to encompass external perspective on their work
- Reputational risk, since disputes become public knowledge.

Factors contributing to the challenge are:

- Managers perceive variable quality of independent evaluations, (which could be true)
- Managers believe some consultants are biased against UNDP or do not understand it, (which could be true)
- Evaluations are less positive than management expects and are seen as undermining “communication” strategies
- Varying interpretation of concept of independence of centralized evaluations by stakeholders in different positions
- Presentation of “negative” findings perceived as “disloyalty” by some managers.

The IEO has accepted that it has contributed to this situation and has introduced measures to strengthen its approach. These include a rebalancing of the role of IEO professional staff and consultants, with a stronger emphasis on direct management by IEO of such evaluations. Also, it has introduced procedures to expedite progress, through enforcement of timelines.

8.3.2 Recommended Approach

IEO should be given clear authority to proceed according to the pre-established timetable with all steps in the independent evaluation process, in the absence of timely feedback from management parties. Enduring objections by management to evaluation findings or recommendations should be reserved for inclusion in the Management Response and should not be allowed to delay national workshops or report publication. UNDP units (e.g. Country Offices), which hinder completion of independent evaluations should be penalized through institution of a "red flag" system.

This approach should eliminate lengthy disputes and delays with independent evaluations at no additional cost. The potential disadvantage is that national partners (or other parties affected by thematic or global evaluations) may get conflicting messages, if they receive from IEO reports that have not been accepted by UNDP management. On the other hand, this could become an advantage, since it may place pressure on management to respond on time and constructively, thereby enabling evaluations to be completed on time. This pressure would be reinforced by the application of red flags to managers who are seen to obstruct the system. The Review received ample evidence from its contacts with UNDP staff and managers at different levels that one of the key factors seen to reduce the effectiveness of the evaluation function is that the system lacks penalties against those who behave inappropriately towards it.

8.4. Issue Three: Policy Too Vague on Issues Essential to Operational Independence of the IEO

8.4.1. The Challenge

The Policy is vaguely worded or silent on a number of issues, which could together pose serious challenges to the operational independence of the IEO. The symptoms of this issue include:

- The appointment term of the Director IEO is "up to" 4 years, which allows management the possibility of offering less.
- The duration of a possible renewal is not specified.
- EB does not Chair or even sit on Appointment Committee for Director or Deputy Director, while Management has the majority.
- It is not clear how the Director IEO's performance is assessed, which is necessary for quality assurance and confidence in the position.
- Policy does not specify that Director IEO can submit reports directly to EB as necessary, in the event of serious disputes with management.

Factors contributing to this situation appear to include:

- Assumptions of harmonious relationship between IEO and UNDP management not realized.

- Implications of vague wording not appreciated.
- Importance of credibility of IEO Director through appropriate performance assessment not emphasized.

8.4.2. Recommended Approach

The Review recommends that *the Board should amend the Policy to specify the lead role of the Board in recruitment procedures for the Director of IEO, the duration of the post (subject to performance assessment), renewal processes and duration, and powers of the Director to report directly to the Board as necessary.* The advantage of these measures would be the strengthening of the structural independence of the Office, in keeping with its new title.

8.5. Issue Four: No Assurance of Independent Evaluation by Associated Funds

8.5.1. The Challenge

The Policy describes IEO as “the custodian of the evaluation function” for independent evaluations in UNDP. “Evaluation units of the associated funds and programmes are the custodians of the evaluation function in their organizations.” This indicates that the roles of the different evaluation entities are parallel in some respects. However, whilst the Policy states that IEO “Conducts independent evaluations in line with best international evaluation standards,” the evaluation units simply “manage and conduct evaluations.” The Review believes that, although the evaluation units cannot have the same degree of structural independence as the IEO, because of the small management systems of the institutions, they should still be required to operate in line with “best international evaluation standards.”

Symptoms of this challenge include:

- Owing to small size of associated fund bodies, evaluation units cannot be structurally independent of management
- IEO and associated fund evaluation units are all defined as “custodians of the evaluation function”
- Evaluation units therefore have parallel status to IE. Their independent evaluations are self-verified, but at lower level than for IEO (P4 as against D2)
- Small size of units means that their evaluations are all commissioned from consultants, so that they are effectively managing decentralised evaluations
- Independence and impartiality of evaluations from associated funds (although currently acceptable) is not guaranteed by the Policy.

Factors contributing to the situation include:

- Structural challenges to independence in small organizations not incorporated in Policy
- Levels of evaluation expertise and authority of Head set at lower level for associated funds than for IEO, with no compensating quality assurance
- Inadequate level of collaboration between evaluation units of associated funds and IEO to develop consistent approaches to quality.

8.5.2. Recommended Approach

The Review notes that the evaluation units of the associated funds and programmes have developed in quite different ways and recommends that the Policy should incorporate new and flexible approaches as follows: ***evaluation units should be required to: either submit their independent evaluations to IEO for quality assurance (to ensure comparable "best international evaluation standards"); or to collaborate directly with IEO to manage and report on their independent evaluations. Associated with these measures, it is also recommended that the Policy should require IEO to pay more systematic attention to the contribution of the associated funds and programmes to UNDP results in all of its independent evaluations.***

The Review considers the proposed quality assurance to be appropriate because it is fundamentally the Director level posts of IEO, which enable it to operate at best international evaluation standards; while appointments at this level are unlikely to be viable in the small associated fund units. The alternative is seen as a form of management collaboration on evaluations, which could be formally agreed between a fund and the IEO and subject to periodic review. This collaboration could, for example, include a fund or programme financing a position (full or part-time) in IEO focusing on its evaluation work, or simply commissioning IEO to conduct (or conduct jointly) major evaluations for the fund concerned.

The Review feels that these measures would validate the independence of evaluations from the units and ensure that there is comparability of standards across the evaluation entities covered by the Policy.

8.6. Issue Five: Relevance of Concepts in the Policy Needs Updating

8.6.1. The Challenge

The Policy contains a section on "Definition" (P5/6) that the Review finds problematical. The definitions are mainly derived from the Glossary of Evaluation and Results Based Management (RBM) Terms, OECD (2000). In the light of discussions and debates within the evaluation community over the last decade, some of the definitions do not fully accord with current thinking, while other important topics are not mentioned.

8.6.2. Recommended Approach

The Review recommends that the section in the Policy on definitions is replaced by a more general text, which indicates that the IEO will periodically update and disseminate current evaluation topics and definitions on the basis of best international standards, through operational handbooks and other appropriate means.

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Independent Review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy Terms of Reference (revised 29 November 2013)

Background

The UNDP Executive Board approved the first UNDP evaluation policy during its annual session in 2006. The policy aims to establish a common institutional basis for the UNDP¹ evaluation function and seeks to increase transparency, coherence and efficiency in generating and using evaluative knowledge for organizational learning and managing for results, and to support accountability. At the request of the Executive Board, the Evaluation Office of UNDP commissioned an independent review of the first evaluation policy, which was presented to the Executive Board in 2010 and led to a consequent updating of the evaluation policy approved by the Executive Board in its first session in 2011. The Executive Board further requested the Evaluation Office to commission another review of the evaluation policy to be reported to the Executive Board in 2014.

In UNDP there are two categories of evaluations: (i) independent evaluations conducted by the Evaluation Office; and (ii) decentralised evaluations commissioned by programme units.

The Evaluation Office is an independent evaluation unit headed by a Director who reports directly to the UNDP Executive Board. The Director has a two-fold responsibility: (i) to provide the Executive Board with valid and credible information from evaluations for corporate accountability, decision making and improvement; and (ii) to enhance the independence, credibility and utility of the evaluation function as well as its coherence, harmonization and alignment in support of UN reform and national ownership.

UNDP programme units (UNDP country offices, regional bureaux, policy and practice units²) carry out certain types of decentralised evaluations as outlined in their respective evaluation plans, and ensure that these evaluations provide adequate information about the overall performance of UNDP support in a given context. In UNCDF and UNV the evaluation units report directly to the Executive Secretary and Executive Coordinator, respectively, and also conduct evaluations of their respective operations.

This review will assess the performance of the evaluation function since the approval of the evaluation policy in January/February 2011 and the extent to which the organisation has responded to the requirements of the policy. The review will also help to align the evaluation function with the new 2014-2017 Strategic Plan of UNDP³ (UNCDF and UNV will both produce strategic frameworks, under the UNDP Strategic Plan, to elaborate their results during 2014-17).

¹ It also covers the associated fund and programme, i.e. UNCDF and UNV. In this note, 'organisation' is understood include them.

² Bureau for Development Policy, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy.

³ http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/UNDP_strategic-plan_14-17_v9_web.pdf

Purpose, Scope and Objectives

The evaluation policy requires a periodic review of the evaluation function in order to identify lessons and learn from them. This ToR is for the second such review. The findings and recommendations will be presented to the UNDP Executive Board and UNDP management at an informal meeting in September 2014 with the final report presented during the first regular session of the Executive Board in January 2015. The review report will: inform key stakeholders about the status of the implementation of the policy; identify strengths and weaknesses, including good practices and systemic constraints; and identify areas that may require policy change or management decision to improve the evaluation function.

The review will cover the period from January 2011 to mid-2013, taking into account contextual and organisational changes since the approval of the first evaluation policy in 2006. It will cover all UNDP managed programmatic interventions, irrespective of funding source. The review will assess the progress made so far in implementing the evaluation policy. The organisation will benefit from forward-looking recommendations on measures and adaptations required.

The review will cover both independent evaluations and decentralised evaluations, including the oversight for these evaluations. There will be a specific focus on the decentralised evaluation function given the knowledge gathered in successive Annual Reports on Evaluation, which points to perennial weaknesses in the coverage and quality of decentralised evaluations. The peer review of UNDP's Evaluation Office on methodology and knowledge sharing conducted by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in 2012 also highlighted this need for deeper consideration of decentralised evaluation in the policy review process. For UNCDF and UNV, the review will seek to benchmark current systems and processes for evaluation with other UN agencies of similar size and scope.

Review Questions

In alignment with the normative framework of the evaluation policy, the review will focus on the following three elements of the evaluation policy:

- The overall UNDP evaluation function
- Independent evaluations
- Decentralised evaluations

Within each, the review will ask the following questions:

(a) Evaluation Function

Relevance of the policy: Is the policy clearly understood by key constituents of the organisation? Has it effectively influenced the systems and practices of the organisation in improving the performance of UNDP, as well as UNV and UNCDF? Does the policy meet professionally, recognized international standards for an evaluation policy for multilateral agencies similar to UNDP?

Did the parts of UNDP listed below fulfil their key functions as outlined in the evaluation policy:

- The Executive Board of UNDP as custodian of the evaluation policy (paragraph 18)
- The Evaluation Office of UNDP as custodian of the evaluation as defined in the evaluation policy (paragraph 19)
- The Administrator of UNDP, being accountable for UNDP results
- The senior management of practice and policy bureaux, UNV, UNCDF, regional bureaux and country offices that manage global, regional, country and thematic programmes

What are the areas of strength and weakness? The review should also examine the relationship between the evaluation functions of UNDP and its associated fund and programme.

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Capacity and resources: Are the relevant units—Evaluation Office, practice and policy bureaux, UNV, UNCDF, regional bureaux and country offices—equipped with required specialized and technical expertise to fulfil their evaluation mandates? Are the evaluation-related programmes of work of these units adequately financed to allow the conduct and commissioning of credible and quality evaluations in a timely manner? Are the budget and evaluation plans linked so that it is clear that adequate resources are allocated?

(b) Independent Evaluations by the Evaluation Office

Independence: Did the Executive Board and the Administrator safeguard the independence of the evaluation function and foster an enabling environment for evaluation? Is the Evaluation Office located independently from the other management functions so that it is free from undue influence? Do the Executive Board and Administrator ensure that evaluations are conducted in an impartial and independent manner? Do they ensure that evaluators have the freedom to conduct their work without repercussions for career development? Do evaluators hired by Evaluation Office operate in an independent manner?

Credibility: Do the Evaluation Office evaluations meet the quality criteria as stipulated in the UNEG Norms and Standards? Do Evaluation Office evaluations have meaningful and transparent consultation with stakeholders? Are Evaluation Office evaluations conducted with ethical considerations as expressed in the policy?

Utility: Are Evaluation Office products (programmatic and thematic evaluations) optimal for promoting accountability and learning in the organisation? Are the evaluations designed and completed in a timely manner to enhance utility? Are Evaluation Office evaluations found to be useful for learning, accountability and improvements? Have management responses been prepared in a systematic manner to independent evaluations? Has there been follow up to independent evaluations in a timely and comprehensive manner?

Did the Executive Board use evaluation and reports on compliance with evaluation policy for accountability, and draw on the findings and recommendations of evaluation for oversight and approval of corporate policy, strategy and programmes?

Have the Evaluation Office evaluations followed requirements for effective dissemination and use of evaluations, as required in the evaluation policy (e.g. translation of summaries into the three languages)?

Partnership in evaluation: Has the Evaluation Office effectively engaged in partnership in evaluation by building a network of practitioners, promoting joint and country-led evaluations and engaging in the work of UNEG? Has the Evaluation Office been engaged in partnership to nurture a collaborative relationship with national evaluation institution and associations?

(c) Decentralised Evaluations

Roles and Responsibilities: Did managers of the programme units/UNV/UNCDF fulfil their roles and responsibilities, as outlined in the policy, namely to (i) ensure the evaluability of the programmes; (ii) ensure effective monitoring, (iii); identify priority areas for evaluation; (iv) establish an appropriate institutional arrangement to manage evaluation; (v) ensure adequate resources for evaluation; (vi) safeguard the independence of the evaluation process and product; (vii) ensure the conduct of mandatory evaluations were in line with established quality standards; (viii) promote joint evaluation work with the UN system and other partners; (ix) prepare management responses to all evaluations; (x) draw on evaluation findings to improve the quality of programmes, guide strategic decision making on future programming and positioning, and share knowledge on development experience? What are limitations and challenges? Is there effective oversight for decentralised evaluations?

These roles and responsibilities are further elaborated in sub-questions as shown below:

Compliance/Accountability: Have requirements for evaluation compliance (e.g. conduct of outcome evaluations and mandatory project evaluations) been met by programme units? What are existing challenges in meeting

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compliance? Are there limitations with the current requirements for compliance? Have programme audits consistently looked at evaluation compliance issues?

Capacity and resources: Is there adequate institutional capacity to meet the evaluation policy requirements in the organisation as a whole, specifically at the country and regional level? Are evaluations adequately and realistically financed in the evaluation plans of the programme units? Are evaluations carried out in a cost-effective manner?

Independence/Impartiality: Are decentralised evaluations carried out in a transparent manner, free from bias and potential conflict of interest? Do programme units ensure that evaluators have the freedom to conduct their work without due pressure? Do evaluators hired by the programme units operate in an independent manner?

Credibility: Do decentralised evaluations meet the quality criteria as stipulated in the UNEG Norms and Standards? Do decentralised evaluations have meaningful and transparent consultation with stakeholders? Are decentralised evaluations conducted with ethical considerations, as expressed in the policy?

Utility: Are decentralised evaluations used by the programme units for learning and improvements? Have management responses been prepared in a systematic manner to all evaluations? Has there been follow up to evaluations in a timely and comprehensive manner?

Partnership in evaluation: Have the programme units been engaged in partnership to nurture a collaborative relationship with national evaluation institutions and associations?

The review will identify factors inhibiting the effective implementation of the policy and make recommendations. It will analyse factors related to organisational and staff capacity, incentives for conducting, commissioning and using evaluations at the country office and headquarters levels, the oversight function of central bureaus in ensuring critical evaluation coverage, and issues of evaluation and results culture in the organisation.

Approach and Methodology

The review will utilise the UNEG norms and standards for evaluation in the UN system. The following provides a suggested framework for approach and methodology. Independent reviewers will be requested to further elaborate the approach and methodology as outlined below:

- Formulate theories-of-change that govern the evaluation function as currently practised in UNDP
- Desk Review (documents to be consulted can be found on the UNDP evaluation website.⁴)
- Individual and group interviews (individuals and groups can be identified from the UNDP organizational chart.⁵)
- Survey of UNDP management in headquarters (including UNV and UNCDF), regional service centres and country offices, as well as the Executive Board members and external stakeholders.
- A limited number (6-9) of country offices and regional centres selected on the basis of selection criteria (regional balance, country typology) will be covered in greater depth through case study and field visits.
- The review will involve a limited number of trips to New York and one in Bonn for (i) briefing and debriefing meetings with the Evaluation Office management, UNV, UNCDF and key stakeholders, (ii) interviews with stakeholders and (iii) presentations to the Executive Board in September 2014 and January 2015.

Expected Products

- Inception report (no more than eight pages excluding annexes), detailing the approach and methods to be applied, including the county offices and regional centres to be selected for field visits and case studies, and time frame for the exercise.

⁴ <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/>

⁵ http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/about_us/organisational_chart/

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- Draft and final reports (no more than 30 pages) with annexes. The main report will cover the methodology, main findings, conclusions and actionable recommendations for the Executive Board.
- A summary paper of less than 8,500 words prepared according to Executive Board format.
- One informal consultation with the Executive Board on emerging findings and conclusions.
- Oral presentation to the Executive Board during an informal meeting in September 2014 and the first session in January 2015.

Team Composition and Qualifications

The request for proposals seeks a competent consulting firm, institute or coordinated team of individual consultants to conduct the Evaluation Policy Review.

