

TERMS OF REFERENCE

International Expert - Independent Evaluation of the Support to Confidence Building Measures Programme

Job title:	International Expert - Independent Evaluation of the Support to Confidence Building Measures Programme
Duty station:	Chisinau and field trips to Tiraspol
Reference to the:	"Support to Confidence Building Measures" Programme
Contract type:	Individual Contract (IC)
Contract Duration:	July – August 2014 (up to 20 working days)

Job content

A. Background

I. Brief National Context

In September 1990, several groups from Transnistria, the eastern region of Republic of Moldova situated on the left bank of the Nistru River, proclaimed its independence from the rest of Moldova. An armed conflict followed in 1992, and the so-called "Transnistrian Moldovan Republic" has maintained its separate path from Moldova ever since. After this violent phase, the so-called Transnistrian conflict entered its "frozen" phase, which continues to substantially hinder Moldova's socio-economic development. The settlement of the conflict and the reintegration of the Transnistria region is a national priority and are included among the main objectives of the Government of Moldova's National Development Strategy.

Efforts to reach a settlement to the Transnistria conflict are presently being conducted at two levels. At the political level, Chisinau and Tiraspol have been carrying out both formal and informal talks on a settlement assisted by three international mediators (the OSCE, Russia and Ukraine) and two observers (the EU and the USA) forming the so-called "5+2 format". At the technical level, a number of Working Groups have been formed involving institutions and experts from both banks aimed at joint cooperation and technical approximation of the two distinct socio-economic, institutional and legal systems in order to facilitate the development of the entire Republic of Moldova. Currently, a Deputy Prime Minister is mandated to represent Moldova in the formal 5+2 talks to negotiate a settlement. The Deputy Prime Minister is also supported by a Bureau for Reintegration which was established to spearhead reintegration efforts and coordinate the corresponding activities of ministries and departments.

Although the formal talks have been resumed, after being on hold since 2006 until November 2011, a political settlement has remained elusive. The increasingly complex regional context and the evolution of the situation in Ukraine since the end of 2013 have compounded the underlying set of difficulties, making the prospects of a solution even more remote. However, the developmental challenges facing both sides present an opportunity for practical cooperation between the two banks. Authorities on both sides agree that activities outside the existing political (5+2 talks) and technical (Working Groups) formats which reduce mistrust and increase confidence between both banks are acceptable and necessary.

In this context, in 2012, the third phase of the "Support to Confidence Building Measures" Programme (SCBM Programme) has been launched, funded by the European Union, co-funded and implemented by UNDP Moldova. The overall objective of the programme is to increase confidence between both banks of the Nistru River through ensuring social-economic development by involving local authorities, civil society organizations, business community and other stakeholders.

II. Brief description of the programme to be evaluated

The overall objective of the SCBM programme is to facilitate the settlement of the Transnistrian issue through ensuring economic and social development of local communities and increasing confidence between both banks of the Nistru River by involving local authorities, civil society organisations, business community and other stakeholders.

The programme aims to ensure that ongoing efforts at settlement at the political level (5+2 informal and formal talks) and technical levels (confidence building working groups) are supported by development and confidence building initiatives at the community level that seek to create a general atmosphere conducive to dialogue and cooperation at all levels. The programme aims to reduce misperceptions and mistrust and increase confidence between programme participants and the population at large on both banks. Activities target individuals, communities, institutions, civil society and other stakeholders who demonstrate a willingness to engage in cross-river partnerships and platforms which contribute directly to greater socio-economic development. The major interventions of the project were defined mainly by building upon the lessons learned in the previous 2 phases of the SCBM project, which were successfully implemented during 2009-2011.

Programme specific objectives:

- To enhance economic development in the Transnistria region and the security zone and contribute to economic rapprochement between the two banks of the Nistru River by promoting cross-river exchanges and expanding the range of catalytic business support services;
- To empower local communities and actors from both sides to participate in collaborative projects addressing pressing development needs and ensure the delivery of essential public services;
- To address common environmental development concerns by creating opportunities and platforms for joint collaboration from both banks;
- To foster civil society development by enhancing the capacity of NGOs to generate activities which promote cross-river collaboration and addressing key development needs.

