

TERMS OF REFERENCE

EVALUATION OF UN PACIFIC STRATEGY

2018 - 2022

1. BACKGROUND - CONTEXT

The UN Pacific Strategy 2018-2022¹ directs the programmes and operations of 29 UN Agencies that form the UNCT, to support internationally agreed Priority Areas, including the Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in the Pacific region (2015 GA res. 69/318). The United Nations Pacific Strategy (UNPS) 2018-2022 outlines the collective response of the UN system to development priorities in 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs), namely Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. The UNPS supports these 14 Governments and Peoples in the Pacific to advance a localized response to the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The 14 PICTs covered by the UNPS have a total population of 2.5 million people² in an area that encompasses 15 per cent of the earth's surface. There are key differences in geography, size, history, culture, economies, and political systems across the region. Fiji is the most populous country with approximately 900,000 residents and Tokelau is the smallest with approximately 1,000. Wide ranging economic, social, environmental, and political challenges present threats to the region's development, including the achievement of the SDGs. Four countries in the Pacific are among the top 15 at highest risk of disaster, with Vanuatu and Tonga as the first and second at greatest risk among 181 countries ranked³. Human Development ranges widely in the Pacific with Solomon Islands ranking 151st and Palau ranking 50th among 189 countries⁴. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the Pacific is amongst the lowest in the world, ranging from US\$5,496 million in Fiji to US\$47 million in Tuvalu⁵.

The UNPS Results Framework captures the strategic focus of the UNPS 2018-2022 with six outcomes that address priority issues and development challenges across the Pacific sub-region including special measures to address gender inequality, the empowerment of women, human rights, climate change, and the importance of building resilience and capacity for disaster risk management. These outcomes collectively contribute both to the achievement of results within national development frameworks and towards the SDGs.

2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The primary purpose of the UNPS evaluation is to **promote greater learning and operational improvement**. Overall, the evaluation has both learning and accountability purposes. The

¹ UN Pacific Strategy 2018-2022 available at <https://unsdg.un.org/download/1740/16580>

² 2020 UN Population estimates are available on <https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DataQuery/>

³ 2020 World Risk Report available at <https://weltrisikobericht.de/english/>

⁴ 2020 UNDP Human Development Report available at <http://hdr.undp.org/>

⁵ 2019 World Bank available at <http://data.worldbank.org>

evaluation will provide important information for strengthening programming and results at the sub-regional level, specifically informing the planning and decision-making for the next Cooperation Framework (CF) programme cycle and for improving United Nations coordination at the sub-regional level. The UNCT, host governments and other CF stakeholders can learn from the process of documenting good practices and lessons learned, which can then be shared with DCO and used for the benefit of other countries.

The objectives of the evaluation are:

1. To assess the contribution of the UNPS to Pacific sub-region development results through evidence-based judgements using evaluative approaches
2. To identify the factors that have affected the UNPS's contribution, investigating why the performance is as it is and explaining the enabling factors and bottlenecks.
3. To provide actionable recommendations for improving the UNPS's contribution, especially for incorporation into the new CF programming cycle. These recommendations should be logically linked to the conclusions and findings of the evaluation and should draw upon lessons learned identified through the evaluation.

3. SCOPE

This evaluation will cover all programme based contributions of UNCT to the six UNPS outcomes. The UNPS evaluation covers all initiatives during the 2018 – 2022 cycle until the evaluation starts in 2021, and in all 14 PICTs of the UNPS. The timeframe of the UN Pacific roadmap towards a new UNSDCF requires the evidence from this evaluation to inform the Strategic Prioritization step starting in October 2021.

The primary users of the evaluation results will be the UNCT. Secondary users include host governments, donors, development partners, DCO, and UNCTs of other countries and sub-regions.

4. CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

The criteria against which the UNPS will be assessed are relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and coherence. The evaluation will answer the following questions to achieve its objectives and taking the respective criteria into account:

Criteria	Evaluation questions
Relevance IS THE UNPS DOING THE RIGHT THINGS?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are the UNPS objectives aligned and been consistent with the needs, priorities, and policies of the PICT governments (including alignment to national development goals and targets, national plans, strategies and frameworks). • How dynamic and responsive has the UNPS been to emerging and unforeseen needs, especially those of the most vulnerable, disadvantaged and marginalized groups? • To what extent has the UNPS implementation taken on the findings and addressed recommendations of the 2019 Multi-Country Office Review?