The review Team Leader will be responsible for leading the review, ensuring that the review will meet required standards and fulfil its information needs. Detailed roles and responsibilities and division of work will be discussed and agreed upon during initial briefing in New York.

The Team Leader should have a demonstrated experience in leading evaluations and/or other evaluative exercises (such as peer reviews) to assess the implementation of an organisational policy in a government institution or a multilateral organisation such as UNDP. The team members should have sound knowledge of evaluation methods and their application in a complex evaluative exercise. Experience in working with UNDP or other UN agencies is an advantage. It is expected that the team will be diverse in terms of geographical and gender representation.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Team Members

The Team Leader will be responsible for the following key tasks (60 days):

- Develop the review design and methodology for conducting the review, based on the actual availability of data and discussions with the Evaluation Office, in line with the UNEG norms and standards
- Lead the stakeholder mapping expertise
- Lead the scoping and main missions to UNDP HQ, UNV HQ in Bonn and field visits
- Oversee the conduct of in-country work, as well as questionnaires and surveys (if relevant), as determined in the inception report
- Lead the drafting of the inception report
- Lead and participate fully in presentation(s) to stakeholders and Executive Board members as well as in selected data collection missions.
- Draft the final report, with support from the Team Specialists
- Lead the debriefing of Evaluation Office, UNDP senior management and Executive Board members, including the preparation of the presentations to Executive Board sessions in September 2014 (informal meeting) and January 2015 (first annual session).

Other team members (Team Specialists) will cover areas, such as organisational behaviour and incentives, institutional and individual capacity. The key tasks for which the Team Specialists will be responsible are as follows (specific functions and number of days to be determined in inception report):

- Support the Team Leader in designing the overall approach and methodology for conducting the review
- Organize and oversee the conduct of field visits and surveys or questionnaires as determined by the Team Leader
- Draft key sections of the report, as designated by the Team Leader, based on the evidence gathered through secondary source material, and from the in-country work, interviews in HQ, etc.
- Provide intellectual and strategic input, and participate fully in the missions to collect, analyse and validate data
- Specific duties within the scope of the evaluation as proposed by the Team Leader.

Implementation Arrangements

The review will be an independent exercise with the Evaluation Office providing administrative and management support. As commissioning office, the Evaluation Office will manage the process for selecting the review team members and advisory panel; make contractual and travel arrangements; support the review team by facilitating interviews, field visits, background documentation; and arrange for the publication and dissemination of the report. An Evaluation Office Task Manager has been appointed to facilitate this process.

Unlike evaluations conducted by the Evaluation Office, staff members of the Evaluation Office will not participate in this exercise as evaluators, in order to allow the team to assess the Evaluation Office performance in an independent manner. Consequently, the review team will be requested to make independent presentations of the review to the Executive Board at an informal meeting in September 2014 as well as to the first annual session in January 2015.

Two members of the Evaluation Office's independent Evaluation Advisory Panel together with an evaluation director from UNEG will form a review-specific advisory panel that will assure the quality of the review by providing guidance to the policy review team on the process and approach/methodology applied.

There will also be an internal reference group consisting of management representatives from UNDP regional and policy bureaux, UNV and UNCDF. The reference group reviewed the ToR and will review the inception report and draft review report. It will ensure that the review team receive needed support for data collection (including field visits) and that factual comments on the final draft report are received from the various parts of UNDP in a timely manner.

Proposed Timeframe

The review will commence around January/February 2014 and the report will be completed in July 2014 for presentation to an informal meeting of the Executive Board in September 2014.

Tentatively, four visits to New York are foreseen for the Team Leader: (i) briefing around end-January/early February 2014 prior to completion of the inception report; (ii) interviews with HQ staff; (iii) oral presentation to an informal meeting of the Executive Board in September 2014; and (iv) oral presentation to the Executive Board in January 2015. A detailed timeline will be discussed and agreed upon during the briefing and the participation of the Team Specialists in the subsequent missions to New York will be established in the Inception Report.

ANNEX 2: LIST OF KEY DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

ERC Extracts

- UNDP. *ERC Outcome Evaluation*. (Excel sheet)
- UNDP. *Project Evaluation – Status of Management Response*. (Excel sheet)

Evaluations

- UNDP, May 2013. Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (2008-2013). 160p.
- UNDP, 2013, 2012, 2011. Independent Evaluation Office, Annual Report on Evaluation.
- UNDP Evaluation Office, December 2010. Evaluation of UNDP Contribution at the Regional Level to Development and Corporate Results. 71 p.
- UNDP Evaluation Office, May 2013. Evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2008–2013. 67 p.
- UNDP, Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (2008-2013)
- UNDP, Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Europe and the CIS (2011-2013) Volume 11-Additional Annexes
- UNDP, Evaluation of the Fourth Global Programme- May 2013
- UNDP, Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Europe and the CIS (2011-2013)
- UNDP, Evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2008–2013
- UNDP, Mid-Term Evaluation Report for the Sustainable Land Management Project St. Vincent and the Grenadines- July 2011
- Evaluation of Results-Based Management In UNDP- December 2007
- Strategic Evaluation of FAO County programme-(with special attention to implementation of the National Medium Term Priority Framework (NMTPF) planning tool)

Evaluation Policy of UNDP

- Executive Board UNDP, 2011, *The evaluation policy of UNDP*. 16 p.
- The Evaluation Policy of UNDP, 15 November 2010
- The Evaluation Policy of UNDP, 2011

Evaluation Policies of International Organizations

- Canadian International Development Agency (2012), *CIDA Evaluation Policy*.
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (2011), Revised IFAD Evaluation Policy.
- UK Department for International Development (2013), *International Development Evaluation Policy*.
- UN Women (2012), *Evaluation policy of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women*
- The World Bank Group (2012), *Revised mandate of the Director General, Independent Evaluation Group, and Independent Evaluation of the World Bank - Terms of Reference*.
- Revised UNFPA Evaluation Policy, 14 June 2013
- Evaluation Policy, UNIDO, 22 May 2006

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- Presentation of UN Women Evaluation Policy Second Regular Session of the Executive Board, 30 November 2012
- UNHCR'S evaluation policy, August 2010
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Evaluation Policy
- UNODC, Evaluation Policy
- IFAD, Evaluation Policy (May 2011)
- UN WOMEN, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (2010-2013)
- United Nations Population Fund, Revised UNFPA Evaluation Policy, 22 APRIL 2013
- IFAD Evaluation Policy (May 2011)
- Presentation of UN Women Evaluation Policy Second Regular Session of the Executive Board, 30 November 2012
- United Nations Environment Programme, Evaluation Policy, September 2009
- Report by the Director-General on the UNESCO Evaluation Policy and Elaborated Elements of the UNESCO Evaluation Strategy, 16 March 2007
- OCHA, Policy Instruction Evaluations, 18 June, 2010

Executive Board

- Executive Board of the UNDP and of the United Nations Population Fund, 15 November 2010
- Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund- 15 November 2010 outcome-level
- Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services, 8 April 2011
- Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services, 19 March 2013

General Information

- UNDG, 16 March 2014. Delivering as One Countries. 1 p.
- UNDP, Memo Angola (+ Annex 1 - 10).

Informal documents

- One Pager on ADR and UNDAF
- Decentralised Evaluation from the Country Office perspective HB January 2014
- UNDP, Background Note for the Evaluation Policy Review Team (14 February 2014)

Monitoring

- Annual report on evaluation in UNDP in 2007
- Annual report on evaluation in UNDP in 2008
- Annual report on evaluation in UNDP 2009
- Annual report on evaluation in UNDP 2010
- Annual report on evaluation in UNDP, 2011
- Annual report on evaluation, 2012
- Report of the Administrator on the Evolution of the Role and Function of the United Nations Volunteers Programme Since its Inception

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Other Reviews of Multilateral Organizations

- United Nations Evaluation Group (2012), *Evaluation Capacity in the UN System*
- OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation (2010), *Evaluation in Development Agencies*, Better Aid, OECD Publishing.
- OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation (2012), *Assessing the Development Effectiveness of Multilateral Organizations: (Revised) Guidance on the Methodological Approach* (<http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluationofdevelopmentprogrammes/dcdndep/evaluatingmultilateraleffectiveness.htm>)
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4. Panama: Red de Oportunidades Empresariales par alas Familias Pobres de Panama, 2013
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6. Ethiopia: Final Evaluation of African Adaptation Programme: Supporting Climate Resilient Sustainable Development, 2013
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8. Kenya: Strengthening the Protected Area Network with the Eastern Montane Forest Hotspots, 2012
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12. Tunisia: Adaptation du littoral aux changements climatique AAP – Evaluation Finale, 2013
13. Indonesia: Making Aceh Safer Through Disaster Risk Reduction in Development (DRR-A), 2013
14. Indonesia: Technical Support to Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Completion and Continuation Coordination, 2013
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20. Albania: Empowering Vulnerable Communities Joint Programme, 2013
21. Ukraine: Community-based Approach to local Development, 2013
22. Ukraine: EU/UNDP Support to the Regional Development of Crimea Project, 2013
23. UNCDF: Liberia Decentralization and Local Dev't Programme – Local Dev't Fund Component, 2013
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11. Assessment of Development Results : Angola, 2013
12. Assessment of Development Results: Côte d'Ivoire, 2013
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14. Assessment of Development Results: Niger, 2013
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16. Assessment of Development Results: Costa Rica, 2012
17. Assessment of Development Results: Djibouti, 2012
18. Assessment of Development Results: the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2012
19. Assessment of Development Results: Egypt, 2012
20. Assessment of Development Results: India, 2012
21. Assessment of Development Results: Moldova, 2012
22. Assessment of Development Results: Paraguay, 2012
23. Assessment of Development Results: Sri Lanka, 2012
24. Assessment of Development Results: United Arab Emirates, 2012

ANNEX 3: QUALITY SCREENING SCORING GUIDE

Evaluation Title: _____

Evaluation Team Leader: _____ Reviewer: _____

	Points for criteria scored	Maximum Points	Score
A	Purpose of the evaluation clearly stated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> why the evaluation was done (1) what triggered the evaluation (including timing in the project/programme cycle) (1) how evaluation is to be used (1) 	3	
B	Evaluation objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluation objectives are clearly stated (1) objectives logically flow from purpose (1) 	2	
C	Organization of the evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> logical structure to the organization of the evaluation (1) evaluation report is well written (1) clear distinction made among evidence, findings, conclusions, <u>lessons</u> and recommendations (1) report contains executive summary and annexes (2) 	5	
D	Subject evaluated is clearly described Evaluation describes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the activity/programme being evaluated (1) the programme's expected achievements (1) how the programme addresses the development problem (1) the implementation modalities used (1) 	4	
E	Scope of the evaluation Evaluation defines the boundaries of the evaluation in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> time period covered (1) implementation phase under review (1) geographic area (1) <u>dimensions of stakeholder involvement being examined</u> (1) 	4	
F	Evaluation criteria Evaluation criteria include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> relevance of activities and supported projects/programs (1) efficiency of operations in support of projects / programs (1) the achievement of development objectives and expected results 	5	

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	<p>(including impacts) (1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cross-cutting issues: inclusive development which is gender sensitive and environmentally sustainable (1) • the sustainability of benefits and positive results achieved (1) 		
G	<p>Multiple lines of evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one point (1) for each line of evidence used (document review, <u>case studies</u>, surveys, interviews, focus groups, direct observation, etc.), up to a maximum of five points (5) 	5	
H	<p>Evaluation design</p> <p>Elements of a good evaluation design include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an <u>explicit theory of how objectives</u> and results were to be achieved (1) • specification of the level of results achieved (output, outcome, impact) (1) • <u>baseline data</u> (quantitative or qualitative) on conditions prior to programme implementation (1) • comparison of conditions after programme delivery to those before (1) • a qualitative or quantitative comparison of conditions among programme participants and a <u>control group</u> (1) 	5	
I	<p>Evaluation findings and conclusions are relevant and evidence based</p> <p>Evaluation report includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluation findings relevant to the assessment criteria (1) • findings that are supported by the chosen methodology (1) • evidence from different sources triangulated and converge or non-convergence of evidence from triangulation explained (1) • a clear logical link between the evidence and the finding (1) • <u>conclusions which are clearly linked to the evaluation findings as reported (1)</u> • alternative / competing explanations considered (1) 	6	
J	<p>Evaluation limitations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statement of the limitations of the methodology (1) • impact of limitations on evaluation (1) • <u>attempts made to remedy limitations are stated</u> (1) 	3	
K	<p>Evaluation Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>evaluation contains recommendations that flow from findings and conclusions</u> (1) • recommendations are directed to one or more authority that can act on them (1) • recommendations are action oriented and aimed at improving effectiveness of the programme / investment(1) 	3	
<p>Total (required to have a minimum of 27 points overall, 11 of which should be from Criteria G, H and I, to be considered as adequate)</p>		45	

ANNEX 4: COMPARISON OF IEO'S QA RATINGS* WITH REVIEW TEAM'S RATINGS** ON SAMPLE OF DECENTRALISED EVALUATIONS REVIEWED

Commissioning Units/Cos	Evaluation Name (Project/Programme)	IEO's QA	Team's QA	Budget (\$000)	Joint	GEF
Latin America and Caribbean (4)						
Barbados (1)	Regional Risk Reduction Initiative (R3I), 2012	4	5 (37/45)	150.0	Yes	No
Columbia (1)	Efficiencia Energetica en Edificios, 2013		5 (37.5/45)	32.0	No	Yes
Panama (2)	Contribuciones y Mejoras a la Seguridad Ciudadana en Panama: Ventana de Paz, 2013	4	5 (37/45)	50.0	Yes	No
"	Red de Oportunidades Empresariales par alas Familias Pobres de Panama, 2013	5	5 (38/45)	25.0	No	No
Africa (5)						
Ethiopia (2)	Final Evaluation of Coping with Drought Programme, 2013		5 (33.5/45)	20.0	No	Yes
"	Final Eval of African Adaptation Programme: Supporting Climate Resilient Sust. Dev't, 2013	5	5 (34/45)	7.5	No	No
Kenya (3)	Support to Implementation of Resultant National Processes from the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconstruction, 2013	3	3 (26/45)	30.0	No	No
"	Strengthening the Protected Area Network with the Eastern Montane Forest Hotspots, 2012		4 (28.5/45)	20.0	No	Yes
	End of Programme Evaluation: Public Sector	5	5	32.0		

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“	Reforms Programme, Phase II, 2013		(33.5/45)			
Arab States (3)						
Egypt (2)	Final Evaluation of Mobilization of the Dahshour World heritage Site for Community Development, 2013	4	5 (37/45)	17.2	No	No
“	Evaluation of UNDP Project: Strengthening Transparency and Integrity in the Civil Service, 2012	2	3 (25/45)	10.0	No	No
Tunisia (1)	Adaptation du littoral aux changements climatique AAP – Evaluation Finale, 2013	4	4 (27.5/45)	10.0		
Asia-Pacific (7)						
Indonesia (4)	Making Aceh Safer Through Disaster Risk Reduction in Dev't (DRR-A), 2013	5	5 (35/45)	15.0	No	No
“	Technical Support to Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Completion and Continuation Coordination, 2013	5	5 (34/45)	25.0	No	No
“	Art Gold Indonesia (AGI) Project Evaluation, 2013	4	4 (33/45)	15.0	No	No
“	Peace Through Development (PTD), 2013	5	5 (39/45)	15.0	No	No
Thailand (3)	Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI), 2013	5	5 (34/45)	7.0	No	No
“	Indep. Evaluation of United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region, 2012	5	5 (38/45)	72.5	No	No
“	Indep. Evaluation – Integrated Community Development for Livelihoods and Social Cohesion in Mae Hong Son Province, 2011	4	4 (33/45)	16.2	No	No
Europe and Central Asia (3)						
Albania	Empowering Vulnerable Communities Joint Programme, 2013	4	5 (37/45)	8.0	No	No
Ukraine	Community-based Approach to local Development, 2013	5	5			

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			(35/45)	20.0	No	No
	EU/UNDP Support to the Regional Development of Crimea Project, 2013	3	4 (36.5/45)	10.0	No	No
United Nations Capital Development Fund (4)						
UNCDF (4)	Liberia Decentralization and Local Dev't Programme – Local Dev't Fund Component, 2013		5 (34.5/45)	20.0	No	No
"	Inclusive Finance Practice Area portfolio Review, 2013		6 (39.5/45)	150.0	No	No
"	Provincial Government Strengthening Programme (Solomon Islands), 2012		5 (35/45)	70.0	No	No
"	Enhancing Access to Financial Services Project, 2012		5 (34.5/45)	50.0	No	No
UN Volunteers (4)						
UNV (4)	Eval of Marking of the Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers, 2013		5 (38/45)	80.0	No	No
"	Review of University Volunteer Scheme for Youth Empowerment and Dev't of Papua, 2013		2 (16/45)	10.0	Yes	No
"	Evaluation of Partners for Prevention – Regional Joint Prog for Gender-based Violence Prevention , 2013		6 (40.5/45)	10.0	Yes	No
"	Alternative Livelihoods for Youths Affected and Infected by HIV/AIDS through Skills Development and Youth Volunteering (Eth), 2013		5 (34/45)	10.0	No	No
BCPR - Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (4)						
"	Evaluation of Support to Mobile Court Arrangements in Post –Conflict Situations, 2013	5		40.0	No	No
"	Evaluation of UNDP Reintegration Programs, 2013	4		70.0	No	No
"	Evaluation of the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI), 2012	4		36.5	No	No
"	Evaluation of the Global Risk Identification Programme, 2012	4		36.5	No	No

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* IEO Ratings: 6 = Highly Satisfactory, 5 = Satisfactory, 4 = Moderately Satisfactory, 3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory, 2 = Unsatisfactory and 1 = Highly Unsatisfactory.