These objectives were tackled through the following five components:

- 1. Business Development Component** – activities which promote the common interests of business actors from both banks in the context of EU integration have been implemented. The projects were planned to contribute to stimulating the SME sector in Transnistria and encouraging cross-river cooperation among business actors. These projects include the continuation of business education through the Transnistria business school project, the establishment of business services for entrepreneurs and a road map for micro-financing opportunities as well as consulting services for businesses from both Moldova and Transnistria on export/import operations, trade between the two banks, EU quality systems, trade certificates and all other business and trade related areas.
- 2. Community Development Component** - projects were implemented which enable and empower citizens on both banks to jointly participate in tackling community development needs, particularly the rehabilitation of social institutions and basic infrastructure in Transnistria region and the security zone, as well as improve access to and quality of mother and child health care, including perinatal care and immunization in the region. Small grants were provided to community-based organizations to encourage community mobilization.
- 3. Environment Component** - projects have provided an opportunity for the development of joint solutions in addressing common environmental concerns, building on successful cooperation between authorities, civil society organizations, specialists and communities.

4. **Support to Civil Society Component** - through the provision of grants, projects were supposed to enhance the capacity of civil society organizations to generate activities which reduce mistrust and increase confidence. Platforms will be created to link specialists from both banks who share common interests. The project will encourage cross-river NGO-to-NGO partnerships. Harnessing NGO expertise to produce practical improvements in areas relevant to the population, cross-river NGO-to-community links will be promoted.

B. Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of the Evaluation is to learn from the experience of the EU/UNDP funded programme on Support to Confidence Building Measures, with a forward looking approach. The Evaluation is expected to clarify underlying factors affecting the situation, highlight unintended consequences (positive and negative) and better design UNDP-supported interventions at the next stage. The Country Office accordingly plans to make use of the exercise as a learning opportunity not only for the office but also for key partners and stakeholders, as inclusively and as practically possible.

The overall objectives of the evaluation are the following:

1. Provide an objective assessment of the achievements, constraints, performance, results, impact, relevance and sustainability of the interventions.
2. Generate lessons from experiences in the respective interventions for the period 2011 to date (results of the two previous smaller CBM projects could be as well considered) to inform current and future programming at the country level
3. Identify whether past results represent sufficient foundation for future progress
4. Provide clear and forward-looking recommendations in order to suggest effective and realistic strategies by UNDP and partners.

The evaluation should be comprehensive and cover the outcome, outputs, activities and inputs of the project. The results of the evaluation will be used for re-focusing the interventions and guiding future programming. In this context, the evaluation will:

- (i) Extract lessons for future interventions in the sector;
- (ii) Propose improvement of the coordination between donor-supported interventions in meeting national requirements;
- (iii) Outline main areas of focus for next stage UNDP projects.

C. General Terms of the Evaluation

The scope of the evaluation should incorporate the following categories of analysis:

Relevance: the degree to which the purpose of the SCBM Programme remains valid and pertinent.

Efficiency: the productivity of the implementation process - how good and how cost efficient the process of transforming inputs into outputs and outcomes was.

Effectiveness: a measure of the extent to which the SCBM Programme has contributed to achieve its results through an effective use of their resources.

Capacity development: as a key to **development effectiveness**, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable local development.

Sustainability – to what extent are the SCBM Programme results sustainable, taking into consideration the existing capacity, structures and political context in the country.

The evaluation is expected to address the following issues:

Outcome status:

Outcome Analysis – what and how much progress has been made towards the achievement of the outcome (including contributing factors and constraints).

- Determine whether or not the outcome has been achieved and, if not, whether there has been progress made towards its achievement.
- List innovative approaches tried and capacities developed through UNDP assistance.
- Assess the relevance of UNDP outputs to the outcome.
- Ascertain the progress made in relation to the outputs.
- List the factors (positive and negative) that affect the accomplishment of outputs.

Underlying factors: Analyze the underlying factors beyond UNDP's control that influenced the outcome. Distinguish the substantive design issues from the key implementation and/or management capacities and issues including the timeliness of outputs, the degree of stakeholders and partners' involvement in the completion of outputs, and how processes were managed/ carried out.

Outputs status:

Output Analysis – the relevance of and progress made in terms of UNDP and other UN Agencies outputs.

Were the outputs relevant to the outcome? Were the outputs achieved? What are the factors (positive and negative) that affect the accomplishment of the outputs?

Activities status:

Analysis of activities - Were the activities to achieve the outputs effective and efficient?

How well the activities were planned and implemented? Were key methodologies and approaches that facilitate the success of the initiative, particularly regarding participation and empowerment, gender balance, and delivery of necessary inputs appropriate?

Inputs status:

Inputs Analysis - what contribution UNDP and other UN Agencies have made to the progress towards the implementation of activities and achievement of the output and outcome.

How appropriate were the inputs? Were the inputs sufficient to achieve the results? How cost effective they were?

Partnership strategy: Ascertain whether UNDP's partnership strategy has been appropriate and effective. What were the partnerships formed? What was the role of UNDP? How did the partnership contribute to the achievement of the outcome? What was the level of stakeholders' participation? Examine the partnership among UN Agencies and other donor organizations in the relevant field.