<p>Effectiveness HAS THE UNPS ACHIEVED ITS OBJECTIVES?</p> <p>IS THE UNPS DOING IT RIGHT?</p>	<p>Cooperation Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the UNPS contributed effectively to provide greater clarity and transparency of results achieved and resources used? <p>UN System Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What have been the benefits for the people and institutions targeted by the interventions, including the most vulnerable, disadvantaged, and marginalized population?
<p>Efficiency HOW WELL HAVE RESOURCES BEING USED?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does UNPS internal coordination reduce transaction costs and create efficiencies for UNCT members implementing the UNPS?
<p>Sustainability WILL THE BENEFITS LAST?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What mechanisms, if any, has the UNPS planned for - and UNCT established - to ensure socio-political, institutional, financial and environmental sustainability?
<p>Coherence HOW WELL DOES THE UNPS FIT?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the UNPS implementation fostered coherence, through the promotion of synergies, interlinkages between its interventions, partnerships, external relations, and through its governance structures?

The evaluator may adapt the evaluation criteria and questions, upon agreement between the evaluation manager and the evaluator as reflected in the inception report.

5. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The UNPS evaluation is not expected to conduct a complete analysis of individual programmes, project or activities of UNCT members but rather build on each agency's programme and project reviews, assessments, and other evaluative evidence. Where a paucity of data necessitates a quick assessment of a contribution, this should be carried out using appropriate methodologies that identify contributions at the outcome level. A causal analysis between activities and outcomes is not in scope of this evaluation.

Data generated in this evaluation should be to the extent possible disaggregated by sex, age, and geographic region. Disaggregation by ethnicity, disability, migratory status and other contextually relevant markers of equity would be valuable.

The evaluation should use methodological triangulation that involves multiple data sources, methods, and quantitative and qualitative analytical approaches. The evaluation questions (outlined above) must be used to develop the approach and methodology, which will in turn determine the data collection strategies, instruments, sampling strategy, and the analysis plan. The UNPS 2018-2022 strategy and the PICTs' development plans will be the frameworks used to draw conclusions from findings of the evaluation.

6. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The evaluation team will operate under the supervision of an Evaluation Manager (EM), who will oversee the entire process of the evaluation, from its preparation to the dissemination and use of

the final report. The EM coordinates comments on, quality assures and approves the deliverables of the evaluators, aligns the assessment process with the UNEG norms and standards, code of conduct and ethical guidelines for evaluations as well as guidance on integrating human rights and gender equality in evidence generation. The EM will monitor and report any attempts to compromise the independence of the team of evaluators during the evaluation process. The EM clears the payment to the evaluators once any outstanding issues have been addressed satisfactorily.

The EM is supported by the Steering Committee (SC), who in close coordination with UNCT, is to approve the selection of the evaluators and all key deliverables. The SC facilitates stakeholder identification and consultations, access to national information and data sets. In collaboration with the EM, the SC organizes the findings workshop following the data collection, and ensures the final report and its results are disseminated and shared with DCO and other key stakeholders, promoting the use of evidence and lessons.

The UN Evaluation Development Group for Asia Pacific (UNEDAP), including DCO Evaluation Adviser, will serve as technical reference group for additional level of quality control of the evaluation products.

7. PROCESS, TIMELINE AND DELIVARABLES

ACTIVITIES	DELIVERABLES	TIME ESTIMATE (from start of contract)	PAYMENT SCHEDULE
1. INCEPTION			
a. Desk review of relevant program documents, reports, and secondary data; Stakeholder analysis;	Summary of desk review findings; List of sources;	Week 1-2	25% (1 st tranche)
b. Prepare inception report (incl. desk review, methodology, work-plan, data collection tools), in accordance with UNEG quality guidelines;	Draft inception report	Week 3	
c. Review and comments on draft inception report by EM, SC, and UNEDAP	Inception Report Comments Matrix	Week 4	
d. Finalize inception report;	Final inception report ⁶	Week 5	
2. DATA COLLECTION AND VALIDATION			
a. Data collection, field work, analysis of data;		Week 6-7	25% (2 nd tranche)
b. Workshop to validate data collection results and preliminary findings;	PowerPoint presentation, meeting minutes	Week 8	

⁶ Max 15-20 page/8,000 words, excluding annex;

3. REPORTING AND DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS			
a. Processing and analysis of the collected data, and drafting of the interim report;	1 st draft report;	Week 9	25% (3 rd tranche)
b. Review and comments on draft report by EM, SC, and UNEDAP;	Evaluation Comments matrix	Week 10	
c. Prepare and submit second draft of evaluation report addressing issues in comments matrix;	2 nd draft report;	Weeks 11	
d. Review and comments by UNCT;	2 nd Evaluation Comments matrix	Week 12	
e. Submit and present final report;	Final report ⁷	Week 13	25% (4 th tranche)

The evaluation team should abide by the UNEG Code of Conduct in carrying out the evaluation. The timelines will be further detailed by the evaluation team in the inception report.