** Review Team's Ratings: 39.1-45 = Highly Satisfactory, 33.1-39 = Satisfactory, 27.1-33 = Moderately Satisfactory, 21.1-27 = Moderately Unsatisfactory, 15.1-21 = Unsatisfactory and < 15 = Highly Unsatisfactory.

ANNEX 5: COMPARISON OF QA RATINGS OF IEO'S PANEL WITH REVIEW TEAM'S QA RATINGS ON EVALUATIONS DONE BY IEO IN 2012 AND 2013

Evaluation Name / Title	IEO's QA Ratings*	Team's QA Rating**
Assessment of Development Results (ADRs) - 2013:		
1. Croatia	5 (Satisfactory)	
2. Timor Leste	5 (Satisfactory)	
3. Niger	5 (Satisfactory)	
4. Angola	5 (Satisfactory)	5 (39/45)
5. Cote D'Ivoire	5 (Satisfactory)	
6. Afghanistan	5 (Satisfactory)	5 (35.5/45)
ADRs – 2012		
1. India		6 (40.5/45)
2. Sri Lanka		5 (37.5/45)
3. Egypt		5 (33.5/45)
4. UAE		4 (33/45)
5. Djibouti		5 (36/45)
6. DRC		5 (33.5/45)
7. Costa Rica		5 (37.5/45)

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8. Paraguay		5 (35.5/45)
9. Moldova		5 (37/45)
Global & Regional Programme Evaluations (RPEs) - 2013:		
1. Fourth Global Programme	5 (Satisfactory)	
2. Regional Programme – Arab States	4 (Mod. Satisf)	4 (33/45)
3. Regional Programme - Africa	5 (Satisfactory)	5 (34/45)
4. Regional Programme - Asia and the Pacific	5 (Satisfactory)	
5. Regional Programme – CIS	5 (Satisfactory)	
6. Regional Programme – Latin America	5 (Satisfactory)	
RPEs – 2012: None completed by IEO		
Thematic Evaluations - 2013:		
1. Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to South-south and Triangular Cooperation (2008-2011)	5 (Satisfactory)	
2. Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Poverty Reduction	5 (Satisfactory)	5 (33.5/45)
3. Evaluation of UNDP Support to Conflict-Affected Countries in the Context of UN Peace	5 (Satisfactory)	4 (29.5/45)
Thematic Evaluations – 2012: None completed by IEO		

* IEO Ratings: 6 = Highly Satisfactory, 5 = Satisfactory, 4 = Moderately Satisfactory, 3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory, 2 = Unsatisfactory and 1 = Highly Unsatisfactory.

** Team's Ratings: 39.1 – 45.0 = Highly Satisfactory; 33.1-39.0 = Satisfactory; 27.1-33.0 = Moderately Satisfactory; 21.1-27.0 = Moderately Unsatisfactory; 15.1-21.0 = Unsatisfactory and < 15 = Highly Unsatisfactory.

ANNEX 6: INVITATION LETTERS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTRONIC SURVEYS

Letter from IEO to Consultants (2014-03-07)

Dear consultant,

As part of its efforts to strengthen its evaluation function, UNDP has commissioned an independent review of its evaluation policy. The review is conducted by an independent group of consultants from Le Group-conseil Baastel. The results of the review will be reported directly to the UNDP Executive Board.

As an input to this review, Baastel is conducting a survey of consultants who conduct evaluations on contract with UNDP country offices and other programme units. The purpose of this message is to urge you to respond to the survey and provide your frank views and experiences. Please note that the responses to the survey will be kept strictly confidential. The individual responses will not be made available to UNDP management nor to the Independent Evaluation Office. The results will not be presented by country but aggregated regionally, so as to ensure anonymity of responses.

You will soon receive a request to participate in the survey directly from Baastel.

Thank you already in advance for your cooperation.

Best regards,

Letter from IEO to M&E Staff (2014-03-26)

Dear colleagues,

As part of its efforts to strengthen its evaluation function, UNDP has commissioned an independent review of its evaluation policy (see attached TOR). The review is conducted by an independent group of consultants from Le Group-conseil Baastel. The results of the review will be reported directly to the UNDP Executive Board.

As an input to this review, Baastel is conducting a survey of Evaluation Focal Points. The purpose of this message is to urge you to respond to the survey and provide your frank views and experiences. Please note that the responses to the survey will be kept confidential and individual responses will only be available to the consultants.

You will soon receive a request to participate in the survey directly from Baastel.

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Thank you already in advance for your cooperation.

Best regards,

Letter from IEO to RRs (2014-03-26)

Dear colleagues,

As part of its efforts to strengthen its evaluation function, UNDP has commissioned an independent review of its evaluation policy (see attached TOR). The review is conducted by an independent group of consultants from Le Groupe-conseil Baastel. The results of the review will be reported directly to the UNDP Executive Board.

As an input to this review, Baastel is conducting a survey of Resident Representatives. The purpose of this message is to urge you to respond to the survey and provide your frank views and experiences. Please note that the responses to the survey will be kept confidential and individual responses will only be available to the consultants.

You will soon receive a request to participate in the survey directly from Baastel.

Thank you already in advance for your cooperation.

Best regards,

Letter from Baastel to Consultants (2014-03-13)

Dear consultant,

This invitation is addressed to consultants who conduct evaluations on contract with UNDP country offices and other programme units. As you have been informed in a previous email sent by the independent evaluation office (IEO) of the UNDP, the institution's evaluation policy is presently under review by a team employed by Le Groupe-conseil Baastel. As an important component of the review, our team has prepared an online survey for consultants. We would like to receive feedback on your experiences of conducting decentralised evaluations for the UNDP and we therefore invite you to kindly take 15 - 20 minutes of your time to answer this survey. The goal is to assess the evaluation policy's usefulness, highlight its strengths and weaknesses (including in the way it is implemented at regional and country level) and to suggest areas for improvement. By answering the survey, you will have a chance to contribute to improving the implementation of the evaluation policy and the future experiences of consultants conducting evaluations with the UNDP country offices and other programme units.

Here is the link to the English version of the survey:

If you any questions or comments please contact the consultant responsible for the management of the survey by email at the following address: alexandre.daoust@baastel.com.

Review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy
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*We look forward to your participation and thank you in advance for your time,
Yours truly,*

Letter from Baastel to M&E Staff (2014-04-10)

Dear madam/sir,

Independent Review of UNDP's Evaluation Policy

The present invitation is addressed to UNDP staff executing tasks related to evaluation. As you have been informed in a previous email sent by the independent evaluation office (IEO) of the UNDP, the institution's evaluation policy is presently under review by an independent team employed by Le Groupe-conseil Baastel. As an important component of the review, our team has prepared an online survey for UNDP staff. We would like to receive feedback on your experiences working for the UNDP and we therefore invite you to kindly take 15 - 20 minutes of your time to answer this survey. The goal is to assess the evaluation policy's usefulness, highlight its strengths and weaknesses (including in the way it is implemented at regional and country level) and to suggest areas for improvement. By answering the survey, you will have a chance to contribute to improving the implementation of the evaluation policy.

Here is the link to the English version of the survey:

If you any questions or comments please contact the consultant responsible for the management of the survey by email at the following address: alexandre.daoust@baastel.com

We look forward to your participation and thank you in advance for your time,

Yours truly,

Letter from Baastel to RRs (2014-04-10)

Dear madam/sir,

This invitation is addressed to Resident Representatives (RRs) from UNDP country offices. As you have been informed in a previous email sent by the independent evaluation office (IEO) of the UNDP, the institution's evaluation policy is presently under review by a team employed by Le Groupe-conseil Baastel. As an important component of the review, our team has prepared an online survey for RRs. The Review Team regards the Country Office's perspective as fundamental to this review process. For this reason, the questionnaire may appear rather long. The goal of the survey is to assess the evaluation policy's usefulness, highlight its strengths and weaknesses (including in the way it is implemented at regional and country level) and to suggest areas for improvement. By answering the survey, you will have a chance to contribute to improving the implementation of the evaluation policy.

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Here is the link to the survey:

If you any questions or comments please contact the consultant responsible for the management of the survey by email at the following address: alexandre.daoust@baastel.com.

We look forward to your participation and thank you in advance for your time.

Yours truly,

ANNEX 7: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES FOR THE DIFFERENT GROUPS

Questionnaire for Consultants who conducted decentralised evaluations

Dear consultant,

Welcome to the Independent Review of UNDP Evaluation Policy Survey of Consultants.

UNDP has commissioned an independent review of its evaluation policy. This is being implemented by a team managed by Baastel, a consultancy company based in Ottawa, Canada. As an input to this review, the team is conducting a survey with all consultants who have conducted evaluations on contract with UNDP country offices and/or other programme units (excluding the Independent Evaluation Office). This survey is designed and managed by the Baastel independent evaluation team. It should help generate useful information that will help improve the implementation of the UNDP evaluation policy. Responding to this survey should not take more than 30 minutes of your time. We encourage you to include additional qualitative information detailing and explaining your responses to the questions.

Please note that your responses to the survey will be kept strictly confidential. They will be received and managed by Baastel in Canada and will not be shared with UNDP. The results will not be presented by country or in a raw state but will be aggregated and analysed at a macro level, which will further ensure anonymity of responses. We would be pleased to receive your responses by March 31st 2014 and the survey will be closed on April 15th 2014.

Thank you very much for your participation in this important exercise.

The Baastel evaluation team

1. In which region(s) have you worked as an evaluation consultant for UNDP?

Country	Answer
Africa	[]
Arab States	[]
Asia and the Pacific	[]
Europe and the CIS	[]
Latin America and the Caribbean	[]
Headquarters (New York)	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____ (optional)	

2. Have you conducted evaluations for agencies other than UNDP?

Details	Answer
Yes, with other UN agencies (including UNV and UNCDF) or international financial institutions	[]
Yes, with bilateral donors	[]
Yes, with others	[]
No	[]
For other UN Agencies, please specify which: _____ (optional)	

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3. How many evaluations have you conducted for UNDP country offices, other UNDP offices, UNCDF or UNV over the past 3 years? Please list all offices concerned and the number of evaluations for each.

4. From what funding source did the projects you have evaluated come? For other funding sources, please specify which:

Funding Source	Number of Projects
GEF-sponsored projects/programs,	[]
MDG Achievement Fund sponsored projects/programs,	[]
UNCDF-sponsored projects/programs,	[]
UNV-sponsored projects/programs, and	[]
Projects/programs from other UNDP units.	[]
For other funding sources, please specify which: _____ (optional)	

5. In addition to evaluations, do you provide other services to UNDP? For other services, please specify which:

Details	Answer
Yes, programme and/or project development	[]
Yes, programme and/or project management	[]
Yes, other services (Which?)	[]
No, only evaluations	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____ (optional)	

6. How satisfied are you with how evaluations have been handled by the UNDP office (s) you have worked with
Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Very satisfied	[]
Satisfied	[]
Not satisfied	[]
Very unsatisfied	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____ (optional)	

7. Can you share any good practices you have experienced by UNDP Offices in terms of design, management and conduct of evaluations?

8. Have you faced any challenges when conducting the evaluations you did for UNDP?

Details	Answer
No challenges	[]
Challenges as shown below (more than one can be selected):	
• Unclear terms-of-reference or guidance	[]
• Too broad terms-of-reference	[]
• Inadequate resources (e.g., provisions for field and project visits)	[]
• Inadequate time	[]
• Lack of evaluation expertise in UNDP team	[]
• Restrictions from visiting sites, which you felt should have been allowed	[]
• Reaching agreement on the inception report	[]
• Reaching agreement on the final report	[]
Other (Which? Below)	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____ (optional)	

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9. How useful has the information provided by the ROAR (Results Oriented Annual Report) been for your evaluation work for a Country Office? If useful, what aspects of the ROAR helped your evaluation work? If not useful, why was this? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Very useful	[]
Useful	[]
Not useful	[]
Not at all useful	[]
Have not worked for a Country Office	[]
If useful, what aspects of the ROAR helped your evaluation work?	
If not useful, why was this?	
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

10. Have you ever encountered any of the following issues when conducting evaluations for UNDP? Can you please explain in detail what happened? What were the reasons why these issues were encountered? What was the context? Comments, details, explanations:

Details	Answer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP office or staff member asked you to substantially change your findings and conclusions although they were adequately supported by the evidence in the report. If so, please explain (below). [] • UNDP office or staff member significantly modified or rewrote (parts of) your report [] • Payment for your services was denied or significantly delayed because of disputes regarding your findings or conclusions [] • No issues [] 	
Other issues (Which? Below)	[]
If you have encountered any of the above, can you please explain in detail what happened? What were the reasons why these issues were encountered? What was the context?	
Comments, details, explanations: _____ (optional)	

11. Considering all of your experiences with UNDP, how would you characterize the overall guidance you received from UNDP staff? Could you please provide examples of what you considered helpful and/or not helpful?

Scale	Answer
Very helpful	[]
Helpful	[]
Not helpful	[]
Not at all helpful	[]
Could you please provide examples of what you considered helpful and/or not helpful? _____	
Comments, details, explanations: _____ (optional)	

12. How would you characterize the evaluation expertise of the UNDP staff who provided the guidance for the evaluation(s) that you have been involved in? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Very good	[]
Good	[]
Limited	[]
Poor	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____ (optional)	

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13. Have you ever decided against responding to an advertised Request for Proposals for a UNDP assignment for which you felt you were qualified and had the time to undertake? If yes, can you share with us your reasons for not submitting a proposal? Comments, details, explanations:

Yes/no	Answer
Yes	[]
No	[]

If yes, can you share with us your reasons for not submitting a proposal?
Comments, details, explanations: _____ (optional)

14. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions you have for improving the quality of UNDP decentralised evaluations below.

Questionnaire for Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Staff

Dear UNDP employee,

Welcome to the Independent Review of UNDP Evaluation Policy Survey of evaluation staff.

UNDP has commissioned an independent review of its evaluation policy. This is being implemented by a team managed by Baastel, a consultancy company based in Ottawa, Canada. As an input to this review, the team is conducting a survey with UNDP staff executing tasks related to evaluation. This survey is designed and managed by the Baastel independent evaluation team. It should help generate useful information that will help improve the implementation of the UNDP evaluation policy. Responding to this survey should not take more than 15 - 20 minutes of your time. We encourage you to include additional qualitative information detailing and explaining your responses to the questions. Some questions are mandatory, if you do not answer them, the survey will not let you pass to the next page.

Please note that your responses to the survey will be kept strictly confidential. They will be received and managed by Baastel in Canada and will not be shared with UNDP. The results will not be presented in a raw state but will be aggregated and analysed at a macro level, which will further ensure anonymity of responses. We would be pleased to receive your responses by April 28th 2014 and the survey will be closed on May 12th 2014.

Thank you very much for your participation in this important exercise.

The Baastel evaluation team

1. What is your official title with regard to your M&E responsibilities? (E.g., Adviser, Focal Point).
2. Do you work on M&E full-time or part-time? Comments, details, explanations. If part-time, about what proportion of your time is spent on M&E activities?

Answer	Answer
Full-time	[]
Part-time	[]

Comments, details, explanations.
If part-time, about what proportion of your time is spent on M&E activities?

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3. What is the approximate balance of your time spent on evaluation as against monitoring? %
4. Do you have any formal qualifications in monitoring and/or evaluation? If so, please provide details.
5. Have you received any specific training on monitoring and evaluation (including online training courses)?
Comments, details, explanations (If so, please provide details):
6. Are you involved in completing the ROAR (Results Oriented Annual Report)?
6. a. What is the process for assembling the necessary data?
6. b. Are there sufficient data (e.g. baselines, progress indicators) to ensure that the ROAR is complete and accurate? Comments, details, explanations:
6. c. In your opinion, how useful is the ROAR to the Country Office? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Very useful	[]
Useful	[]
Not useful	[]
Not at all useful	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

6. d. What specific use is made of it?
6. e. To what extent is information presented in the ROAR used in evaluations commissioned by the CO?
Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Used a lot	[]
Used moderately	[]
Used a little	[]
Not used at all	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

6. f. To what extent have the findings of CO evaluations confirmed or challenged information presented in the ROAR? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Confirmed	[]
Supported (with some challenges)	[]
Somewhat challenged	[]
Challenged	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

7. (Excluding the ROAR) What are the main tasks you perform with regard to monitoring?
7. a. Have you faced any challenges in completing these monitoring tasks to the standard you would like to achieve?
If so, what are these? Comments, details, explanations:
8. What are the main tasks you perform with regard to evaluation?
8. a. Have you faced any challenges in completing these evaluation tasks to the standard you would like to achieve?
If so, what are these? Comments, details, explanations:
9. What are the specific ways in which your Office uses evaluation?

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10. To what extent do you feel that the Office in which you work has developed an “evaluation culture”?

10. a. What are the key points supporting this assessment?

