

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### **1819AB: Integrated energy and water resource management in support of sustainable development in South-East Europe and Central Asia**

#### **I. Purpose**

The primary purpose of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which the objectives of the UNDA 11th tranche project “Integrated energy and water resource management in support of sustainable development in South-East Europe and Central Asia” were achieved. The evaluation will assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project in supporting member States to strengthen their capacities in the area of integrated energy and water resource management, in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The evaluation will also assess progresses on human rights, gender equality results, 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, the ECE’s COVID-19 early response through this project.

The results of the evaluation will allow improving capacity building services provided to member States through regular technical cooperation as well as the development and implementation of similar future projects and activities by the Sustainable Energy Division (SED) of UNECE.

#### **II. Scope**

The evaluation will include the full project implementation during the period of 1 January 2018- 31 December 2021 in six countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan as in the original project document; Tajikistan and Ukraine added to the list of beneficiary countries as part of repurposing to address the impact of the COVID-19 crisis).

#### **III. Background**

The project supports the Expected Accomplishments (a) “Improved policy dialogue and cooperation among all stakeholders on sustainable energy issues, in particular energy efficiency, cleaner electricity production from fossil fuels, renewable energy, coal mine methane, mineral resource classification, natural gas and energy security”, (c) Strengthened implementation of ECE recommendations/guidelines, best practices and other normative instruments for sustainable energy development” of the UNECE Proposed Strategic Framework for 2018–2019 of Subprogramme 5 “Sustainable Energy”, and Expected Accomplishment (a) “Improved response to environmental challenges by ECE constituencies” of the UNECE Proposed Strategic Framework for 2018–2019 of Subprogramme 1 “Environment”.

The project builds on outcomes of the UNECE/ESCAP UNDA project “Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.”

The overall goal of the project is to strengthen the national capacity of economies in transition to develop policy recommendations for integrated energy and water resources management, applicable nationally.

The target groups of the project were national policy makers (Ministry of Energy and/or Mining and Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources (or their equivalents), national energy, mining and water endowment regulators (Ministry of Environment or equivalent), national financial reporting regulators, financial institutions, energy and mining industry and water resources development organizations, and Universities / Educational Institutions. Specific attention was paid to vulnerable groups.

In March 2020, the project was modified to involve additional studies to ascertain the impact of the COVID 19 on several critical materials that are required in the production of medical equipment and supplies. Testing, diagnostics, treatment, personnel safety, and protection of healthcare workers are being severally hampered or compromised due to supply-chain disruptions. Mass-scale vaccine development and deployment also requires several critical raw materials.

The budget of the project was \$ 490,000.00 funded from the 11<sup>th</sup> tranche of the Development Account. The project was implemented in cooperation with ESCAP.

The project was managed in 2018-2019 by Viktor Badaker, Economic Affairs Officer and afterwards by Oleg Dzioubinski, Regional Adviser, funded from the Regular programme on technical cooperation (Sect. 23 of the regular budget).

## **Issues**

The evaluation will answer the following issues: Relevance; Coherence; Effectiveness; Efficiency and Sustainability.

### **Relevance:**

1. To what extent did the Project respond to the priorities and needs of the beneficiary countries to develop and strengthen their capacities in the area of integrated energy and water resource management, in the context of the 2030 Agenda?
2. To what extent were the activities consistent with global and regional priorities? How relevant were the activities vis-à-vis the programme of work of the UNECE? What value has UNECE’s efforts added in this area?
3. How relevant was the project to the target groups’ needs and priorities? Was there a focus on the most vulnerable ones?
4. Did the project apply gender, rights-based and disability inclusion approaches in the design, implementation, and results of the activities?
5. How relevant was the project with regards to climate change and disaster risk reduction?

### **Coherence:**

6. How coherent was the collaboration with other entities in the UN system and other international organizations?
7. How coherent was the project design? Were the activities implemented in the required sequence needed to ensure the greatest impact of the project? To what extent are the outputs consistent with and relevant to the overall objective and expected accomplishments?
8. What adjustments, if any, were made to the project as a direct consequence of the COVID-19 situation, and to what extent did the adjustments allow the project to effectively respond to the new priorities of Member States that emerged in relation to COVID-19?
9. How did the adjustments, if any, affect the achievement of the project's expected results as stated in its original results framework?

**Effectiveness:**

10. Did the project achieve the results expected during the project design in terms of the planned activities, outcome, and impact?
11. What were the challenges/ obstacles to achieving the activities, objective and expected accomplishments?

