

TERMS OF REFERENCE

E345: Improve capacities of UNECE member States in developing evidence-based policy measures to meet their commitments under MIPAA/RIS and 2017 Lisbon Ministerial Declaration: Ageing (Phase III)

I. Evaluation objective and purpose

The objective of this evaluation is to determine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UNECE project E345 “Improve capacities of UNECE member States in developing evidence-based policy measures to meet their commitments under MIPAA/RIS and 2017 Lisbon Ministerial Declaration: Ageing (Phase III)” and the extent to which its objectives were achieved.

As per ECE Evaluation policy, the evaluation aims to (i) Promote organizational learning, by identifying lessons learned and best practices; (ii) Contribute to improvement of programme or project performance, as progress towards and achievement of results, including by contributing to senior leadership decision-making; (iii) Ensure accountability of the Secretariat to member States, senior leadership, donors, and beneficiaries.

The results of the evaluation will allow improving awareness-raising and capacity building activities provided to member States through inter-governmental cooperation and technical cooperation as well as the development and implementation of similar future projects and activities by the Population Unit of UNECE.

II. Background

The project supported the following expected accomplishments of the Population Component of Subprogramme 8: Housing, land management and population as defined in the UNECE Proposed Programme Budget for 2020 ‘to advance (...) evidence-based population and social cohesion policies’. The proposed project directly contributes to the Programme of work of the Working Group on Ageing for 2018-2022 (ECE/WG.1/2018/2, Annex 2). The objective of the project was to support the implementation of the programme of work of the Working Group on Ageing (WGA) and improve capacities of UNECE member States in developing evidence-based policy measures to meet their commitments under the Regional Implementation Strategy of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA/RIS) and the 2017 Lisbon Ministerial Declaration by facilitating exchange of good practices among member States and other stakeholders, supporting the WGA in developing guidelines to streamline the process of mainstreaming ageing in the region, assisting countries in preparing comprehensive policies on ageing, providing support and advice to countries on monitoring MIPAA/RIS implementation specifically within its fourth cycle of review and appraisal (2018–2022). Expected accomplishments were enhanced national policy formulation on population ageing and improved capacity to monitor and assess, within national and regional context, the implementation of MIPAA/RIS and the 2017 Lisbon Ministerial Declaration. Core activities included the preparation of policy briefs and policy seminars on ageing, the preparation and launch of guidelines for mainstreaming ageing, the preparation of road maps for mainstreaming ageing at country request and conducting the fourth review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS at the regional level.

III. Evaluation scope

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 during

Q2 of 2023. It will cover project implementation, from January 2020 to April 2023 in UNECE member States.

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.

III. Key evaluation questions

The evaluation will seek to answer questions related to the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project.

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 the participating countries? How relevant were they 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 UNECE projects?
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 the projects design and implementation?

Effectiveness

6. To what extent were the project objectives and expected accomplishments achieved?
7. To what extent did the project improve the competencies of policy makers in the participating countries to design, develop, implement, reform, and evaluate population ageing policies?
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?
16. To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid and what could be revised in the project subsequent Phases?

IV. Evaluation approach and methodology

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with: the ECE Evaluation Policy¹; the Administrative instruction guiding Evaluation in the UN Secretariat²; and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation³. Human rights and gender equality considerations will be integrated at all stages of the evaluation⁴: (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.

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 evaluator shall conduct online surveys and interview a wide range of diverse stakeholders, including members of the Standing Working Group on Ageing (national focal points on ageing), academia, civil society, regional and international organisations active in the field of ageing.

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 or by telephone/video): the evaluator shall interview a wide range of diverse stakeholders and beneficiaries as outlined above. To ensure representativeness, the evaluator shall speak to a large sample of stakeholders including high-level government interlocutors whom UNECE has worked with.

The evaluator will further elaborate on the evaluation methodology in the Inception Report that will among others include the survey questions and interview guide. 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, highlighting the results of the project and lessons learned.

V. Evaluation schedule⁵

February 2023	ToR finalized
March 2023	Evaluator selected
April 2023	Contract signed. Evaluator starts the desk review
May 2023	Evaluator submits inception report including survey design
May 2023	Launch of data gathering survey distribution.
June 2023	Stakeholders interviews and analysis of collected information.
June 2023	Evaluator submits draft evaluation report and draft evaluation brief.
July 2023	Evaluator submits final evaluation report and final evaluation brief.

¹ [UNECE Evaluation policy](#)

² ST/AI/2021/3

³ [UNEG 2016 Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#)

⁴ IN line with UNEG Guidance contained in [Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations](#)

⁵ Final timetable to be agreed following engagement of the evaluator

VI. Resources and Management of the evaluation

An independent consultant will be engaged to conduct the evaluation, with a budget of USD 12,000, inclusive of all costs. 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.

VII. Intended use / Next steps

The results of the evaluation will be used in the planning and implementation of future activities of the Population Component of the Housing, land management and population subprogramme, in particular the Programme of Work 2023-2027 of the UNECE Standing Working Group on Ageing.

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 evidence-based population and social cohesion policies;

The results of the evaluation will be reported to the inter-governmental Standing Working Group on Ageing at its annual meeting in November 2023.

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 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 in the social domain.
2. Knowledge of and experience in working with intergovernmental processes, preferably in the social domain / on ageing.
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. Demonstrated experience in conducting questionnaires and interviews is an asset.
5. Fluency in written and spoken English. Knowledge of Russian will be an advantage.
6. Specialized training in areas such as evaluation, project management, social statistics, advanced statistical research and analysis would be an asset.

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