11. How long have you worked for UNDP? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Less than a year	[]
Between one and two years	[]
Between two and five years	[]
Between five and ten years	[]
More than ten years	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

12. How long have you worked in your current Office? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Less than a year	[]
Between one and two years	[]
Between two and five years	[]
Between five and ten years	[]
More than ten years	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

13. How long have you worked in your current M&E function/position? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Less than a year	[]
Between one and two years	[]
Between two and five years	[]
Between five and ten years	[]
More than ten years	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

14. What is your Grade within the UN system?

15. In what region is the Unit you present?

Country	Answer
Africa	[]
Arab States	[]
Asia and the Pacific	[]
Europe and the CIS	[]
Latin America and the Caribbean	[]
Headquarters (New York)	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____ (optional)	

Questionnaire for Resident Representatives

Dear UNDP Resident Representatives,

Welcome to the Independent Review of UNDP Evaluation Policy Survey of RRs.

As you might already know, UNDP has commissioned an independent review of its evaluation policy. This is being implemented by a team managed by Baastel, a consultancy company based in Ottawa, Canada. As an input to this review, the team is conducting a survey with RRs. This survey is designed and managed by the Baastel independent evaluation team. The Review Team regards the Country Office perspective as fundamental to this review process. For this reason, the questionnaire may appear rather long. Please note that you can save your answers and come back to finalise the survey later; just follow the instructions provided on the screen). The Review Team thanks respondents in advance for their contribution to the survey. It covers the period from 2011 until now. For RRs who have moved office during this period, please base your responses on experience in your current Country Office. We encourage you to include additional qualitative information detailing and explaining your responses to the questions. Please note some questions are mandatory; if you do not answer them, you will not be able to go to the next page.

Please note that your responses to the survey will be kept strictly confidential. They will be received and managed by Baastel in Canada and will not be shared with UNDP. The results will not be presented by country or in a raw state but will be aggregated and analysed at a macro level, which will further ensure anonymity of responses. We would be pleased to receive your responses by April 28th 2014 and the survey will be closed on May 12th 2014.

Thank you very much for your participation in this important exercise.

The Baastel evaluation team

1. In what ways does the Evaluation Policy affect the work of the Country Office (CO)?

1a: If it does not, why is this so?

2. Do you feel that the Evaluation Policy can have a greater influence on the work of CO?

2a: If so, in what areas are there opportunities for the evaluation policy to play a greater role in the work of CO and how could this be done?

2b: Is there room for the Regional Bureau to play a greater role in evaluation? In what ways?

3. From your perspective as a Resident Representative, what do you see as the main strengths and weaknesses in the Evaluation Policy itself or in the way it is implemented?

4. What incentives exist for commissioning and using evaluations at the CO level?

5. Does the CO have the necessary specialised and technical expertise to fulfil its evaluation responsibilities?

Comments, details, explanations:

6. How would you characterize the evaluation expertise of the CO staff to provide general guidance for all key stakeholders? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Very good	[]
Good	[]
Limited	[]
Poor	[]

Comments, details, explanations: _____

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7. To what extent are evaluations commissioned by the Country Office adequately financed to allow the completion of credible and high quality evaluations in a timely manner? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Very well financed	[]
Well financed	[]
Not well financed	[]
Very poorly financed	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

8. Are the CO budget and evaluation plans linked so that it is clear that adequate resources are allocated? Comments, details, explanations:

9. Has your CO participated in any evaluations conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office, such as an ADR or Thematic Evaluation? Comments, details, explanations:

10. What type of evaluation was this?

11. What was the CO's perspective on the quality of this evaluation? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Very High	[]
High	[]
Low	[]
Very low	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

12. Did the CO feel that this evaluation had meaningful and transparent consultation with stakeholders? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Very meaningful and transparent	[]
Meaningful and transparent	[]
Not very meaningful and transparent	[]
Not at all meaningful and transparent	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

13. Did the CO feel that this evaluation was conducted in an ethical manner? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Very ethical	[]
Ethical	[]
Not very ethical	[]
Not at all ethical	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

14. Did the CO feel that this evaluation was delivered in a timely manner? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Very timely	[]
Timely	[]
Not very timely	[]
Not at all timely	[]

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Scale	Answer
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

15. To what extent did the CO agree with the findings of this evaluation? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Agreed a lot	[]
Agreed	[]
Disagreed	[]
Disagreed a lot	[]
Comments, details, explanations (if disagreed or disagreed a lot, how did the CO react? What did it do?) : _____	

16. Did the Country Office release a management response (or contribute to a management response for a Thematic Evaluation) to this evaluation? Comments, details, explanations:

17. To what extent have the commitments in this management response been implemented? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
All have been implemented	[]
The majority have been implemented	[]
Some have been implemented	[]
A few have been implemented	[]
A limited number have been implemented	[]
None have been implemented	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

18. To what extent was this evaluation useful to the CO to generate learning and improvements?

Scale	Answer
Very useful	[]
Useful	[]
Not useful	[]
Not at all useful	[]
Comments, details, explanations (If appropriate, please give examples of how you used these findings or recommendations of the evaluation and what follow-up actions you have taken.): _____	

19. To what extent did this evaluation contribute findings relevant to the accountability of the CO operations and programmes?

Scale	Answer
Contributed a lot	[]
Contributed	[]
Contributed only a little	[]
Did not contribute at all	[]
Comments, details, explanations (If appropriate, please give examples of how you used these findings and/or recommendations of the evaluation and what follow-up actions you have taken.): _____	

20. As far as the Country office is aware, has the Independent Evaluation Office engaged in any way with national institutions in the country to promote or strengthen evaluation capacity, institutions or associations?

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21. What steps do managers in the CO take to ensure that programmes and projects are evaluable?

22. To what extent do projects and programmes have effective monitoring systems, which can be used for evaluation purposes? (For example, do they generally have baselines, targets and indicators against which progress are monitored?) Comments, details, explanations :

Scale	Answer
Very effective	[]
Effective	[]
Not very effective	[]
Not effective at all	[]
Comments, details, explanations _____	

23. Have project and programme managers been able to ensure adequate financial resources for evaluations? Comments, details, explanations :

Scale	Answer
Very adequate	[]
Adequate	[]
Not very adequate	[]
Not adequate at all	[]
Comments, details, explanations _____	

24. What challenges has the CO faced in complying with its responsibilities for mandatory project evaluations? (other than "No challenges", more than one answer can be selected)

Details	Answer
No challenges	[]
Challenges as shown below (more than one can be selected):	
Communication issues with the consultant	[]
Issues with the terms-of-reference	[]
Inadequate resources (e.g., provisions for field and project visits)	[]
Inadequate time	[]
Lack of evaluation expertise of the consultant	[]
Lack of evidence concerning the findings presented by the consultant	[]
Reaching agreement on the inception report	[]
Reaching agreement on the final report	[]
Other (Which? Below)	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

25. What measures does the CO take to ensure the independence of decentralised evaluation processes and reports?

26. In your opinion, have decentralised evaluations always been carried out in a transparent and independent manner, free from bias and any potential conflict of interest?

27. What measures does the CO take to ensure the quality of decentralised evaluation processes and reports?

28. To what extent is the Country Office able to guide independent consultants evaluating projects and programmes? Comments, details, explanations :

Scale	Answer
-------	--------

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Scale	Answer
Substantial guidance	[]
Moderate level guidance	[]
Little guidance	[]
No guidance at all	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

28. a. What level of specialist evaluation expertise does the CO have to help guide independent experts evaluating its projects or programmes? Comments, details, explanations :

Scale	Answer
Very good	[]
Good	[]
Limited	[]
Poor	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____ (optional)	

29. Has the CO ever experienced problems recruiting evaluation experts for its project/programme evaluations? If so, why was this? Comments, details, explanations :

30. To what extent have the Management Responses to decentralised evaluations conducted during the period from 2011 until now been acted upon? Comments, details, explanations :

Scale	Answer
All have been implemented	[]
The majority have been implemented	[]
Some have been implemented	[]
A few have been implemented	[]
A limited number have been implemented	[]
None have been implemented	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

31. To what extent has the CO drawn on the findings of decentralised evaluations to guide decisions on future programming and strategic positioning of UNDP?

32. Are there any systems in place to share the knowledge on development experience derived from decentralised evaluations? If so, what are these? Comments, details, explanations :

33. What is the overall oversight system for decentralised evaluations in the CO and how effective is it?

34. To what extent has the CO engaged in Joint Evaluations or System-wide evaluations with other UN agencies? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Engaged a lot	[]
Engaged	[]
Engaged only a little	[]
Did not engage at all	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

35. What have been the major benefits of these types of evaluations?

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Answer:

36. Have there been any major challenges or limitations with them? If so, what are these?

Answer:

37. Has the CO always completed its ROAR (Results Oriented Annual Report) on time? Comments, details, explanations:

38. In preparing its ROAR (Results Oriented Annual Report), what is the process for assembling the necessary data?

Answer: _____

39. Are there sufficient and reliable data (e.g. baselines, targets and progress indicators) to ensure that the ROAR is complete and accurate? Comments, details, explanations:

40. In your opinion, how useful is the ROAR to the Country Office? Comments, details, explanations:

Scale	Answer
Very useful	[]
Useful	[]
Somewhat useful	[]
Not useful at all	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____	

41. What specific use does the CO make of the ROAR?

42. To what extent have the findings of CO evaluations confirmed or challenged information presented in the ROAR?

43. Does the CO have any staff with specific responsibilities for Evaluation? Comments, details, explanations: If so, what is the job title and what proportion of this person's time is spent on evaluation? If not, is the CO able to get the requisite evaluation advice, guidance and services from the Regional Bureau when needed, and how satisfied is the CO with these advice, guidance and services?

44. Does this person have any qualification related to evaluation? (Please specify) Comments, details, explanations:

45. Has this person received any specific training (including online) concerning evaluation in UNDP? Comments, details, explanations:

46. Does the CO use any of the evaluation guidance documents (including on-line) produced by the Independent Evaluation Office? Comments, details, explanations:

47. If so, how useful are these documents? Comments, details, explanations (Is there any guidance that has been particularly useful? If so, which?):

Scale	Answer
Very useful	[]
Useful	[]
Somewhat useful	[]
Not useful at all	[]

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Scale	Answer
Comments, details, explanations (Is there any guidance that has been particularly useful? If so, which?): _____	

48. In what region is the CO you represent (boxes to tick one)?

Country	Answer
Africa	[]
Arab States	[]
Asia and the Pacific	[]
Europe and the CIS	[]
Latin America and the Caribbean	[]
Headquarters (New York)	[]
Comments, details, explanations: _____ (optional)	

49. What is the approximate annual programme budget of the CO?

50. Are there any other comments you would like to make with regard to the Evaluation Policy or its implementation? If so, please add them below.

ANNEX 8: MINI-HANDBOOK FOR MISSIONS TO REGIONAL BUREAUX / COUNTRY OFFICES

Review of UNDP's Evaluation Policy

Purpose: To provide orientation and guidance to evaluation team members on the conduct of field missions to Regional Bureaus and Country Offices to ensure consistency in our data collection approach.

Background: The Review employs a range of data collection methods from different lines of evidence. These include:

- Document reviews covering essential strategic documents, internal to UNDP as well as external to UNDP (e.g other agencies' evaluation policies);
- A meta-evaluation (quality assessment) of a sample of centralized (IEO) and decentralised (non-IEO) evaluations;
- Electronic surveys of consultants who conducted decentralised evaluations, as well as different categories of UNDP staff (Res Reps and Heads of Regional Bureaus as well as staff with evaluation responsibilities);
- Interviews with Executive Board Members, a range of different internal staff (IEO Staff, senior UNDP managers) and external stakeholders; and
- Focus groups with some of these internal staff and stakeholders.

In short, the Review will incorporate a comprehensive set of data sources from both Headquarters and the field.

The Field Visits: The field visits to selected Regional Bureaus and Country Offices provide an opportunity to obtain a first hand field-based perspective from different stakeholders on issues relating to various aspects of the Evaluation Policy, its operation and implementation by discussing it with them.

Key Issues for the Field Visits: Many reports have highlighted the poor quality of decentralised evaluations. The extent to which teams in regional and country offices share this perspective and (if so) what may be some of the underlying causes for this issue need to be explored. The meta-evaluation and quality assessment of these evaluations point to hypotheses about several areas of weakness ranging from a likely low priority accorded to the planning and implementation of these evaluations, inadequate attention to the quality control process (preparation of the TORs, the selection of the consultants, quality control over the process and finalization of the evaluation reports), adequacy of capacity and resources devoted, etc. Of particular importance is the need to ascertain whether the rationale that the evaluations could be a useful RBM tool in managing for results is recognized, or whether the evaluations are seen as an imposed requirement and are therefore done in a rather perfunctory or statutory manner. These

hypotheses point to challenges, which are multi-dimensional in nature and would need to be explored with different stakeholders.

There may also be issues with the centralized evaluations conducted by the IEO. It will also be important to explore whether this is the case, what these issues are and what adjustments can and should be made to improve the function.

Key Stakeholders to be engaged: The key stakeholders that are involved in influencing the Policy's success in the field are the following:

- UNDP staff at the Senior Management level, such as Heads of Regional Bureaus, Resident Representatives, and Country Directors, who can shed light on their perceptions about the adequacy of the policy, and decisions about the planning, funding and use of evaluations;
- UNDP staff at the programme/project level, such as programme and project officers involved in commissioning the evaluations, who can shed light on how the evaluations are implemented (preparation of the TORs, publishing the Request For Proposals, selecting and managing the Consultants, guidance and support to the consultants in the data collection, and quality control over the process, etc);
- UNDP technical staff, such as the M & E and sector/thematic specialists, who are involved in advising and supporting the programme staff in getting their evaluation work done to quality standards and can shed light on the advisory and quality control aspects of the evaluation process; and
- If possible, non-UNDP stakeholders, such as partner country officials, local partners and other donors' representatives, who have been involved with UNDP initiatives and evaluations and can shed light on the nature of partnerships and capacity building aspects associated with the evaluation work.

Aspects to be explored: As can be discerned from the foregoing, the kinds of issues that need to be explored with stakeholders will vary depending on the category of stakeholders. The different groups will have exposure to the evaluation function and process from different vantage points from which they are best placed to provide their views. Accordingly, a different mix of questions will need to be explored with each, as outlined in the Appendices below. Also, as background to inform the lines of investigation and add concreteness to the discussions, information will be provided on the quality assessments of the relevant decentralised evaluations that were reviewed.

Appendix 1: Questions for ResReps, Regional Bureau Heads & Country Directors

(NB: The Views of ResReps are being obtained through the e-survey but we have no way of telling whether these Res Reps have completed the survey and if they have, which questionnaire is theirs. So it would be helpful to get a "broad brush" picture of their views on a few key questions).

We will seek to obtain the Respondents' views, with opportunities to comment, on the following aspects:

Relevance of the Policy:

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- How relevant is the Evaluation Policy in your view?
- Do you consider the Division of Responsibilities between IEO and Regional Bureaux for centralized and decentralised evaluations appropriate?

Effectiveness of Policy Implementation:

- How well has the Evaluation Policy been implemented?
- How have managers performed in meeting their responsibilities for decentralised evaluation?
- Are there adequate incentives for managers to undertake decentralised evaluations?
- Are there ways in which the effectiveness of policy implementation can be improved?

Usefulness of the Evaluations:

- How useful for the Regional Bureau/ Country office have been evaluations completed by the Independent Evaluation Office?
- How useful have your decentralised evaluations been for the office?
- What could be done to increase the usefulness of these (both centralized and decentralised) evaluations?

Improving the Quality of Decentralised Evaluations:

- Are there ways in which the quality and credibility of decentralised evaluations can be improved?

Capacity and Resources:

- Does the Regional Centre/Country Office have adequate capacity and resources to implement the Evaluation Policy?

Partnerships in Evaluation:

- How much emphasis has the Regional Office /Country Office placed on partnerships in evaluation? Have these partnerships been useful for your decentralised evaluations?

Are there any additional comments you would like to share with us about areas not covered above?

Appendix 2: Questions for Programme / Project officers.

(Views of these staff are not being obtained through other instruments. These respondents offer an opportunity to drill down with open-ended questions to get at the process and approach of conducting the evaluations, including the challenges and constraints, to help us better understand these aspects)

Planning for Evaluations:

- In establishing your Evaluation Plans, how do you determine which evaluations are to be included and considered as mandatory?
- How are the budgets and resources for these eventual evaluations determined at the time the Evaluation Plans are being set?

Conduct of the Evaluations:

- Are the budgets adjusted when the individual evaluations are initiated?
- Who is/are responsible for preparation of the Terms of Reference for the evaluations when they are initiated?

- How are the country partners involved in developing the TORs and in the evaluation process more generally?
- What measures are in place to enhance the credibility of the evaluations?

Evaluation Utilization:

- How do the evaluations add value to the work of the office?
- In retrospect, do you consider that the time and resources devoted to doing these evaluations are resources well spent?

Evaluation Guidance and Support:

- What kind of guidance and support is provided by technical specialists (M&E and sector/thematic) at different stages in the evaluation process (the planning, conduct, and reporting)
- Do you have access to (a) training opportunities in evaluation to help you with your evaluation work? (b) e-training materials (either on-line and/or including such resources as a CD or diskette with the particulars on how to go about doing evaluations) to help you?

Evaluation Capacity Development

- How much priority/effort is devoted by the Country Office and Regional Bureau/Centre to build evaluation capacity among local partners?

Evaluation Partnerships:

- How much emphasis/effort is devoted by the Country and Regional Bureau/Centre to establishing partnerships for evaluation?

Incentives to do evaluations:

- What incentives are in place to do evaluations?

Division of Responsibilities:

- Do you consider the Division of Responsibilities between IEO and Regional Bureaux for centralized and decentralised evaluations appropriate ?