**Efficiency:**

12. Did the project achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources?
13. How could the use of resources be improved? Would you propose any alternatives to achieve the same results? If yes, which ones?
14. Were the human and financial resources allocated to the project used efficiently and commensurate the project results?

**Sustainability:**

15. How is the stakeholders' engagement likely to continue, be scaled up, replicated or institutionalized? To what extent do the partners and beneficiaries 'own' the outcomes of the work?
16. To what extent are the objectives of the activity still valid? How can the activity be replicated in the UNECE region or in other regions?
17. What are the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 related activities? Could they be replicated?
18. What are the laws, regulations, policies or projects that have been developed so far based on the strengthening of capacities of the beneficiary countries in the area of integrated energy and water resource management and development of sustainable policies in this area?

**IV. Methodology**

**a) The evaluation will be conducted based on the following mixed methods to triangulate information:**

- A desk review of all relevant documents, as the primary source of information. The desk review will include *inter alia*: the project document and information on project

activities (monitoring data) including the UNDA draft final report; studies and reports (Project reports, reports of the Committee on Sustainable Energy, reports of the Expert Group on Resource Management, financial information), project workshops reports. The consultant will also research projects in the same area conducted by other UN agencies.

- Interviews (in person and/or by telephone/video) to be conducted with (i) national coordinators who acted as UNECE counterparts throughout the national assessments and follow up activities; (ii) representatives of government agencies responsible for the areas addressed in the studies; (iii) representatives of enterprise support institutions such as professional bodies and industry associations; and (iv) partners involved in the project. As deemed necessary, focus group discussions via online platforms can also be organized.
- Online survey of the key stakeholders and beneficiaries. The survey will be developed by the consultant on his preferred platform.

#### **b) Norms and standards**

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the [ECE Evaluation Policy](#) and the Administrative instruction guiding Evaluation in the UN Secretariat ([ST/AI/2021/3](#)).

Gender equality and human rights considerations are integrated at all stages of the evaluation: (i) in the evaluation scope of analysis, evaluation criteria and questions design; (ii) in the methods, tools, and data analysis techniques; (iii) in the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the final report.

#### **c) Outline of the final report**

The evaluation report will strive not to exceed 30 pages and follow the mandatory outline for UNDA report to be shared by the Programme Management Unit. An Executive summary (max. 2 pages) will summarize the methodology of the evaluation, key findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

### **V. Evaluation schedule**

- A. Preliminary research: by 1 January 2022;
- B. Data collection: by 15 February 2022;
- C. Data analysis: by 15 March 2021;
- D. Draft report: 1 April 2022;
- E. Final draft report: 15 April 2022;
- F. Final report: 31 April 2022.

*Final timetable to be agreed following engagement of the evaluator. The timing above is indicative.*

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

An independent consultant will be engaged for a period of 40 days to conduct the evaluation, within a budget of \$19,600, inclusive of all costs.

To enhance the relevance, quality and credibility of the evaluation process, an Evaluation

Committee will support the evaluation process. The Committee will be comprised of two members:

- Project Manager, Sustainable Energy Division
- Programme Officer in charge of evaluations, Programme Management Unit (PMU)  
Mr. Igor Shpurov, General Director, Russian State Committee on Mineral Reserves

The Evaluation Committee will be involved in the following steps:

- Review of the Terms of Reference
- Review of the proposed evaluator profiles
- Reception and review of the draft evaluation report

The Project Manager, Mr. Oleg Dzioubinski, in consultation with Mr. Scott Foster, 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

The Programme Management Unit will be involved in the following steps:

- Selection of the evaluator
- Prepare and clear the Terms of Reference
- Provide 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

## **VII. Intended Use/Next Steps**

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;
- learn lessons from early response to the impact of COVID-19, to develop further related projects
- assess the gaps and further needs of countries in the area of this project;
- formulate a tailored capacity building projects to strengthen the national capacity in integrated management of energy, mineral and water resources;
- induce new project ideas, improving the planning and design of future capacity-building activities and projects on integrated management of energy, mineral and water resources in the UNECE region.

The results of the evaluation will be reported to the Committee on Sustainable Energy.

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

## **VIII. Criteria for evaluators**

Evaluators should have:

- An advanced university degree or equivalent background in relevant disciplines
- Specialized training in areas such as evaluation, project management, advanced statistical research and analysis.
- Demonstrated relevant professional experience in design, management and conduct of evaluation processes with the UN Secretariat, with multiple stakeholders, survey design and implementation, and project planning, monitoring and management, gender analysis and human rights due diligence
- Demonstrated methodological knowledge of evaluations, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis for end-of-cycle project evaluations.
- 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.