Cross-cutting issues: Sustainability: an assessment of the likelihood that the projects results will endure after the active involvement of UNDP has ended. To what extent the changes (and benefits) brought by the projects can be expected to last after projects completion. The evaluation team should be requested to provide recommendations for potential follow-up interventions, i.e. how feasible the follow-up actions would be, what alternatives can be identified and/or what components can be added to it, what knowledge products could be developed.

D. Proposed Methodology

An overall guidance on outcome evaluation methodology can be found in the *UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results* and the *UNDP Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators*. The evaluators should come up with a suitable methodology for the evaluation of this intervention based on the guidance given in these two documents.

During the outcome evaluation, the evaluators are expected to apply the following approaches for data collection and analysis:

- Desk review of relevant documents (project documents with amendments made, review reports - midterm/final, donor-specific, etc);
- Discussions with the Senior Management and programme staff of UNDP Country Office;
- Briefing and debriefing sessions with UNDP, EU Delegation and the Government, as well as with other donors and partners
- Interviews with partners and stakeholders (including gathering the information on what the partners have achieved with regard to the outcome and what strategies they have used)
- Field visits to selected project sites and discussions with project teams, project beneficiaries;
- Consultation meetings.

E. Composition and qualification of the evaluation team

Members of the mission must not have been associated with the project's formulation, implementation or monitoring.

Specifically, the Consultant will perform the following tasks:

- Lead and manage the evaluation mission;
- Design the detailed evaluation scope and methodology (including the methods for data collection and analysis) for the report;
- Decide the division of labor within the evaluation team;
- Conduct an analysis of the outcome, outputs and partnership strategy (as per the scope of the evaluation described above) for the report;
- Draft related parts of the evaluation reports; and
- Finalize the whole evaluation report.

F. Proposed Timeframe

It is expected that the outcome evaluation be conducted during the period July – August 2014, over a period of 20 working days.

Activity Timeframe:

Evaluation design and work plan	One day, (home based)
Desk review of existing documents	4 days, (home based)
Field visits, interviews with partners, and key stakeholders	5 days,
Drafting of the evaluation reports	6 days, (home based)
Debriefing with UNDP and with partners	One day,
Finalization of the evaluation reports (incorporating comments received on first drafts)	3 days (home based)

G. Expected deliverables

1. The key product expected from this evaluation is a comprehensive analytical report in English that should, as a minimum, include the following contents:

- Executive summary;
- Introduction;
- Description of the evaluation methodology;
- Analysis of the situation with regard to the outcome, the outputs and the partnership strategy;
- Analysis of opportunities to provide guidance for the future programming;

- Key findings (including best practices and lessons learned)
- Conclusions and recommendations
- Annexes: ToRs, field visits, people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.¹

2. An outline for the future UNDP intervention in support of confidence building measures covering areas like (business development, social welfare, healthcare, community infrastructure, environment, civil society etc.) based on the recommendations of the mission is to be produced. Opportunities to engage other UN agencies in future work would also be considered.

H. Organisational settings

The Consultant will work under the direct supervision of the UNDP Portfolio Manager, and will be supported by the SCBM team with the Programme-related documentation.

The payment for services provided by the Consultant will be made according to deliverables completed, and approved by the UNDP Portfolio Manager.

Travel: All project related-travel arrangements in Moldova and its Transnistrian region will be carried out by the SCBM Programme.

I. Qualification requirements /selection criteria

- Minimum of a master's degree or equivalent in Management, Development Studies and/or International Affairs and other relevant fields
- At least 8 years of work experience in the areas relevant to the assignment (post conflict development, local development, participatory planning for sustainable development, including participatory monitoring and evaluation)
- At least 3 years' experience in conducting evaluation of projects in the socio-economic field
- Excellent analytical and writing skills
- Excellent spoken and writing skills in English (Russian or Romanian are an advantage)
- Proven experience of participatory monitoring and evaluation processes
- Familiarity with development approaches in post-conflict context of Eastern Partnership or EU Neighborhood countries
- Experience within the country, including in Transnistrian region will be a strong advantage

J. Reference materials

The following documents should be studied by the evaluators:

1. UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results
2. UNDP Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators
3. UNDP Results-Based Management: Technical Note
4. United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Moldova (2013-2017)
5. UNDP Results-Oriented Annual Report (ROAR) for Moldova (2011, 2012, 2013)
6. SCBM Project Document (Description of Action) and relevant reports
7. UNDP National Human Development Reports for Moldova
8. Other documents and materials related to the outcome to be evaluated (from the government, donors, etc.)

Background documentation is available on www.undp.md

¹ See the *UNDP Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators* for a detailed guidance on the preparation of an outcome evaluation report.