

Annex I

Types of evaluation

Independent evaluations

Thematic evaluations assess UNDP performance in areas that are critical to ensuring sustained contributions to development results in the context of emerging development issues and changing priorities at the global and regional levels. Thematic evaluations may cover, for example, UNDP policies, focus and results areas, partnerships, programmatic approaches, cooperation modalities, or business models.

Global, regional and South-South programme evaluations assess the performance and intended and achieved results of those programmes. They are intended to reinforce the substantive accountability of UNDP to the Executive Board, and will be timed to contribute to the preparation and approval of the next programme.

Assessments of Development Results (ADRs) assess the attainment of intended and achieved results as well as UNDP contributions to development results at the country level. Their scope includes, but is not necessarily confined to, UNDP responsiveness and alignment to country challenges and priorities; strategic positioning; use of comparative advantage; and engagement with partners. The number and selection of countries, and the timing of these evaluations, will be determined to ensure coverage and to allow findings and recommendations to feed into the preparation of the subsequent programme. Wherever possible, these evaluations will be conducted jointly or at a minimum, in coordination with other United Nations organizations.

Decentralized evaluations

UNDAF evaluations focus on UNDAF outcomes, their contributions to national priorities and the coherence of United Nations Country Team support. The UNDAF evaluation is timed to provide inputs to the preparation of the next UNDAF, country programmes and projects by individual agencies. The UNDAF evaluations take place at the beginning of the penultimate year of the programme cycle and build on UNDAF annual reviews, as well as major studies and evaluations that have been completed by individual agencies.

Global, regional and country programme evaluations assess UNDP attainment of intended results and contributions to development results and outcomes as outlined in the respective programmes. The evaluation examines key issues such as UNDP effectiveness in delivering and influencing the achievement of development results and UNDP strategic positioning.

Outcome evaluations address the short-term, medium-term and long-term results of a programme or cluster of related UNDP projects. They include an assessment of the effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and relevance of the programme against their own objectives, their combined contribution, and the contribution of external factors and actors. Outcome evaluations also examine unintended effects of the programme or projects. Rather than being ad hoc, the selection of the programme or project cluster to be evaluated should be guided by strategic decisions made by the programme unit, in line with the evaluation plan. This decision should be informed by agreements with national government and key stakeholders and partnership requirements, with attention to utility and linkage with strategic and programmatic evaluations.

Thematic evaluations assess UNDP performance in areas that are critical to ensuring a sustained contribution to development results in the context of emerging development issues and changing priorities in a given context that is pertinent to a UNDP programme unit. Thematic evaluations may cover, for example, UNDP results and focus areas, cross-cutting issues such as gender and capacity development, partnerships, programmatic approaches, cooperation modalities, or business models.

Project evaluations assess the efficiency and effectiveness of a project in achieving its intended results. They also assess the relevance and sustainability of outputs as contributions to medium-term and longer-term outcomes. Projects can be evaluated during the time of implementation, at the end of implementation (terminal evaluation), or after a period of time after the project has ended (post- evaluation). Project evaluation can be invaluable for managing for results, and serves to reinforce the accountability of project managers. Additionally, project evaluation provides a basis for the evaluation of outcomes and programmes, as well as for strategic and programmatic evaluations and ADRs, and for distilling lessons from experience for learning and sharing knowledge.

Evaluations in UNV and UNCDF

Strategic and thematic evaluations provide a basis for developing forward-looking strategies for organizational effectiveness and core thematic programme areas. They involve reviews of past experience to identify strengths and gaps in the approach and results relating to a particular aspect of the organization and its approach, or to a thematic programme area. They may also include a review of the global trends and partner practices in the organizational or thematic area to determine whether approaches and interventions are relevant. Strategic and thematic evaluations are undertaken by UNCDF and UNV.

Programme and project evaluations can focus on evaluating performance mid-way through and at the end of the programme cycle. They assess the specific contributions, efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of interventions, as well as strategic positioning and partnerships. Programme and project evaluations are undertaken by UNCDF and UNV.

Joint evaluations

Joint evaluations are one modality of carrying out an evaluation to which different partners contribute. Any evaluation can be conducted as a joint evaluation; there are various degrees of “jointness”, depending on the extent to which individual partners cooperate in the evaluation process, merge their evaluation resources and combine their evaluation reporting. There is often a steering group that oversees the process and a smaller management group to ensure that implementation goes smoothly. Increasingly, joint evaluations are pursued as a preferred option in UNDP while maintaining accountability for its own contribution to results. At the country level, UNDAF evaluations are carried out jointly by United Nations agencies.