

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### **E264: Enhancing coherence and integration of economic and social statistics in support of the implementation of 2008 System of National Accounts**

#### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the extent to which the objectives of the UNECE project E264 “Enhancing coherence and integration of economic and social statistics in support of the implementation of 2008 System of National Accounts” were achieved.

The evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project.

The evaluation will also assess any impacts the project may have had on progressing human rights, gender equality, disability inclusion, climate change and disaster risk reduction in the context of this engagement. The evaluation will finally look at the activities repurposed to address the impact of the COVID-19 crisis, and assess, to the extent possible, UNECE’s COVID-19 early response through this project.

#### **II. Background**

The project aimed at increasing the capacity of countries in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia in compiling national accounts and supporting statistics according to the recommendations of international statistical standards. The activities of the project included the following four modules:

- 1) Methods and compilation techniques for implementation of the 2008 SNA and supporting economic statistics.
- 2) Price statistics - development of price indices and deflators for national accounts aggregates.
- 3) Statistical business registers - improving coverage and accuracy of national statistical business registers.
- 4) Expanding the use of household surveys for the estimates of the informal sector and remittances.

The activities were carried out in cooperation with other international and regional partners, including CIS-STAT, EFTA, Eurostat, ILO, IMF, OECD and World Bank.

#### **III. Evaluation objectives, scope and questions**

The evaluation will be guided by the objectives, indicators of achievement and means of verification established in the logical framework of the project document. The evaluation will be conducted in Q3 of 2023. It will cover the full implementation of the project, from June 2017 to June 2023 in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan)

The final evaluation of the project has the following specific objectives:

- Determine as systematically and objectively as possible the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project results in light of its goals and objectives.
- Assess how the project activities contributed to gender equality and women’s empowerment, as well as the realization of human rights, with an emphasis on ‘leaving no one behind’ and, if needed, it will make recommendations on how these considerations can be better addressed in future activities of the subprogramme.
- Identify good practices and lessons learned from the project and formulate action-oriented, forward-looking recommendations addressed to the subprogramme for improving future interventions.

The evaluation criteria are relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

### **Relevance**

1. To what extent was the project design appropriate for meeting the needs of beneficiary countries?
2. To what extent did the project respond to the priorities and needs of national statistical offices in beneficiary countries? How relevant were the project activities to the countries' needs and priorities?
3. To what extent was the project aligned with the SDGs?
4. What takeaways are there for ensuring relevance of future projects of UNEE Statistical Division?
5. To what extent were gender, human rights and disability perspectives integrated into the design and implementation of the project? What results can be identified from these actions? How can gender and human rights perspectives be better included in future projects design and implementation?

### **Effectiveness**

6. To what extent were the project objectives and expected results achieved?
7. To what extent did the project improve the competencies of national statistical offices in the beneficiary countries to produce and use macroeconomic statistics in their countries?
8. To what extent are the project activities coherent and harmonized with those of other partners operating within the same context, particularly those of other UN system entities?
9. What were the challenges/obstacles (including COVID-19 and sub-regional instability) to achieving the expected results? How successfully did the project overcome these?
10. What (if anything) has prevented the project from achieving the desired results?

### **Efficiency**

11. Were the resources adequate for achieving the results?
12. Were the results achieved on time and were all activities organized efficiently?
13. To what extent were the resources used economically and how could the use of resources be improved?

### **Sustainability**

14. What measures were adopted to ensure that project outcomes would continue after the project ended and to what extent have these measures addressed the existing risks for sustainability?
15. To what extent do the partners and beneficiaries 'own' the outcomes of the work? How is the stakeholders' engagement likely to continue, be scaled up, replicated, or institutionalized?

## **IV. Evaluation approach and methodology**

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with: the ECE Evaluation Policy<sup>1</sup>; the Administrative instruction guiding Evaluation in the UN Secretariat<sup>2</sup>; and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation<sup>3</sup>. Human rights and gender equality considerations will be integrated at all stages of the evaluation<sup>4</sup>: (i) in the evaluation scope and questions; (ii) in the methods, tools and data analysis techniques; (iii) in the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the final report. The evaluator will explicitly explain how human rights, gender, disability, SDGs, and climate change considerations will be taken into account during the evaluation.