Suggestions for Improvement:

- What do you consider as strengths and weaknesses in the evaluation system?
- What are the major challenges you faced in conducting your evaluations?
- In your view, what can be done to improve how evaluations are planned for, conducted and used in the Country Offices/Regional Bureaus?

Appendix 3: Questions for M & E and sector/thematic specialists.

(Views of M&E staff are also being sought through an electronic survey but this is another opportunity to get at the process and approach through some open-ended questions, especially to see whether the project and programme managers and technical people are on the same page).

Planning for Evaluations:

- In establishing your Evaluation Plans, how do you determine which evaluations are to be included and considered as mandatory?
- How are the budgets and resources for these eventual evaluations determined at the time the Evaluation Plans are being set?

Conduct of the Evaluations:

- Are the budgets adjusted when the individual evaluations are initiated?
- Who is/are responsible for preparation of the Terms of Reference for the evaluations when they are initiated?
- How are the country partners involved in developing the TORs and in the evaluation process more generally?
- What measures are in place to enhance the credibility of the evaluations?

Evaluation Utilization:

- How are the evaluations used to add value to the Office's work?
- In retrospect, do you consider that the time and resources devoted to doing these evaluations are resources well spent?

Evaluation Guidance and Support:

- What kind of guidance and support is provided by technical specialists (M&E and sector/thematic) at different stages in the evaluation process (the planning, conduct, and reporting)
- Do you have access to (a) training opportunities in evaluation to help you with your evaluation work? (b) e-training materials on evaluation (such as a CD or diskette with the particulars on how to go about doing evaluations) to help you?

Evaluation Capacity Development

- How much priority/effort is devoted by the Country Office and Regional Bureau/Centre to build evaluation capacity among local partners?

Evaluation Partnerships:

- How much emphasis/effort is devoted by the Country Office and Regional Bureau/Centre to establishing partnerships for evaluation?

Incentives to do evaluations:

- What incentives are in place to do evaluations

Division of Responsibilities:

- Do you consider the Division of Responsibilities between IEO and Regional Bureaux for centralized and decentralised evaluations appropriate?

Suggestions for Improvement:

- In your view, what are the strengths and weaknesses in the evaluation system
- What are the major challenges you faced in conducting your evaluations?
- In your view, what can be done to improve how evaluations are planned for, conducted and used in the Country Offices/Regional Bureaus?

Appendix 4: Questions for partner country officials, local partners, other donors.

(Views of these players are not being sought through other means. If we are able to get access to a few of the people on the partner government side who are the key interlocutors with the UNDP Office, it would be good to explore the following issues)

Evaluation Partnerships and Level of engagement in UNDP evaluations:

- Does the UNDP office engage your ministry or other government ministries in their evaluations?
- How would you characterize the effort devoted by the UNDP Country Office and Regional Bureau/Centre to establish partnerships with the Government when they do their evaluations?
- If you have been involved in their evaluations, how have you found the experience?

Evaluation Capacity Development

- How much discussion/communication has there been between the UNDP Country Office and / or Regional Bureau about efforts to build evaluation capacity of within the government and among local partners?
- How would you characterize the level of effort?
- Has there been any collaboration with the Independent Evaluation Office in New York to help raise country-level awareness and capacity with regard to evaluation.

ANNEX 9: LIST OF PEOPLE MET

DATE	NAME		POSITION	COUNTRY	OFFICE	PROGRAMME / UNIT	METHOD
	LAST	FIRST					
INCEPTION MISSION							
19/02/14	Uitto	Juha	Deputy Director	USA	Independent Evaluation Office (IEO)		In person
19/02/14	Reynolds	Michael	E Adviser	USA	IEO		In person i
19/02/14	Fox	Alan	E Adviser	USA	IEO		In person interview
19/02/14	Rios	Ximena	Operations Manager	USA	Independent Evaluation Office (IEO)		In person interview
19/02/14	Nanthikesan	Suppiramaniam	Monitoring and Evaluation Adviser	USA	Regional Bureau of Africa		In person interview
19/02/14	Kadrigamar	Chandi	E Adviser	USA	IEO		In person interview
19/02/14	Bryant	Heather	E Specialist	USA	IEO		In person interview
19/02/14	Soares	Ana Rosa	E Specialist	USA	IEO		In person interview
19/02/14	Thomson	Peter	EB President (Asia-Pacific States)	USA	Permanent Mission of Fiji to the UN		In person interview
19/02/14	Khatri	Namita	Deputy Permanent Representative	USA	Permanent Mission of Fiji to the UN		In person interview
19/02/14	Fox	Alan	E Adviser	USA	IEO		In person interview
19/02/14	Pradhan	Anish	IT Specialist	USA	IEO		In person interview
20/02/14	Osttveiten	Helge	Director	USA	Office of Audit and Investigation		In person interview
20/02/14	Richard	Dictus	Executive Coordinator	USA		UNV	Phone interview
20/02/14	Belev	Boyan	Vice-president (Eastern European States): Bulgaria	USA			Skype interview
20/02/14	Karl	Judith	Executive Office	USA	Executive Office	Operations Support Group	In person interview
20/02/14	Boukobza	Aurelie	Programme Specialist	USA	Executive Office	Operations Support Group	In person interview
20/02/14	Herlihy	Vincent	EB Vice President (Western Europe and other States)	USA	Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations	Global Development Issues	In person interview

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DATE	NAME		POSITION	COUNTRY	OFFICE	PROGRAMME / UNIT	METHOD
	LAST	FIRST					
21/02/14	Naidoo	Indran	Director IEO	USA	Independent Evaluation Office (IEO)		In person interview
21/02/14	Rosellini	Nicholas	Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director	USA	Regional Bureau of Asia and the Pacific		In person interview
21/02/14	Gercheva	Dafina	Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director	USA	Bureau of Management		In person interview
21/02/14	Kirk	Colin	Director	USA	UNICEF		In person interview
21/02/14	Bichler	Marc	Executive Secretary	USA	United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)		In person interview
21/02/14	Saleh	Turhan	Chief, RBA CST, HQ/EXO	USA	UNDP Executive Office		In person interview
ANGOLA							
4/09/14	Juergensen	Olaf	Deputy Country Director	Angola	UNDP Country Office		Skype interview
4/09/14	Seidi	Sirajo	Focal point for M&E	Angola	UNDP Country Office		Skype interview
BARBADOS AND THE OECS							
12/06/14	Wilson	J. Ricky	Programme Manager for Environment, Energy and Climate Change	Barbados	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
12/06/14	King	Ian	Programme Manager for Disaster and Climate Risk Management	Barbados	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
12/06/14	Clarke	Marlon	Project Coordinator	Barbados	UNDP Country Office	Community Alerts Project	In person interview
12/06/14	Chase	Janine	Project Manager	Barbados	UNDP Country Office	Youth-In	In person interview
12/06/14	Hinds	Cherryanne	Programme Finance Associate (M&E Focal Point)	Barbados	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
12/06/14	Blanco	Lara	Deputy Resident Representative	Barbados	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
CHILE							
16/06/14	Cozar	Marta	Head of M&E Unit	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
16/06/14	Morandé	Ignacio	M&E Unit & Corporate Development Officer	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
16/06/14	Molperceres	Antonio	RR & Resident Coordinator	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
16/06/14	Alarcon	Alejandra	Project Manager PDLA	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
16/06/14	Larranaga	Osvaldo	Programme Manager, Poverty Reduction and Inequalities	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview

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	LAST	FIRST					
16/06/14	Arntz	Mariana-Helena	Project Manager Indigenous and Urban Development	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
16/06/14	Toro	Guillermo		Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
16/06/14	Ortiz	Jorge	Project manager	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
16/06/14	Parra	Alberto	Programme Manager, Local Development	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
17/06/14	Morandé	Ignacio	M&E Unit & Corporate Development Officer	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
17/06/14	Flisfisch	Angel	Director	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
17/06/14	Marquez	Rodrigo	Human Development Report	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
17/06/14	Roa	Patricia	Programme Officer	Chile	ILO Sub-regional Office		In person interview
17/06/14	Guerrero	Elizabeth	Programme Manager, Gender	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
17/06/14	Cassinelli	Aldo	Former representative in charge of relations with the UN agencies	Chile	General Secretariat of the		In person interview
18/06/14	Morandé	Ignacio	M&E Unit & Corporate Development Officer	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
18/06/14	Molina	Sergio	Indigenous Affairs Coordinator	Chile	Social Development Ministry		In person interview
18/06/14	Figueroa Rubio	Pamela	Head of Research Division	Chile	General Secretariat of the		In person interview
18/06/14	Fernandez	Marco	Policy Unit Manager	Chile	International Cooperation (Foreign Affairs Ministry)		In person interview
18/06/14	Herrera	Rodrigo	Programme Officer	Chile	Social Development Ministry		In person interview
19/06/14	Stutzin	Miguel	Programme Officer	Chile	Environment Ministry (GEF)		In person interview
19/06/14	Argomedeo	Rosa Maria	Head of the Access to Energy and Equity	Chile	Ministry of Energy		In person interview
19/06/14	Moreno	Daniela	Programme Officer	Chile	Transparency Council		In person interview
19/06/14	Cabezas	Andrea	GEF project manager	Chile	Ministry of Environment		In person interview
19/06/14	Valenzuela	Fernando	GEF project manager	Chile	Ministry of Environment		In person interview
19/06/14	Rios	Marcela	Programme Manager	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
20/06/14	Ximena	Georges	Focal Point UNDP/GEF	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
20/06/14	Toranzos	Pamela	Manager of Environment/GEF projects	Chile	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
ETHIOPIA							

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	LAST	FIRST					
26/08/14	Bosch	Emily	Policy Specialist, Aid Effectiveness	Ethiopia	UNDP Country Office	Aid Effectiveness	Electronic
27/08/14	Woll	Bettina	Deputy Country Director (Programme)	Ethiopia	UNDP Country Office	Country Programme	Electronic
28/08/14	Wagener	Dirk	Team Leader	Ethiopia	UNDP Country Office	Partnerships and Management Support Unit	Electronic
1/09/14	Taye	Dinksew	UN Resident Coordinators Office	Ethiopia	UNDP Country Office	Monitoring and Evaluation Analyst	Electronic
GERMANY							
29/05/14	Dictus	Richard	Executive Coordinator	Germany	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
29/05/14	Mukwashi	Amanda	Chief	Germany	UNDP Country Office	Volunteer Knowledge and Innovation Section	In person interview
29/05/14	Madsen	Svend	Management	Germany	UNDP Country Office	Services Division	In person interview
29/05/14	Galtieri	Francesco	Chief	Germany	UNDP Country Office	Peace Programming Section	In person interview
29/05/14	Ikeda-Larhed	Kazumi	Chief	Germany	UNDP Country Office	Partnerships and Communications Division	In person interview
29/05/14	Jennings	Allen	Chief	Germany	UNDP Country Office	Development Programming Section	In person interview
30/05/14	Schienko	Gelfiya	Chief Corporate	Germany	UNDP Country Office	Planning and Performance Unit	In person interview
30/05/14	Sahota	Ravnit	Evaluation Specialist	Germany	UNDP Country Office	Evaluation Unit	In person interview
30/05/14	Kalapurakal	Rosemary	Deputy Executive Coordinator	Germany	UNDP Country Office	UNV	In person interview
INDIA							
10/06/14	Solovieva	Alexandra	Deputy Country Director (Programming)	India	UNDP Country Office		Skype interview
INDONESIA							
14/07/14	Broderick	Douglas	UNDP Resident Representative/UN Resident Coordinator	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Senior Management	In person interview

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	LAST	FIRST					
14/07/14	Purba	Sirman	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Unit (PMEU)	In person interview
14/07/14	Gina	Meutia	Thematic and M&E Advisor	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Unit (PMEU)	In person interview
14/07/14	Ari Yahya	Pratama	Results Based Management Officer	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Unit (PMEU)	In person interview
14/07/14	Djulie	Abadi	Assistant	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Unit (PMEU)	In person interview
14/07/14	Nurina	Widagdo	Unit Head	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Democratic Governance & Poverty Reduction Unit (DGPRU)	In person interview
14/07/14	Danielle	Ide-Tobin	Monitoring and Reporting Officer	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Democratic Governance & Poverty Reduction Unit (DGPRU)	In person interview
14/07/14	Hester	Smidt	Monitoring and Reporting Officer (half time)	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Democratic Governance & Poverty Reduction Unit (DGPRU)	In person interview
15/07/14	Budhi	Sayoko	Unit Head	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Environment Unit (EU)	In person interview
15/07/14	Probiyantono	Anton Sri	Programme Manager	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Environment Unit (EU)	In person interview
15/07/14	Tomoyuki	Uno	Programme Manager	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Environment Unit (EU)	In person interview
15/07/14	Iwan	Kumiawan	Programme Manager	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Environment Unit (EU)	In person interview
15/07/14	Andria	Verania	Programme Manager	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Environment Unit (EU)	In person interview

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	LAST	FIRST					
15/07/14	Lux	Matthieu	Monitoring & Reporting Officer	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Environment Unit (EU)	In person interview
15/07/14	Sinandang	Kristanto	Unit Head	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit (CPRU)	In person interview
15/07/14	Amril	Malikah	Programme Manager	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit (CPRU)	In person interview
15/07/14	Suhud	Maja	Programme Manager	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit (CPRU)	In person interview
15/07/14	Smidt	Hester	Monitoring and Reporting Officer (half time)	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit (CPRU)	In person interview
16/07/14	Sutikno	Wariki	Directorate of Regional Autonomy, BAPPENAS (Ministry of National Development Planning)	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Partner Country Government	In person interview
16/07/14	Sadiawati	Diani	Director for Analysis of Law and Regulation, BAPPENAS	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Partner Country Government	In person interview
16/07/14	Cervenka	Hana	First Secretary, Embassy of Norway	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Other Donor Agencies	In person interview
16/07/14	Rahimah	M	Development Advisor, Embassy of Norway	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Other Donor Agencies	In person interview
16/07/14	Murjani	Nita	Forestry/Climate Change Advisor, Embassy of Norway	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Other Donor Agencies	In person interview
17/07/14	Hutomo	R	Director for Socio-Economic Recovery and Improvement, BNPB (Disaster Preparedness Agency)	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Partner Country Government	In person interview
18/07/14	Trankaman	Beate	Country Director (CD)	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Senior Management	In person interview
18/07/14	Insandjaja	Irene	Programme Manager, DFAT, Embassy of Australia	Indonesia	UNDP Country Office	Other Donor Agencies	In person interview
KENYA							
28/08/14	Keating	Maria-Theresa	Country Director	Kenya	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
28/08/14	Batamuliza	Evelyne	Country Programme Advisor	Kenya	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
28/08/14	Reeves	Wilmot A.	Head of Unity/Economic Advisor	Kenya	UNDP Country Office	Strategic Policy Advisory Unit	In person interview
28/08/14	Averbeck	Carolyn	Team Leader	Kenya	UNDP Country Office	Inclusive Economic	In person interview

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	LAST	FIRST					
						Growth and Social Development Unit	
28/08/14	Kipyego	Nicholas	Research Associate	Kenya	UNDP Country Office	Strategic Policy Advisory Unit	In person interview
28/08/14	Nieminen	Minja	Programme Officer (UNV)	Kenya	UNDP Country Office	Inclusive Economic Growth and Social Development Unit	In person interview
18/09/14	Gatungu	James	Director, Statistics Directorate, Production Statistics	Kenya	Ministry of Devolution and	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics	In person interview
18/09/14	Samoei	Paul	Senior Economist/Statistician	Kenya	Ministry of Devolution and		In person interview
18/09/14	Kimani	Benson	Chief Economist	Kenya	Ministry of Devolution and	Economic Planning Directorate, Development Coordination Department Treasury	In person interview
18/09/14	Kiprono	Jackson	Senior Economist	Kenya	Ministry of Devolution and	Macro Planning Unit Treasury	In person interview
19/09/14	Machuka	Samson	Director	Kenya	Ministry of Devolution and	M&E Directorate	In person interview
19/09/14	Kiboi	David	Chief Economist	Kenya	Ministry of Devolution and	M&E Directorate	In person interview
NIGERIA							
11/07/14	Cocco	Bernardo	Deputy Country Director	Nigeria	UNDP Country Office	Programmes	In person interview
11/07/14	Odele	Muyiwa	Team Leader	Nigeria	UNDP Country Office	Environment	In person interview
11/07/14	Alao	Matthew	Officer in Charge	Nigeria	UNDP Country Office	Governance	In person interview
11/07/14	Asogwa	Robert	Team Leader	Nigeria	UNDP Country Office	Economic Growth	In person interview
11/07/14	Bassey	Ekanem	Project Specialist	Nigeria	UNDP Country Office	Anti Corruption	In person interview
PANAMA							
7/06/14	Perez	José Manuel	Programme Officer	Panama	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
8/06/14	Perez	José Manuel	Programme Officer	Panama	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
9/06/14	Justiniano	Freddy	Regional Director	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview

