



## **Terms of Reference (TOR)**

### **External Evaluation of UNCTAD's Development Account 7<sup>th</sup> Tranche Project - Integration of the Trade Dimension in the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and Enhancing National Ownership of Trade-related Assistance in the UN Country-level Development Plans**

#### **1. Introduction and Purpose**

The projects implemented by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), entitled: “Integration of the Trade Dimension in the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (Project S)” and “Enhancing National Ownership of Trade-related Assistance in the UN Country-level Development Plans (Project AV)”, will end in December 2013. In compliance with the requirements of the Development Account, which supports this project (7th tranche), the projects will need to undergo an external terminal evaluation.

This evaluation should assess, systematically and objectively, the project framework and design, project management, and project performance. The evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, and practical, constructive and forward-looking recommendations are made in order to strengthen the work of UNCTAD in this area.

The primary audiences of the evaluation report are UNCTAD management and programme officers, the Capacity Development Office/Development Account of DESA project stakeholders, UNCTAD's member States, Agencies of the UN Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity and other stakeholders.

#### **2. Background**

Surveys of UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) in 2006 and 2007 show that less than 20% of the UNDAFs in 120 countries included a reference to trade and investment issues. As a result, the role of economic and trade related issues in the UNDAFs in achieving poverty reduction and development goals has been marginal.

At the country level, low awareness of the government entities and other stakeholders of the importance of trade policy and trade related assistance in development plans affected their capacity to mainstream trade and productive capacities into their national development plans.

At the same time, there was insufficient inter-agency cooperation in the area of trade and productive capacities at the country level among development partners. Links between the Enhanced Integrated Framework (a six-agency trade related assistance mechanism), the Aid-for-Trade and the One UN plans still need to be consolidated in terms of policy and operational coherence with the UN country assistance plans.

The goal of the two Development Account projects is to increase the policy coherence between the international economic environment and the domestic development goals and inter-linkages between trade and the sectoral components of national development plans. The projects aim at enhancing national capacities to formulate UN assistance plans that take due account of economic and trade related issues and to coordinate the required inter-agency actions in view of national development goals.

The first project, “Integration of the Trade Dimension in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework” started in July 2010 is expected to finish by the end of 2013. The second project, “Enhancing National Ownership of Trade-related Assistance in the UN Country-level Development Plans”, started in 2012 and serves as an extension of the first project to provide similar activities in other countries and to follow up and intensify activities in the first project’s target countries.

The expected accomplishments of the project S are as follows:

- (i) Increased participation and ownership of national Governments and other key stakeholders in the formulation of UN assistance programmes and activities on trade and productive sectors in selected countries.
- (ii) Enhanced capacity of national Governments to utilize information and knowledge on current and potential assistance of the UN system on trade and productive sectors to benefit national development strategies.
- (iii) Improved policy and operational coherence among relevant UN entities and the donor community providing development assistance on trade and productive sectors to the least developed and land-locked developing countries, especially by better aligning with the EIF and PRSPs.

The expected accomplishments of the project AV are as follows:

- (i) Increased ownership and participation of national governments and other stakeholders in the formulation of the UNDAF in the area of trade and productive sectors.
- (ii) Improved knowledge management, better utilization and improved coordination of UN expertise in the area of trade-related assistance by national authorities, stakeholders and donors.

The main activities of the two projects include the development of training materials (including different language versions), development of online training courses, national and regional training and awareness workshops, and one global meeting. Activities have been implemented in Lesotho, Mali, Nepal, Beirut and Guatemala.

These two projects are aligned with the objective of sub-programme 3- International Trade, within the scope and priorities of the Biennial Programme Plan of UNCTAD (2010-2011). They also support UNCTAD’s mandate and role as lead of the UN Interagency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacities, which is specified under subtheme 4 of the Accra Accord.

The two projects contribute to Millennium Development Goal (MDG) number 8, by supporting policies encouraging development and reducing poverty.

Both projects have been executed by UNCTAD, in close collaboration with relevant

governmental counterparts, the relevant UN Regional Commissions, UNITAR, UN Resident Coordinators, and other relevant members of the UN Interagency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacities.

### **3. Scope of the Evaluation**

The evaluation will consider all activities that have been implemented under the two projects and should address the following issues:

#### **a) *Relevance***

- Whether the project design and choice of beneficiaries and activities have properly reflected and addressed the needs of the beneficiaries, taking into account UNCTAD's mandates, and alignment with the objectives of the Development Account;
- Whether the planned and actual activities and outputs of the projects were consistent with the intended outcomes and impact;
- What is UNCTAD's comparative advantage in this area of work;

#### **b) *Effectiveness***

- Whether the activities have achieved planned objectives as enunciated in the project's logframe and produced beneficial results;
- What were the main factors influencing the outcomes of the projects, either negatively or positively; what are the lessons to be learned to mitigate risks in carrying out similar projects in future;
- Have the projects contributed to enhancing inter-agency coherence and joint initiatives among relevant agency members of the UN Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity;

#### **c) *Efficiency***

- Have resources and funds been used efficiently, leveraging in-house expertise, previous interventions and other resources to optimize the project outcomes;
- Have all the project activities been delivered in a timely manner;
- Is there evidence of synergies and complementarities between the two projects;

#### **d) *Sustainability***

- Whether the activities have been designed and implemented in such a way to ensure maximum sustainability of their impact, for instance, whether beneficiary country stakeholders and development partners were actively involved in the initiation, design and implementation of the project;

#### **e) *Impact***

- Whether any outcomes (intended and/or unintended) in beneficiary countries are evident following the intervention by UNCTAD.

### **4. Deliverables and Expected Output**

The evaluation, on the basis of its findings and assessments made on the above criteria, should draw conclusions, make recommendations and identify lessons learned from the implementation of the two projects.