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<sup>1</sup> [UNECE Evaluation policy](#)

<sup>2</sup> ST/AI/2021/3

<sup>3</sup> [UNEG 2016 Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#)

<sup>4</sup> In line with UNEG Guidance contained in [Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations](#)

The evaluator is required to use a mixed-method approach, including qualitative as well as quantitative data gathering and analysis as the basis for a triangulation exercise of all available data to draw conclusions and findings.

The evaluation should be conducted based on the following mixed methods to triangulate information:

1. A desk review of all relevant documents, including the project document and information on project activities (monitoring data); materials developed in support of the activities (agendas, plans, participant lists, background documents, donor reports and publications); Proposed programme budgets covering the evaluation period; project reports to the donor.
2. Online survey of key stakeholders and beneficiaries: the survey will be developed by the consultant on her/his preferred platform.
3. Interviews (in-person and/or by telephone/video): the evaluator shall interview a wide range of diverse stakeholders and beneficiaries.
4. Remote observation of virtual workshops and meetings, including recordings of meetings.

The evaluator will further elaborate on the evaluation methodology in the Inception Report that will among others include the survey questions and whether any of the 12 countries will be selected for an in-depth assessment. The evaluation report will be written in English, will consist of approximately 30 pages and will include an executive summary (max. 2 pages) describing the evaluation methodology, key findings, conclusions and recommendations. The evaluator will also produce an Evaluation Brief summarizing key evaluation findings, lessons learned and recommendations, including through images and infographics.

#### **V. Evaluation schedule<sup>5</sup>**

May 2023	ToR finalized
June 2023	Evaluator selected
June 2023	Contract signed. Evaluator starts the desk review
July 2023	Evaluator submits inception report including survey design
August 2023	Launch of data gathering, including survey and interviews
September 2023	Evaluator submits draft evaluation report and evaluation brief
October 2023	Evaluator submits final evaluation report and evaluation brief

#### **VI. Resources and Management of the evaluation**

An independent consultant will be engaged to conduct the evaluation under the management of the PMU. Payment will be made upon satisfactory delivery of work.

The Programme Management Unit (PMU) will manage the evaluation and will be involved in the following steps: Selection of the evaluator; Preparation and clearance of the Terms of Reference; Provision of guidance to the Project Manager and evaluator as needed on the evaluation design and methodology; Clearance of the final report after quality assurance of the draft report.

The Project Manager, in consultation with the Division Director, will be involved in the following steps: Provide all documentation needed for desk review, contact details, support and guidance to the evaluation consultant as needed throughout the timeline of the evaluation; Advise the evaluator on the recipients for the questionnaire and for follow-up interviews; Process and manage the consultancy contract of the evaluator, along the key milestones agreed with PMU.

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<sup>5</sup> Final timetable to be agreed following engagement of the evaluator

## **VII. Intended use / Next steps**

The results of the evaluation will be used in the planning and implementation of future activities of the UNECE Economic Cooperation and Integration Subprogramme. Findings of this evaluation will be used when possible to:

- improve direct project's follow up actions, implementation of products by project beneficiaries and dissemination of the knowledge created through the project;
- assess the gaps and further needs of countries in the area of this project;
- formulate tailored capacity building projects to strengthen the national capacity in enhancing innovation.

The results of the evaluation will be reported to the Conference of European Statisticians

Following the issuance of the final report, the Project Manager will develop a Management Response for addressing the recommendations made by the evaluator. The final evaluation report, the management response and the progress on implementation of recommendations will be publicly available on the UNECE website.

## **VIII. Criteria for evaluators**

The evaluator should have:

1. An advanced university degree or equivalent background in relevant disciplines.
2. Knowledge of and experience in working on data and statistics; knowledge of and experience in economic statistics desirable.
3. Relevant professional experience in design and management of evaluation processes with multiple stakeholders, survey design and implementation, project planning, monitoring and management, gender mainstreaming and human-rights due diligence.
4. Demonstrated methodological knowledge of evaluations, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis for end-of-cycle project evaluations, including demonstrated experience in conducting questionnaires and interviews.
5. Fluency in written and spoken English.

Evaluators should declare any conflict of interest to UNECE before embarking on an evaluation project, and at any point where such conflict occurs.