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	LAST	FIRST					
9/06/14	Fuentes	Martin	Social Research & Statistic Specialist and UNDAF Focal Point for the Panama UNCT	Panama	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
9/06/14	Lorenzato	Massimo	Strategic Advisor, contract services, not official staff	Panama	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
9/06/14	Hiraldo	Fernando	Deputy RR	Panama	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
9/06/14	Perez	José Manuel	Programme Officer	Panama	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
9/06/14	Perez	José Manuel	Programme Officer	Panama	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
10/06/14	Justiniano	Freddy	Regional Director	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview
10/06/14	Perez	José Manuel	Programme Officer	Panama	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
10/06/14	Jenkins	Alma	M&E specialist	Panama	UNICEF		In person interview
10/06/14	Lecaros	Carla	Expert on Mission, Evaluation Area	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview
10/06/14	Barathe	Richard	Head of the Monitoring and Country Office Support Unit	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview
10/06/14	Pinto Quintero	Erika	FAO, Sub-Regional Office	Panama	FAO, Sub-Regional Office		In person interview
10/06/14	Berrio	Edilma	M&E Representative	Panama	UNFPA		In person interview
11/06/14	Perez	José Manuel	Programme Officer	Panama	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
11/06/14	Lecaros	Carla	Expert on Mission, Evaluation Area	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview
11/06/14	Brusco	Andrea	Programme Officer	Panama	UNEP		In person interview
11/06/14	De La Cruz	Carmen	Gender Team Leader	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview
11/06/14	Adams	Jayne	Officer in Charge	Panama	WFP, Regional Office		In person interview
11/06/14	Didier	Gisèle	Programme Manager	Panama	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
11/06/14	Mira Salama	Jaime	Poverty and Environment Initiative	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview
12/06/14	Guzman	Sylvia	Regional Programme & CO Support Unit	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview
12/06/14	Bauza	Soledad	Country advisor, Regional Programme and CO support nit	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview
12/06/14	Coles de	Helen	GEF/PNUD Senior Technical Advisor (Ecosystems and Biodiversity)	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview
12/06/14	Paz	Clea	Regional Technical Advisor	Panama	UN-REDD		In person interview
12/06/14	Etcheverre	Ignacio	IT Atlas support	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview
13/06/14	Justiniano	Freddy	Regional Director	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview
13/06/14	Lecaros	Carla	Expert on Mission, Evaluation Area	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview

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	LAST	FIRST					
13/06/14	Agersnap	Louise	Head of Executive & Assistant	Panama	UNDG LAC Secretariat		In person interview
13/06/14	Landau	Maribel	Director	Panama	UNDP LAC Regional Office		In person interview
SLOVAKIA							
26/05/14	Ten	Marina	Programme Monitoring Analyst	Slovakia	UNDP Country Office		In person interview
26/05/14	Carrington	Daniela	Climate Change Advisor	Slovakia	UNDP Country Office	Energy and Environment Practice	In person interview
26/05/14	Macauley	John	Programme Specialist	Slovakia	UNDP Country Office	Health, HIV and Development Team	Skype interview
27/05/14	Adam	Olivier	Deputy Director	Slovakia	Regional Bureau for Europe and		In person interview
27/05/14	Krause	Martin	Energy and Environment Practice Leader	Slovakia	Regional Bureau for Europe and		In person interview
27/05/14	Bernardo	Robert	CD Policy Specialist	Slovakia	Regional Bureau for Europe and		In person interview
27/05/14	Cecchi	Francesco	Democratic Governance Practice	Slovakia	Regional Bureau for Europe and		In person interview
27/05/14	Gelz	Daniele	Aid for Trade Project Manager	Slovakia	Regional Bureau for Europe and	Poverty Reduction Practice	Skype interview
USA							
7/08/14	Wandel	Jens	Assistant Administrator and Director	USA	Bureau of Management		In person interview
7/08/14	Nanthikesan	Suppiramaniam	Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor	USA	Regional Bureau for Africa		In person interview
7/08/14	Pan Sloane	Ester		USA	Permanent Mission of the		In person interview
7/08/14	Gupta	Prakash		USA	Permanent Mission of India		In person interview
7/08/14	Herlihy	Vincent		USA	Permanent Mission of Ireland		In person interview
7/08/14	Bhatia	Vineet	Officer in Charge	USA	Regional Bureau for Asia and		In person interview
7/08/14	Sergelen	Dambadarjaa	Chief Management Support Unit and :al Point	USA	Regional Bureau for Asia and		In person interview
7/08/14	Menon	Saraswathi	Former Director	USA	UNDP Independent Evaluation		In person interview
7/08/14	Ruedas	Marta	Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy	USA	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and		In person interview

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DATE	NAME		POSITION	COUNTRY	OFFICE	PROGRAMME / UNIT	METHOD
	LAST	FIRST					
7/08/14	Karl	Judith	Executive Secretary,	USA	UNCDF		In person interview
7/08/14	Fyfe	Andrew	Evaluation Specialist	USA	UNCDF		In person interview
7/08/14	Sandhu-Rojon	Ruby	Deputy Director and OIC	USA	Regional Bureau for Africa		In person interview
VIETNAM							
21/07/14	Mehta	Prathiba	UNDP Resident Representative/UN Resident	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Senior Management	In person interview
21/07/14	Lan	Le Le	Head	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Team	In person interview
21/07/14	Lai	Dao Xuan	Assistant Country Director and Head of the	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Sustainable Development Cluster (SD)	In person interview
21/07/14	Huyen	Do Thi	Programme Analyst	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Sustainable Development Cluster (SD)	In person interview
21/07/14	Thu Hang	Vu Thi	Programme Analyst	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Sustainable Development Cluster (SD)	In person interview
21/07/14	Qunh Trang	Truong Thi	Project Officer	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Sustainable Development Cluster (SD)	In person interview
21/07/14	Loan	Ngo Thi	UNREDD Programme Officer	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Sustainable Development Cluster (SD)	In person interview
21/07/14	Hoffet	Nastassja	UNV Officer	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Sustainable Development Cluster (SD)	In person interview
22/07/14	My Hanh	Tran	Officer In Charge of cluster	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Governance and Participation Cluster	In person interview
22/07/14	Phong Tra	Bui	Programme Analyst	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Governance and Participation Cluster	In person interview
22/07/14	Schoemaeker	Deborah	Programme Analyst	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Governance and Participation Cluster	In person interview

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DATE	NAME		POSITION	COUNTRY	OFFICE	PROGRAMME / UNIT	METHOD
	LAST	FIRST					
22/07/14	Thi Mai	Nguyen	Programme Assistant	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Governance and Participation Cluster	In person interview
22/07/14	Thi Hoa	Ninh	Programme Associate	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Governance and Participation Cluster	In person interview
23/07/14	Azad	Babul	Project Results Planning and Monitoring	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Team	In person interview
23/07/14	Tien Phong	Nguyen	Assistant Country Director and Head of	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Inclusive and Economic Growth Cluster	In person interview
23/07/14	Bui Linh	Nguyen	Programme Analyst	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Inclusive and Economic Growth Cluster	In person interview
23/07/14	Thi Minh Tien	Tran	Programme Associate	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Inclusive and Economic Growth Cluster	In person interview
23/07/14	Thi Hai Yen	Nguyen	Programme Assistant	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Inclusive and Economic Growth Cluster	In person interview
23/07/14	Quinn	Fiona	Deputy Head of Development, Irish Aid, Ireland	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Staff from Other Donor Agencies	In person interview
24/07/14	Chamberlain	Louise	Country Director	Vietnam	UNDP Country Office	Senior Management	In person interview
24/07/14	Thi Hong Hanh	Nong	Head of Division and Government focal point for UNDP evaluation.	Vietnam	Foreign Economic Relations International Organizations and , Ministry of Planning and	Staff from the Partner Country Government	In person interview
ADDITIONAL PEOPLE MET							
06/07/14	Casar	Maria Eugenia	UN Under Secretary General and UNDP Associate Administrator	USA	Executive Office		In person interview
06/07/14	Bissainthe	Astrid	Assistant to Ms. Casar	USA	Executive Office		In person interview
06/07/14	Oliveira	Marielza	Programme Advisor	USA	Executive Office	Operations Support Group	In person interview
07/07/14	Sandhu-Rojon	Ruby	Deputy Director and OIC	USA	Regional Bureau for Africa		
07/07/14	Ruedas	Marta	Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy	USA	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and		

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DATE	NAME		POSITION	COUNTRY	OFFICE	PROGRAMME / UNIT	METHOD
	LAST	FIRST					
			Director		Recovery		

ANNEX 10: REVIEW TEAM MEMBERS

In response to requests from members of the Executive Board and UNDP management for further information concerning the appropriateness of the methods employed by the review, the following summary information is disclosed. Le Groupe-conseil Baastel ltee (herein referred to as Baastel) the Canadian consultancy company leading the assignment assembled a Review Team with the following combination of qualifications, experience and expertise, which it maintains are relevant and sufficient to conduct the assignment.

Dr. David Todd – Team Leader

David Todd, is a national of Barbados and the United Kingdom, has a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology and over 35 years of experience in the field of international development in several continents, covering major fields of development cooperation. He has many years as a staff member of the World Bank, DFID and European Commission, as well as in the private sector and academia. He has familiarity with UN systems, including as a consultant in evaluation and serving on the UNEG Coordinating Committee and as Co-Chair of a UNEG Task Force. He has served as a staff evaluation specialist in the World Bank (GEF Evaluation Office) and DFID and has conducted evaluation consultancies for World Bank, DFID, UNDP, UNDESA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Netherlands, GEF, ILO, African Development Bank, Government of Bangladesh and Government of Botswana.

Some of Dr Todd's most relevant experience includes:

- **Independent Evaluation of UN Delivering as One Pilot Countries**, for UNDESA. Team Coordinator of a team of international and national consultants for a major policy evaluation, which was presented to the UN General Assembly. Duration: July 2011 to June 2012.
- **African Development Bank Evaluation Office**. Consultant on Synthesis Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming, exploring concepts, practices and results across a broad range of donors and agencies.
- **Assessment of Development Results for Jamaica 2004-2010**, for UNDP Evaluation Office, where he was responsible for all aspects of evaluation of eight years of development assistance, including poverty reduction, human rights, environmental governance and disaster management. Duration: October 2010 to March 2011.
- **Senior Evaluation Specialist, World Bank, working in the Evaluation Office of the Global Environment Facility**, where he managed major evaluation programs, including: two year, \$1.8 million evaluation of the inter-relationship between local benefits and global environmental gains in the GEF portfolio, including focus on poverty and gender issues; and development and implementation of Impact Evaluations of GEF activities, including theory-based evaluations of Protected Area projects in East Africa. Duration: November 2002 to July 2009.
- **Social Development Adviser, Department for International Development of the United Kingdom. Evaluation Department**, where he promoted and advised on evaluation methodology in new DFID areas of concentration, notably conflict reduction; built partnerships with a range of institutions, including UNDP and UNICEF, UK Cabinet Office, Ministry of Defense and Foreign Office; and contributed towards development of Results Based Management concepts and practices. Duration: September 2000 to October 2002.

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Dr. Todd has numerous publications, including on evaluation methodology. Some recent publications include:

- 2012 **Independent Evaluation of Lessons Learned from Delivering as One.** (Team Leader and Principal Author). United Nations. New York.
- 2012 **Mainstreaming Gender Equality: A Road to Results or a Road to Nowhere?** (With Lee Risby). Operations Evaluation Department, African Development Bank. 2012
- 2011 **Natural Disaster Response: Lessons from Evaluations of the World Bank and Others.** (With Hazel Todd) **Evaluation Brief 16.** Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank, Washington DC.
- 2011 **The Full Road to Impact: the Experience of the Global Environment Facility Fourth Overall Performance Study,** (with R. van den Berg), in **Journal of Development Effectiveness,** Vol. 3. No. 3. Sept 2011. P409-433.
- 2011 **Assessment of Development Results: Evaluation of UNDP Contribution - Jamaica.** (Principal Author. With Neville Duncan, Aldrie Henry-Lee, David Lee, Lloyd Waller and Michael Witter). Evaluation Office, UNDP, New York
- 2010 **Outcome and Influence Evaluation of the UNEP Partnership for Clean Fuel and Vehicles (PCFV).** (With Hazel Todd) United Nations Environment Programme Evaluation Office. Nairobi.
- 2008 **Methodological Challenges of Evaluating the Impact of the Global Environment Facility's Biodiversity Programme,** (with Jos Vaessen), in **Evaluation and Programme Planning 31,** p 231-240.
- 2007 **GEF Evaluation Office Ethical Guidelines,** Evaluation Document No. 2, Washington DC.
- 2006 **The Role of Local Benefits in Global Environmental Programs** (189 pages). (With J. Soussan and L. Risby). Global Environment Facility Evaluation Office, Washington DC.
- 2006 **Science and Society: Lessons from GEF Environmental Conservation Activities.** (With L. Risby, J. Soussan and M. Cernea). Chapter 44 in **Changing Lives,** Alexandria, Egypt, January 2007.
- 1998 **Evaluation of Netherlands-Funded NGOs in Bangladesh, 1972 – 1996** (364 pages). (Principal Author), Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Policy and Operations Evaluation Department, The Hague, Netherlands.

Professional Affiliations/Committees

- 2008/9 **International Programme for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET),** IEG-Carleton University: **Trainer** in Review of Outcomes to Impact Methodology
- 2008/9 **University of Antwerp, Institute of Development Policy and Management,** M.A. in Development Evaluation and Management, Visiting Lecturer.
- 2008/9 **Network of Networks on Impact Evaluation (NONIE):** Steering Committee member.
- 2008/9 **United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG):** Coordinating Committee member.
- 2008/9 **UNEG Impact Evaluation Task Force:** Co-Chair.

Goberdhan Singh – Senior Review Expert/Deputy Team Leader

Goberdhan Singh, a Guyanese and Canadian citizen, was formerly Director General of Evaluation at the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Now an independent freelance consultant, he offers a wealth of knowledge and experience in the field of international development, especially in evaluating development assistance initiatives and investments, to which he devoted the greater part of his 30-year career with CIDA. His evaluation experience encompasses complex strategic multi-partner joint evaluations, policy evaluations, country programme evaluations, sector and thematic evaluations, and other programme and project evaluations in a wide range of sectors and countries. His strong multi-disciplinary background from his studies in the Natural Sciences as well as the Social Sciences, with specialization in international development, international political economy and applied social science research methods, coupled with his expertise in different management approaches enable him to take a systematic and holistic approach that results in high quality, professional work. He is very knowledgeable about aid effectiveness issues. He is valued in the evaluation community for his advice, which is informed by his extensive experience and grounded in innovative ideas, impartiality, integrity, independent thinking and pragmatism.

Some of Mr. Singh's most relevant mandates include:

- ***Strengthening and improving the value-added of Evaluation to CIDA:*** He successfully dealt with the issue of strengthening the function and improving the value-added to the organization as the former Director, and later Director General of Evaluation at CIDA. He elevated the profile from a Division led by a Director to a Directorate led by a DG at the central level, implemented a more independent governance structure with a majority of external members on the Evaluation Committee, and improved the proportion of good quality decentralised evaluations from 66 percent to above 80 percent within a 3 year period. The function received the highest rating for 6 consecutive years in the annual independent assessments by the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada, one of only three departments across the government that could make that claim.
- The ***Development Effectiveness Review of United Nations Development Programme***, covering the development investments of the UNDP over the previous five years, using the new approach he developed and had endorsed by the DAC Network on Development Evaluation to Assess the Development Effectiveness of Multilateral Organizations. Duration: April 2011 to December 2011. (as CIDA Evaluation Director General)
- **Peer Review of the Evaluation Function of Belgian Development Cooperation** as input to the renewal and enhancement of the function by the Belgian Parliament
- The **Peer Review of the Evaluation Function of UNICEF**, a joint initiative involving Norway and Ireland in which CIDA played a lead role under Mr. Singh's leadership. (2007)

Maureen Wang'ati – Senior Review Expert

Maureen Wang'ati, from Kenya, is a Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Expert who holds a B.Sc in Human Ecology and M.Ed in PME. She has over 20 years of experience in PME of local and international development efforts of development agencies. Her focus areas are: Aid Effectiveness, Governance, Law Order and Justice, Agriculture and Food Security, Livestock, Dairy Development and Bee Keeping, Public Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition, HIV/AIDS and Reproductive/Sexual Health, Education and Life Skills, Refugees and Resettlement, Child Protection, Emergency Response, Human Resources and Organizational Development, Human and Women's Rights, Child Labour, Environment and Climate Change, Cross Border Trade, Micro Enterprise Development, and

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National Programmes. Maureen has designed and implemented comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System for different organizations. She has led international team of experts on numerous case studies, midterm and end term reviews, and high level national evaluations involving multi-disciplinary, and multi-cultural professionals of various ages, disciplines and countries on consultancy assignments for international development partners including UNICEF, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UN/ILO, World Bank, DFID, EU/EC, USAID, and many other international donors, regional bodies, ministries and local institutions. Maureen is committed to the field of evaluation and brings a wealth of experience and skills through her pragmatic approach to the field and through capacity building to promote future professional work in this important field.

Relevant experiences include:

- A recently completed a mission for COMESA commanded by UNDP for strengthening institutional capacities to accelerate pro-poor growth and accountability in Sub-Saharan Africa programme, which include: a review and finalization of the COMESA M&E guidelines and policy; the development of members states' on-line reporting system; the revision of indicators and conceptual framework and training and capacity building in RBM and the M&E in five African COMESA member states.
- The implementation of the 9th EDF programme (2007-2010) for the NAO, Government of Solomon Islands. Provided M&E capacity building support to the Planning Directorate of the Government of Solomon Islands South Pacific on the EU funded programmes.
- The global evaluation of UNICEF's support to Life Skills Education (LSE). Responsible for the Kenya Case Study and also a member of the international GLSE evaluation team
- Learning Assessment of the International Development Law Organization HQ and Kenya's '*Support to Implementation of the New Kenya Constitution*' Programme with law reform organs including the Judiciary, CSOs and NGOs and Constitution Implementation Commissions and Judiciary Training Institutions.