More specifically, the evaluation should:

- Highlight what has been successful and can be replicated elsewhere;
- Indicate shortcomings and constraints in the implementation of the projects while, at the same time, identifying the remaining challenges, gaps and needs for future courses of action;
- Make pragmatic recommendations to suggest how UNCTAD's work under this area and related projects can be strengthened.

Three deliverables are expected out of this evaluation:

- 1) An inception report;
- 2) A first draft evaluation report; and
- 3) The final evaluation report.

The inception report should outline the evaluator's understanding of the issues under evaluation including an evaluation framework, and a detailed work plan with the timeframe. The evaluation framework should include a matrix relating evaluation issues and questions to evaluation criteria, indicators, sources of information and methods of data collection.

The first draft report should be presented to the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit and relevant stakeholders for quality assurance and factual corrections, if any.

The final output of the evaluation is a report that must compose below key elements:

- 1) Executive summary (maximum 2 pages);
- 2) Introduction of the evaluation background and a brief description of the projects, the budget utilization and the project activities and outputs;
- 3) A clear description of the methodology used;
- 4) Findings and assessments according to the criteria listed in Section 3 of this ToR;
- 5) Conclusions and recommendations drawn from the assessments.

In the evaluation report, all the assessments made must be supported by facts and findings, direct or indirect evidence, and/or well-substantiated logic. It follows that all the recommendations made should be supported by the assessments made.

The evaluator is required to submit a separate final list of those interviewed, for the record. If necessary, the report may be accompanied by a supplement including supporting materials. If English is not the native language of the evaluator, he/ she is requested to ensure that the final report be copy edited before submission to UNCTAD.

## **5. Methodology**

The evaluator must use a mixed-method approach to triangulate all available data sources to reach conclusions and findings. Such evaluation methodology may include but is not limited to the following:

- Review of relevant project documents and relevant materials;
- Face-to-face interview and/ or telephone interviews with relevant UNCTAD staff;
- Face-to-face interview and/ or telephone interviews with direct beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders;
- Surveys of workshop participants and project partners, as may be required;
- Analysis of the data collected.

All relevant materials will be provided to the evaluator including but not limited to:

Project documents and reports; mission reports; progress reports, self-assessment reports, publications, documents and/or reports produced through the project, material used for activities;

training materials; resource-use information; list of beneficiaries and workshop/meeting participants, counterparts and resource persons; existing feedback (assessments, letters, surveys, etc.).

## 6. Description of Duties

The evaluator reports to the Chief of the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit. He or she will undertake the evaluation exercise under the guidance of the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit and in coordination with the project manager. The evaluator will be responsible for the evaluation design, data collection, assessment and reporting. The evaluator must take full responsibility for the contents of the report generated and ensure its independence and accuracy.

The evaluator should observe the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) guidelines, standards<sup>1</sup>, and norms<sup>2</sup> for evaluations in the UN system, as well as UNCTAD's Evaluation Policy<sup>3</sup>, in the conduct of this assignment.

## 7. Timetable

The total duration of the evaluation is equivalent to 21 days of work and will take place between 1 November, 2013 to 17 January 2014.

Activity	Days
Desk research and study of relevant documentation	3 days
Preparation of inception report and data collection tools	2 days
Interviews with UNCTAD staff	1 day
Observation of project event and interviews with event participants (28- 29 NOV, Geneva) *	2 days
Further follow-up with other stakeholders	3 days
Data analysis and draft report write up	7 days
Final report write up	3 days

Note:

\*: *The evaluator needs to make himself/ herself available during the week of 25 November to conduct interviews or a focus group discussion with participants at the final event organized by this project. The tentative dates for the focus group discussion is scheduled to be between 28- 29 November, 2013.*

## 8. Monitoring and Progress Control

The evaluator must keep the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit informed of the progress made in the evaluation on a weekly basis. The evaluator will also present the draft report to the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit and the project manager before the final submission, giving sufficient time for the verification of factual findings as well as its compliance with the ToR (approximately 1 week). To this end, a draft of the report must be presented by 20 December 2013 for verification by the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit and the project manager, before submission of the final report.

<sup>1</sup> "Standards for Evaluation in the UN System" by UNEG, UNEG/FN/Standards (2005);

<sup>2</sup> "Norms for Evaluation in the UN System" by UNEG, UNEG/FN/Norms (2005);

<sup>3</sup> "Evaluation Policy" of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), December 2011.

The deadline for submission of the final report will be 17 January 2014.

## **9. Qualifications and Experience**

- **Education:** Advanced university degree in economics, or related field.
- **Experience:** At least 5 years of experience in conducting evaluations, preferably on interventions in the areas of trade-related technical assistance and capacity building. It is also desirable that the evaluator has good trade expertise and is familiar with development planning, especially the UNDAFs.
- **Language:** Fluency in oral and written English. Knowledge of Spanish and/ or French is a plus.

## **10. Conditions of Service**

The evaluator will serve under a consultancy contract as detailed in the applicable United Nations rules and regulations. The evaluator will not be considered as staff member or official of the United Nations, but shall abide by the relevant standards of conduct. The United Nations is entitled to all intellectual property and other proprietary rights deriving from this exercise.

## **11. Applying for the consultancy**

Applicants are required to submit an expression of interest to undertake the assignment/consultancy and include the following:

- Cover letter stating why you are suited for this work, your available start date and work experience, especially evaluation experience;
- Detailed CV

A sample of a recent evaluation report should be submitted as a reference.

Applications with the above details should be sent to [evaluation@unctad.org](mailto:evaluation@unctad.org)

**The deadline for submitting the applications is extended to 18 September 2013.**