8. Dissemination and Use

The evaluation will inform the planning and decision-making for the next CF programme cycle and for improving United Nations coordination at the sub-regional level. The evaluation report will be shared with UNCT, host governments and other CF stakeholders to learn from the good practices and lessons learned. The evaluation results will be disseminated to relevant stakeholders in line with the accountability purpose of the work. The report will also be shared with DCO and used for the benefit of other countries.

9. Evaluation Team Profile and Qualifications

The evaluation team (ET) would be a Consultancy Firm or individual(s) that should be composed of around three evaluators. The ET should be built with consideration to:

- gender balance and gender expertise
- coverage of relevant subject areas of work by UNCT member agencies
- coverage of key cross-cutting agenda, including gender equality, human rights and environmental sustainability.

Education

Minimum of post-graduate university degree in the social sciences

Experience

⁷ Maximum 45 pages/30,000 words, excluding annexes and executive summary (maximum 5 pages)

Team Lead

- A minimum of 15 years of professional experience, including in international development
- Extensive knowledge of and minimum of 10 years of experience in research and/or evaluation of complex programmes and themes
- Proven track record in writing reports
- Strong understanding and knowledge of development issues, particularly the SDGs, in the Pacific, and an in-depth understanding of at least one area of work of UNCT members; collectively, Evaluation Team members should broadly cover all areas of UNCT initiatives
- Facilitation skills is highly desirable with experience in leading multi-stakeholder discussions
- Shown ability to lead a team of evaluators
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English
- Knowledge of the UN system and the SDG and their role in development cooperation in the context of the Pacific
- Understanding of the UN Reform and its implementation implication at the country level
- An absence of conflicts of interest (never employed by UNCT members or implementing partners, nor expected to be employed in the near future, no personal relationships with any UNCT members).

Team Member(s)

- A minimum of 10 years of professional experience, including in international development
- Extensive knowledge of and minimum of 5 years of experience in research and/or evaluation
- Demonstrated analytical abilities including on political economy and financing for development, human rights and gender equality
- Proven track record in writing reports
- Strong understanding and knowledge of development issues, particularly the SDGs and in the context of SIDS, and an in-depth understanding of at least one area of work of UNCT members; collectively, Evaluation Team members should broadly cover all areas of UNCT initiatives
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English
- Knowledge of the UN system and the SDG and their role in development cooperation
- Understanding of the UN Reform and its implementation implication at the country level
- An absence of conflicts of interest (never employed by UNCT members or implementing partners, nor expected to be employed in the near future, no personal relationships with any UNCT members).

10. Duration and place of work

The duration of the contract is for a total of 3 months. The anticipated period is from July to September, and may change based on when the selection process is completed.

UN Pacific RCO will facilitate the arrangement of meetings and workshops with partners as required and will provide logistic and financial support as necessary.

11. Risks and limitations

There are several risks for the UNPS which are envisaged. Foremost is the evolving COVID-19 pandemic and response, and the restrictions that go along with it. With the current limitations in movement, travel, meetings, face-to-face interviews or site visits are not possible in many countries in the Pacific. The urgency and severity of the pandemic within this constrained context also means many of the stakeholders and potential users of the evaluation will have as their principle responsibility the response to the pandemic and its effects. This in turn means conducting primary data collection, even using remote methods, runs the risk of low response rates, if at all possible.

The UNPS 2018-2022 does not have a documented Theory of Change. This in itself limits the options for evaluation of change effected by the UNPS. The UNPS does have a Logical Framework, however, it is only “an outcome level document whereby results of outputs and activities attributable to individual agencies or joint work plans contribute to the attainment of the Outcomes”, and there are no results chain or consolidated logic model to show the link between causes and effects. Without theoretical counterfactuals, the questions that are reliably answerable, particularly in the domain of effectiveness and impact, are limited.

The UNPS Results Framework includes 40 indicators for monitoring its outcomes, including baselines and targets. In the 2018 UN Pacific Annual Report, most of the results against these indicators are missing. In the 2020 UN Pacific Annual Report, the results are not reported specifically against the target indicators, rather a case study approach is taken on the topic of the outcomes.

A typical UNDAF evaluation is estimated to require 9 to 10 months according to UNEG. The UNPS evaluation encompasses two sub-regions and 14 countries, and the timeframe for the evaluations allows 3 months from start to finish. Therefore, significant trade-offs need to be made to the scope of the evaluation in order to maintain a level of quality of evidence resulting from it. The inception report to be produced should outline these tradeoffs for the consideration of the UNCT.