Burt Perrin – Quality Assurance Advisor

Burt Perrin, an independent consultant based in France, has over 35 years' practical experience in evaluation, policy development and strategic planning in a variety of public policy domains. His clients embrace a wide range of bilateral and multilateral organizations including numerous UN agencies, the European Commission, governments, NGOs and private organizations around the world. Burt works extensively as a quality assurance expert for a variety of organizations commenting both on evaluation systems as well as with respect to the quality of specific evaluations (that frequently include syntheses of a number of individual evaluations). He also provides expert advice regarding the design and management of evaluation processes and systems, as well as regarding design of M&E plans and methodologies and guidance on interpretation and presentation. He has carried out reviews or consultations with respect to the organization and policies of the evaluation functions of a number of leading international organizations.

One of Burt's particular areas of expertise and the primary focus of his current practice concerns how multilateral and bilateral humanitarian and development organizations, as well as governments and other public sector organizations and NGOs, can take an approach to planning and evaluation that facilitates a true results orientation focusing on meaningful outcomes, going beyond providing outputs and meeting targets that may have limited validity. His obsession is with making evaluation useful, to aid in improved strategies, policies, and programs that result in improved lives for people, communities, and society. Burt takes a methodologically

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diverse and practical approach to his work, involving to the extent possible a collaborative approach with his clients.

Relevant assignments include:

- A review of the independence and effectiveness of the evaluation function of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), including inter alia the mandate and scope of the evaluation function and human resource considerations with respect to recruitment/appointment and dismissal, performance reviews, tenure and possibility of extension of the head of the department and recruitment, mobility, and management of personnel, and knowledge management. (2008)
- Comprehensive forward-looking review and assessment of the evaluation function at the African Development Bank (AfDB) that has contributed to a new strategy and approach to evaluation and also to knowledge management. (2011)
- An in-depth assessment of the quality of evaluations of DFID, taking into account quality considerations in every stage of the evaluation process as well as implications for management of the evaluation process as well as how evaluation information could be better used (including knowledge management considerations), on behalf of DFID's Independent Advisory Committee on Development Effectiveness (report entitled: *Review of the Quality of DFID's Evaluations: A Delicate Balancing Act*). (2009)
- Team Leader Consultant to the Peer Review of the Evaluation System at IFAD (United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development). (2009-2010)

Alexandre Daoust – Review Expert

Alexandre Daoust (B.A., Economics and Policy; M.A., International Economic Development) is a Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) **credentialed evaluation consultant** at Baastel. He is a Monitoring, Evaluation and Results-based Management specialist. His main areas of expertise are socio-economic development (including Aid for Trade, export led development and trade related technical assistance) and governance. He has also worked on environmental and disaster risk management projects and programmes. His particular skill-sets include the evaluation of policies, projects, programmes and institutions; the development of monitoring and evaluation systems; and strategic planning and programming. He has a solid background in statistical analysis, including the use of SPSS software as well as survey questionnaire development. In addition to his field missions in the context of evaluation mandates with Baastel, Alexandre Daoust has worked in the planning and management of export-based economic development projects in Central America and conducted research on civil society empowerment in Brazil. He has a Canadian security clearance, the UN Advanced Security in the Field Training certificates (I & II) and is an active member of the CES.

His clients include Brazil's Ministry of Justice, Canadian Heritage, CIDA (now DFATD), the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, the European Commission, the Fundação Getulio Vargas University, the IDB, the International Finance Corporation, the International Trade Centre, the OAS, Oxfam-Québec, the Ministry of Justice of Canada, the UNDP (GEF), the US State Department and the World Food Programme.

Recent assignments include:

- 2013-ongoing: External Evaluation of UNCTAD'S Development Account 7th Tranche Project (Trade Facilitation Project)

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- 2012-2013: Impact Evaluation of Food for Assets (FFA) of the World Food Programme (WFP) with Guatemala as part of a global evaluation of FFA in five countries.

2012: Review of Evaluations: Identifying Good Practices and Produce Practical Recommendations for Poverty Impact Reporting for the International Finance Corporation

ANNEX 11: OVERVIEW OF IEO ACTIVITIES IN RESPONSE TO THE 2011 EVALUATION POLICY

This note provides information on what the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) has done since the approval of the revised UNDP Evaluation Policy in 2011. It is structured in the same way as the responsibilities of the IEO as set out in the policy itself.

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

What the policy states	What IEO does
Prepares and periodically reviews and updates UNDP policy for evaluation;	The IEO is providing administrative and logistical support to the independent evaluation policy review. Based on the recommendations of the review, it will work with other UNDP units to revise the evaluation policy for submission to the Executive Board (EB) in 2015.
Submits annually its costed programme of work to the Executive Board;	The costed programme of work is included in the Annual Report on Evaluation (ARE) which is presented to the EB at its annual session in June each year.
Reports annually to the Executive Board on the function, compliance, coverage, quality, findings and follow-up to evaluations conducted by UNDP and its associated funds and programmes ⁹³ ;	This is done through the ARE. A new expanded format for the ARE will be produced in 2014 (i.e. 2013 ARE). The EO Director also engages directly with the EB president on an ongoing basis.
Maintains a system to make all evaluation reports, management response and the status of follow-up actions publicly accessible;	The Evaluation Resource Centre (ERC) is the publically accessible system for making all UNDP evaluations and management responses available.

⁹³ The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and UN Volunteers (UNV).

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Regularly alerts senior management to emerging evaluation-related issues of corporate significance, without taking part in decision-making.	The IEO Director has observer status in the Organizational Performance Group (OPG) ⁹⁴ and reports to OPG formally twice a year.
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CONDUCT OF EVALUATIONS

What the policy states	What IEO does
Promotes national ownership and leadership of, and capacity development in evaluation through country-led and joint evaluations, while ensuring the independence, quality and utility of evaluation;	All ADRs look for opportunities to use national evaluation systems, work closely with national counterparts and use national consultants where appropriate.
Develops annually the programme of work for independent evaluations, based on consultations with the Executive Board, senior management, the associated funds and programmes and other stakeholders, and in response to emerging issues that the Evaluation Office may identify;	The AREs include a two-year programme of work. In 2013 the Executive Board requested the EO to prepare a medium-term programme of work. The programme covers the same period as the UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-2017) and was prepared in full consultation with stakeholders including UNDP senior management and the EB. It was approved by the EB in January 2014.
Conducts thematic evaluations, programme evaluations such as the Assessment of Development Results (ADRs) at the country level, evaluations of global, regional, and South-South programmes, and other evaluations as required;	Since 2011 the EO has conducted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 thematic evaluations • 20 ADRs • 7 other programme evaluations See list below for details.
Ensures that independent evaluations provide strategic and representative coverage of UNDP programmes and results and are completed in a timely manner to feed into decision-making;	Thematic evaluations were designed to cover the key areas of the Strategic Plan. Most recent thematic and programmatic evaluations were planned specifically to feed into the development of the new UNDP Strategic Plan.
Conducts independent evaluations in line with best international evaluation standards, including the UNEG norms and standards, Code of Conduct and Ethical Guidelines, and contributes to innovation in evaluation methodology and dissemination of good	- An international evaluation advisory panel (EAP) has been put in place to ensure evaluations are in line with international best practice. - All consultants required to sign the <i>code of conduct</i>

⁹⁴ The OPG is chaired by the Associate Administrator and comprises all Bureau Deputy Directors. It advises on key priorities for operational policy to support organizational performance and takes decisions on changes to operational policy and procedures where appropriate.

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practices.	<i>for evaluation in the UN system.</i> - Since 2012 there has been increasing participation of IEO staff in international conferences to disseminate good practices (see section 3 on KM below)
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Thematic evaluations

- Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Poverty Reduction
- Evaluation of UNDP role in Conflict-affected Countries in the Context of UN Peace Operations
- Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to South-South and Triangular Cooperation
- Evaluation of UNDP Partnership with Global Funds and Philanthropic Foundations
- Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes

Assessments of Development Results⁹⁵

- Africa: Niger, Angola, Cote D'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Kenya, DR Congo, Liberia
- Asia and the Pacific: Timor Leste, Afghanistan, India, Nepal, Pacific Islands, Sri Lanka
- Europe and the CIS: Croatia, Moldova
- Arab States: Algeria, Iraq, Djibouti, UAE
- Latin America and the Caribbean: Costa Rica

Other Programme Evaluations

- Evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan (2008-2013)
- Evaluation of the Global Programme (2009-2013)
- Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Africa (2008-2013)
- Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Arab States (2010-2013)
- Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Asia and the Pacific (2008-2013)
- Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Europe and the CIS (2011-2013)
- Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (2008-2013)

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PARTNERSHIPS AND KM

⁹⁵ These ADRs were largely conducted during 2011-2013. Other ADR that were conducted earlier but completed in this period have not been included.

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What the policy states	What IEO does
Maintains a publicly accessible repository of evaluations;	All UNDP evaluations received by IEO are posted on the ERC. Independent evaluations (i.e. conducted by the EO) are also available on the UNDP public website
Distils evaluation findings and lessons for dissemination in appropriate formats for targeted audiences;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing synthesis of ADRs and decentralised evaluations for use in Thematic Evaluations as well as in external assessments of UNDP. - Key findings reported annually in the ARE
Supports the development of learning groups and communities of practice in evaluation by establishing and supporting knowledge networks;	UNDP EvalNet group is used as well as UNEG communities of practice.
Engages in partnership with professional evaluation networks, including UNEG, the Development Assistance Committee Network on Evaluation, the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the multilateral development banks, and regional organizations to enhance quality and credibility.	<p>Fully engages with UNEG.</p> <p>The IEO is an observer on the DAC Network on Evaluation and the Evaluation Cooperation Group, and the IEO Director attends the annual meetings. Also engages with global and regional networks of professional evaluators.</p>

SUPPORT TO UN REFORM

What the policy states	What IEO does
Ensures that evaluation in UNDP contributes to and remains consistent with United Nations policy and reforms;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IEO manuals and guidance were developed in line with UNEG norms and standards. - Job descriptions in line with UNEG competencies.
Supports the harmonization of the evaluation function in the United Nations system;	Through participation in UNEG task force work.
Prioritizes joint evaluations with United Nations agencies;	There are several joint evaluations with GEF (SGP, protected areas) including some ADRs. Another example is the <i>Evaluation of Joint Gender Programmes</i> with UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, etc. Plus PEI (with UNEP) and UN-REDD (with UNEP and FAO)
Contributes evaluative evidence to system-wide evaluations;	No system-wide evaluations have taken place in this period.
Contributes to the annual work programme of	- UNDP IEO houses the UNEG Secretariat and

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UNEG.	finances one full-time UNEG position - A senior IEO staff member is Executive Coordinator of UNEG - IEO staff belonged to UNEG task forces (recently abolished) and contribute to UNEG products
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MANAGEMENT

The Director of the Independent Evaluation Office is accountable for: (i) Managing the Independent Evaluation Office budget, including contributions from partners; (ii) Managing the recruitment of the Independent Evaluation Office staff, in line with UNDP recruitment procedures and UNEG competencies for evaluators, taking the final decision on selection of staff.

Table 1: EO expenditures 2010-2013 (\$'000)

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total expenditure	6,935	7,351	7,937	8,278
Regular resources	6,700	6,786	7,427	7,624
Other resources	235	568	510	655

Table 2: EO staff by level

Level	Male	Female	Total
D2	1	0	1
D1	1	0	1
P5	4	3	7
P4	1	3	4
P3	1	1	2
P2	0	1	1
G6	0	3	3
G5	0	3	3

SUPPORT TO DECENTRALISED EVALUATION

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What the policy states	What IEO does
Sets evaluation standards for planning, conducting and using decentralised evaluations, and assesses the quality of evaluation reports;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addendum to the Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results (Yellow handbook) prepared after the new evaluation policy approved (June 2011). - A companion guide on outcome evaluation prepared (December 2011). - A system for quality assessment of decentralised evaluations was introduced and currently reviews all decentralised evaluation reports.
Disseminates methodology and good practice standards for evaluation management in UNDP;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An e-learning course on evaluation launched in 2012. - In 2013 IEO supported the Country Office Support Initiative (COSI) managed by the Operations Support Group to help country offices improve their M&E capacities.
Provides a roster of evaluation experts;	A roster is maintained on the ERC and was expanded in 2012. It now contains more than 80 vetted members. It is designed for use by regional bureaus as well as country office staff.
Supports a network of evaluation practitioners;	The UNDP EvalNet group and UNDP Teamworks are used to support networks of practitioners
Maintains a public depository of evaluation resources to facilitate sharing of evaluative knowledge.	The ERC was maintained and strengthened to allow more effective search and to integrate the quality assessment system for decentralised evaluations.

The 2011 Evaluation Policy clearly delineated the role of the EO and that of the regional bureaus and other units in UNDP. The EO has adhered to this division of labour and thus provides only limited support as set out in the table above.

NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY

The evaluation policy states that the Evaluation Office should support national evaluation capacity development and (a) provide a forum for discussion of evaluation issues confronting countries and enable participants to draw on recent and innovative experiences of other countries and (b) facilitate the preparation of the ground for formulation of longer-term initiatives to strengthen national capacities for public policy evaluation through South-South and trilateral cooperation. Since 2009, three National Evaluation Capacity (NEC) conferences have been held, two since 2011:

- First NEC Conference: 15-17 December 2009, Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco

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- Second NEC Conference: 12-14 September 2011, Johannesburg, South Africa
<http://web.undp.org/evaluation/workshop/nec/2011/>
- Third NEC Conference: 29 Sep - 2 Oct 2013, São Paulo, Brazil <http://www.nec2013.org/>

The IEO is working with the UNDP International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth in Brasilia to ensure adequate follow-up to the São Paulo NEC Conference. This work includes supporting communities of practice and monitoring implementation of the NEC commitments agreed in São Paulo.

ANNEX 12: REVIEW MATRIX FROM INCEPTION REPORT

Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
<i>For Overall UNDP Evaluation Function</i>					
<p>Relevance of the policy:</p> <p>To what extent is the policy relevant for improving the performance of UNDP and UNV and UNCDF?</p>	Is the policy clearly understood by key constituents of the organization?	- Familiarity of key constituents with policy requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents • External documents, including reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews • Stakeholder responses • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review. • Individual and focus group interviews • As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either internet-based or by email • Visits to regional centers • Visits to countries • Telephone and video interviews • Discussions in New York and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy. • Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. • Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability. • Survey analysis using Baastel software. • Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. • Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of evaluation policy.
	Has it effectively influenced the systems and practices of the organization in improving the performance of UNDP, as well as UNV and UNCDF?	- Changes in organization systems and practices due to evaluation findings			
	Does the policy meet professionally recognized international standards for an evaluation policy for multilateral agencies similar to UNDP?	- Content and features of the UNDP policy vs. those of other orgs.			

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
				Bonn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of Theory-based analysis.
<p>Effectiveness of Policy Implementation</p> <p>Has the policy been implemented in a manner which ensures that the intended results are achieved?</p>	<p>Did the parts of UNDP listed below fulfil their key functions as outlined in the evaluation policy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Executive Board of UNDP as custodian of the evaluation policy • The Evaluation Office of UNDP as custodian of the evaluation as defined in the evaluation policy • The Administrator of UNDP, being accountable for UNDP results • The senior management of practice and policy bureau, UNV, UNCDF, regional bureau and country offices that manage global, regional, country and thematic programs. 	<p>Decisions of Executive Board on evaluation matters and actions taken by these key players in response to these decisions.</p> <p>Level of cooperation, coordination and complementarity of the units on work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents • External documents, including reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews • Stakeholder responses • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Individual and focus group interviews • As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either internet-based or by email • Visits to regional centers • Visits to countries • Telephone and video interviews • Discussions in New York and Bonn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy. • Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. • Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability. • Survey analysis using Baastel software. • Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. • Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of evaluation policy. • Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
	Did the evaluation functions of UNDP and its associated funds and programs work effectively together?				Theory-based analysis.
Capacity and resources: Are relevant units equipped with required specialized and technical expertise to fulfil their evaluation mandates?	<p>Are the units listed below equipped with required specialized and technical expertise to fulfil their evaluation mandates?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Evaluation Office • Practice and policy bureau • UNV • UNCDF • Regional bureau and country offices <p>Are the evaluation-related programs of work of the listed units adequately financed to allow the conduct and commissioning of credible and quality evaluations in a timely manner?</p> <p>Are the budget and evaluation plans linked so that it is clear that</p>	<p>- Org charts, staff numbers and job descriptions of the various units.</p> <p>- Work plans and Budgets of the various units</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents • External documents, including reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews • Stakeholder responses • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Individual and focus group interviews • As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either internet-based or by email • Visits to regional centers • Visits to countries • Telephone and video interviews <p>Discussions in New York and Bonn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy. • Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. • Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability. • Survey analysis using Baastel software. • Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. • Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of evaluation policy. <p>Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of</p>

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
	adequate resources are allocated?				Theory-based analysis.
<i>For Independent Evaluations of the Evaluation Office</i>					
<p>To what extent are evaluations conducted by EO independent?</p>	<p>Did the Executive Board and the Administrator safeguard the independence of the function and foster an enabling environment for evaluation?</p>	<p>- Decisions and Actions taken by the Exec. Board on issues of independence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents • External documents, including reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews • Stakeholder responses • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Individual and focus group interviews • As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either internet-based or by email • Visits to regional centers • Visits to countries • Telephone and video interviews • Discussions in New York and Bonn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy. • Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. • Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability. • Survey analysis using Baastel software. • Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. • Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of evaluation policy. • Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of Theory-based analysis.
	<p>Is the Evaluation Office located independently from the other management functions so that it is free from undue influence?</p>				
	<p>Do the Executive Board and Administrator ensure that evaluations are conducted in an impartial and independent fashion?</p>	<p>- Org chart of UNDP and reporting lines of the EO</p>			
	<p>Do they ensure that evaluators have the freedom to conduct their work without repercussions for career development?</p>	<p>Feedback from evaluators hired to conduct evaluations</p>			
	<p>Do evaluators hired by Evaluation Office operate in an independent manner?</p>				

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
<p>Credibility:</p> <p>To what extent are evaluations conducted by EO credible?</p>	Do the Evaluation Office evaluations meet the quality criteria as stipulated in the UNEG Norms and Standards?	<p>- Results from Meta-evaluation of a sample of EO evaluations</p> <p>stakeholders participation in Evaluation Reference Groups, Advisory Groups</p> <p>- Compliance with the ethics norm of UNEG</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents • External documents, including reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews • Stakeholder responses • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Individual and focus group interviews • As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either internet-based or by email • Visits to regional centers • Visits to countries • Telephone and video interviews • Discussions in New York and Bonn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy. • Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. • Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability. • Survey analysis using Baastel software. • Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. • Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of evaluation policy. • Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of Theory-based analysis.
	Do Evaluation Office evaluations have meaningful and transparent consultation with stakeholders?				
	Are Evaluation Office evaluations conducted with ethical considerations as expressed in the policy?				
<p>Utility:</p> <p>To what extent</p>	Are Evaluation Office products (programmatic and thematic evaluations) optimal for promoting accountability and	-Learning products prepared from EO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Individual and focus group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy.

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
are evaluations conducted by EO useful and used?	learning in the organization?	evaluations , disseminated in different languages	<p>documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> External documents, including reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews Stakeholder responses Observation 	<p>interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either internet-based or by email Visits to regional centers Visits to countries Telephone and video interviews Discussions in New York and Bonn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability. Survey analysis using Baastel software. Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of evaluation policy. Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of Theory-based analysis.
	Are the evaluations designed and completed in a timely fashion to enhance utility?				
	Are Evaluation Office evaluations found to be useful for learning, accountability and improvements?	- Existence of MRs for the evaluations , evaluation plan compliance			
	Have management responses been prepared in a systematic manner to independent evaluations?	- Reports on follow-ups to implementation of actions in the MRs by units .			
	Has there been follow up to independent evaluations in a timely and comprehensive manner?				
	Did the Executive Board use evaluation and reports on compliance with evaluation policy for accountability, and draw on the findings and recommendations of evaluation for oversight and approval of corporate policy, strategy and programs?	-Learning products from EO evaluations disseminated in different languages			

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	Have the Evaluation Office evaluations followed requirements for effective dissemination and use of evaluations, as required in the evaluation policy (e.g. translation of summaries into the three languages)?				
Evaluation Coverage: Coverage of the investments by the organizations	Does the Evaluation Policy provide for coverage of the various types of investments by the organizations (UNDP, UNCDF, UNV)	- Number and Types of Evaluations by the EO, UNCDF and UNV	Desk Review Interviews	Comparison of types of programs evaluated with types of programs and investments funded by the organizations	
Partnership in evaluation: Has EO developed and used the full range of	Has the Evaluation Office effectively engaged in partnership in evaluation by building a network of practitioners, promoting joint and country-led evaluations and engaging in the work of UN Evaluation Group?	EO's activities in national eval. cap. Dev't, with national evaluation associations,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents • External documents, including 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Individual and focus group interviews • As appropriate, self- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy. • Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations.

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
partnerships necessary to ensure the independence, quality and utility of its evaluations?	Has the Evaluation Office been engaged in partnership to nurture a collaborative relationship with national evaluation institution and associations?	and with UNEG	<p>reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder responses Observation 	<p>completion surveys, either internet-based or by email</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visits to regional centers Visits to countries Telephone and video interviews Discussions in New York and Bonn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability. Survey analysis using Baastel software. Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of evaluation policy. Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of Theory-based analysis.
<i>For Decentralised Evaluations</i>					
<p>Roles and Responsibilities:</p> <p>Did managers of the programme units / UNV / UNCDF fulfil</p>	<p>Did they:</p> <p>(i) Ensure the evaluability of the programs?</p> <p>(ii) Ensure effective monitoring?</p> <p>(iii) Identify priority areas for evaluation?</p>	<p>- proportion of programs with evaluability studies;</p> <p>- % of Country Offices with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents External documents, including reviews by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Individual and focus group interviews As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy. Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. Interview and focus group analysis

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
their roles and responsibilities, as outlined in the policy, to ensure that evaluations are effective, credible, independent and useful?	(iv) Establish an appropriate institutional arrangement to manage evaluation?	M&E units ; - Work plans of programme units / UNV / UNCDF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews • Stakeholder responses • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> internet-based or by email • Visits to regional centers • Visits to countries • Telephone and video interviews • Discussions in New York and Bonn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> using templates to ensure comparability. • Survey analysis using Baastel software. • Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. • Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of evaluation policy. • Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of Theory-based analysis.
	(v) Ensure adequate resources for evaluation?				
	(vi) Safeguard the independence of the evaluation process and product?	- Actions in response to Exec. Board decisions on issues of indep.			
	(vii) Ensure the conduct of mandatory evaluations were in line with established quality standards?	-Examples of adjustments to programs in response to evaluation findings and recommendat i-ons			
	(viii) Promote joint evaluation work with the UN system and other partners?				
	(ix) Prepare management responses to all evaluations?				
	(x) Draw on evaluation findings to improve the quality of programs, guide strategic decision making on future programming and positioning, and share knowledge on development experience?	Communicati o-ns on guidance and oversight matters between EO			

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
	Did EO provide sufficient guidance, assistance and oversight to ensure that decentralised evaluations could achieve their objectives? What are limitations and challenges?	and units			
	Is there effective oversight for decentralised evaluations?				
Compliance & Accountability:	What are existing challenges in meeting compliance?	- Incidence of reporting on issues of compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Individual and focus group interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy.
Have requirements for evaluation compliance been met by programme units?	Are there limitations with the current requirements for compliance?	- Views of managers and staff on compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External documents, including reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either internet-based or by email • Visits to regional centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. • Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability.
	Have programme audits consistently looked at evaluation compliance issues?	Audit reports on issues of compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder responses • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits to countries • Telephone and video interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey analysis using Baastel software. • Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. • Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions in New York and Bonn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> achievement of objectives of evaluation policy. Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of Theory-based analysis.
<p>Capacity and resources:</p> <p>Is there adequate institutional capacity to meet the evaluation policy requirements in the organization as a whole, specifically at the country and regional level?</p>	<p>Are evaluations adequately and realistically financed in the evaluation plans of programme units?</p> <hr/> <p>Are evaluations carried out in a cost-effective manner?</p>	<p>Evaluation plans and budgets of a sample of programme units</p> <hr/> <p>Actual vs. planned expenditures on evaluations conducted by programme units</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents External documents including reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews Stakeholder responses Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Individual and focus group interviews As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either internet-based or by email Visits to regional centers Visits to countries Telephone and video interviews Discussions in New York and Bonn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy. Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability. Survey analysis using Baastel software. Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of evaluation policy. Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of

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					Theory-based analysis.
<p>Independence and Impartiality:</p> <p>Are decentralised evaluations carried out in a transparent manner, free from bias and potential conflict of interest?</p>	<p>Do programme units ensure that evaluators have the freedom to conduct their work without due pressure?</p> <hr/> <p>Do evaluators hired by the programme unites operate in an independent manner?</p>	<p>- Incidences of attempts by managers to interfere or change or influence the findings and conclusions of evaluations</p> <p>- Views from evaluators hired to conduct the evaluations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents • External documents, including reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews • Stakeholder responses • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Individual and focus group interviews • As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either internet-based or by email • Visits to regional centers • Visits to countries • Telephone and video interviews • Discussions in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy. • Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. • Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability. • Survey analysis using Baastel software. • Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. • Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
				New York and Bonn	<p>evaluation policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of Theory-based analysis.
<p>Credibility:</p> <p>Do centralized evaluations meet the quality criteria as stipulated in the UNEG Norms and Standards?</p>	<p>Do decentralised evaluations have meaningful and transparent consultations with stakeholders?</p> <hr/> <p>Are decentralised evaluations conducted with ethical considerations, as expressed in the policy?</p>	<p>- Results from Meta-evaluation of a sample of decentralised evaluations and from IEO independent Quality Assessments</p> <p>- Compliance with ethic norms of UNEG,</p> <p>- Views of independent consultants engaged to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents • External documents, including reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews • Stakeholder responses • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Individual and focus group interviews • As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either internet-based or by email • Visits to regional centers • Visits to countries • Telephone and video interviews • Discussions in New York and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy. • Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. • Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability. • Survey analysis using Baastel software. • Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. • Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of evaluation policy.

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
		do evaluations		<p>Bonn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case studies of GEF, UNV and UNCDF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of Theory-based analysis.
<p>Utility:</p> <p>Are decentralised evaluations used by the program units for learning and improvements?</p>	<p>Have management responses (MRs) been prepared in a systematic manner to all evaluations?</p> <p>Has there been follow up to evaluations in a timely and comprehensive manner?</p>	<p>- % of evaluations with MRs</p> <p>- reports on follow-ups to implementation of actions in MRs by units</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents External documents, including reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews Stakeholder responses Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Individual and focus group interviews As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either internet-based or by email Visits to regional centers Visits to countries Telephone and video interviews Discussions in New York and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy. Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability. Survey analysis using Baastel software. Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of evaluation policy.

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
				Bonn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of Theory-based analysis.
<p>Partnership in evaluation:</p> <p>Have the programme units been engaged in partnership to nurture a collaborative relationship with national evaluation institution and associations?</p>	<p>If so, what is the nature of these partnerships, and how have they added value to the decentralised evaluations?</p>	<p>Programme units with partnership / funding agreements with national evaluation association and institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP, UNV, UNCDF internal documents • External documents, including reviews by individual donors, academic papers, evaluations, Peer reviews • Stakeholder responses • Observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Individual and focus group interviews • As appropriate, self-completion surveys, either internet-based or by email • Visits to regional centers • Visits to countries • Telephone and video interviews • Discussions in New York and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Theory of Change for intended results chains of Evaluation policy. • Meta Evaluation of sample of central and decentralised evaluations. • Interview and focus group analysis using templates to ensure comparability. • Survey analysis using Baastel software. • Triangulation of results on key questions from different data sources and methods. • Assessment of key aspects of performance against Theory-based results chains leading towards achievement of objectives of evaluation policy.

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Criteria / Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data collection Methods / Tools	Data Analysis Methods
				Bonn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing of conclusions on key evaluation criteria on basis of Theory-based analysis.

ANNEX 13: LETTER FOR DISCLOSURE

United Nations Development Programme



8 September 2014

Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Dear Mr. Todd,

We acknowledge receipt of the “Review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy - Draft Final Report” dated 18 August 2014 and forwarded to UNDP on that same date by the Independent Evaluation Office. The draft report raises a number of issues that have prompted the UNDP Administrator to review any evidence that may help inform pertinent management decisions.

According to the draft document received, findings and conclusions presented were based, among other sources of evidence, on electronic surveys “conducted with external consultants who conducted decentralized evaluations, M&E staff and Resident Representatives.”

In order for UNDP to respond to the Administrator’s directive, we would like to request that Baastel Itee discloses to UNDP the following materials:

- Copies of the questionnaires applied to the 3 groups surveyed;
- Any preceding questions or notices presented to survey participants informing them of survey purposes and requesting their participation, as well as any preceding interviewer or respondent instructions given to survey respondents prior to their answering respective questionnaires;
- Details about the sample design, including: size, eligibility for participation, any screening procedures used, the nature of any oversamples, and compensation/incentives offered (if any) for participation; and
- Full survey datasets for the 3 surveys conducted – with respondent identifiers deleted to strictly respect respondent confidentiality and adhere to the highest survey research ethical standards – containing responses obtained from UNDP external consultants and staff.

Mr. David Todd
Team Leader, Review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy
Le Groupe-conseil Baastel Itée
85 Victoria Street
Gatineau QC J8X 2A3
CANADA

One United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017 | www.undp.org

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United Nations Development Programme



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

As the Independent Evaluation Office informed us that the final report is expected to be completed by 20 September 2014, we would appreciate receiving the requested materials at your earliest convenience, in order that our analysis can also inform our reactions to the draft and the management response we are expected to provide thereafter. Kindly provide materials requested to Marielza Oliveira at marielza.oliveira@undp.org with cc to Stan Nkwain at stan.nkwain@undp.org and Chitose Noguchi at chitose.noguchi@undp.org.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Magdy Martínez-Solimán', is positioned above the typed name.

Magdy Martínez-Solimán
Director, a.i.
Bureau for Policy and Programme Support

**Review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy
FINAL REPORT**

Mr. Magdy Martinez-Soliman
Director, e.i.
Bureau for Policy and Programme Support
United Nations Development Programme
304 East 45th Street, FF-3086
New York, NY 10017

Dear Mr. Martinez-Soliman,

Many thanks for your letter of 8th September 2014, in which you request, on behalf of the UNDP Administrator, certain materials from the independent review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy. We have, in fact, already received a request from a number of Executive Board members asking us to ensure that the Final Report contains a detailed Annex on the review methodology. Naturally, the draft report circulated earlier has only a limited presentation of this element and we have always intended to present further details in the forthcoming final document, which is currently under preparation.

With regard to the specific survey, which you mention, of decentralised evaluation consultants, IEO issued invitations to all (100%) such consultants, who had conducted evaluations during the study period, so the entire population was invited. No incentives were offered for participation. Responses were made through an electronic survey programme directly to the review team in Baastel and were not seen by IEO or any other internal UNDP party. As disclosed in Footnote 22 of the draft report (P21), this survey received responses from 154 decentralized evaluation consultants, a response rate of 52%, with a margin of error of 3.6%.

With regard to your request for "Full survey datasets for the 3 surveys conducted," I am obliged to refer you to a number of UNEG instruments, which apply to this situation as well as to the original invitation to participate in the survey.

The first of the UNEG instruments is the Standards for Evaluation in the UN System. I disclose the relevant standard (2.7) below.

Standards for Evaluation in the UN System
UNEG April 2005

***Standard 2.7:**

Evaluators should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual information

18. Evaluators should provide the maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right to privacy.

19. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. They should also inform participants about the scope and limits of confidentiality".

In order to meet this standard, the review team requested that UNDP IEO should specifically "inform participants about the scope and limits of confidentiality" in its letter of invitation to participate. This it did, as shown in the following copy of an invitation letter from IEO. I have displayed critical sections in bold.

"Dear consultant,

As part of its efforts to strengthen its evaluation function, UNDP has commissioned an independent review of its evaluation policy. The review is conducted by an independent group of consultants from Le Group-conseil Baastel. The results of the review will be reported directly to the UNDP Executive Board.

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As an input to this review, Baastel is conducting a survey of consultants who conduct evaluations on contract with UNDP country offices and other programme units. The purpose of this message is to urge you to respond to the survey and provide your frank views and experiences. Please note that the responses to the survey will be kept strictly confidential. The individual responses will not be made available to UNDP management nor to the Independent Evaluation Office. The results will not be presented by country but aggregated regionally, so as to ensure anonymity of responses.

You will soon receive a request to participate in the survey directly from Baastel.

Thank you already in advance for your cooperation.

Best regards,

Juha"

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As you will have seen, the letter of invitation, on the basis of which consultants responded to the survey, specifically excluded (in writing) the possibility of making data available either to IEO or to UNDP, both of which institutions are part of the subject matter of the review and therefore parties with vested (and non-independent) interests in its findings. This measure was taken in accordance with UNEG Standard 2.7 presented above and with the following later UNEG specifications.

UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation
UNEG, March 2008

"Confidentiality

22. Evaluators shall respect people's right to provide information in confidence and make participants aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality. Evaluators must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source so that the relevant individuals are protected from reprisals".

UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System
UNEG, March 2008

"Confidentiality

22. Evaluators shall respect people's right to provide information in confidence and make participants aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality, while ensuring that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source".

As I am sure you will appreciate on the basis of the information presented above, it is impossible for the independent review to disclose to the Administrator's Office data sets, which have been gathered on the basis of written assurances of confidentiality, specifically excluding access of UNDP management. Furthermore, to make the requested disclosure would clearly violate UNEG standards, guidelines and the code of conduct, which the review team is unable to do.

Review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy
FINAL REPORT

I hope that this letter clarifies the situation and I assure you that the review team looks forward to receiving the comments of management and of the IEO in the near future, so that the Final Report can be prepared within its rather tight deadline.

Sincerely,

D. M. Todd

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Founded in 1989, Baastel's mission is to provide decision-makers, managers and implementation partners with the knowledge, tools and skills necessary to promote effective and efficient sustainable development. Baastel has earned its reputation as a consultancy firm fully committed to providing sound advice to development partners on how to strengthen the impacts of their policy and development efforts around the world

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