

Inception Paper

Evaluation of the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC)

13 June 2023
Assignment No: IED-23-007



Function

“The Office shall evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of the programmes and legislative mandates of the Organization. It shall conduct programme evaluations with the purpose of establishing analytical and critical evaluations of the implementation of programmes and legislative mandates, examining whether changes therein require review of the methods of delivery, the continued relevance of administrative procedures and whether the activities correspond to the mandates as they may be reflected in the approved budgets and the medium-term plan of the Organization;” ([General Assembly Resolution 48/218 B](#)).

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I. Introduction

1. The Inspection and Evaluation Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS-IED) is conducting an evaluation of the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC) in line with [ST/AI/2021/3](#), which requires OIOS-IED to evaluate each Secretariat programme and sub-programme at least once every eight years. Additionally, the evaluation will respond to the following two requests for evaluation of RPTC: 1) the General Assembly endorsement of a request from the ACABQ¹ in 2022 that the Secretary-General conduct “a comprehensive independent review, within existing resources, of the RPTC and present the findings in a separate report during the consideration of the next programme budget”; and 2) the 2018 OIOS Internal Audit Division (OIOS-IAD) recommendation² for “an evaluation of RPTC to assess whether it is achieving its objectives and to draw lessons from its implementation.” This will be the first evaluation of RPTC undertaken by OIOS-IED.

II. Background

A. Mandate and objective

2. The RPTC was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 58 (I) in 1946 to provide technical support to developing countries, least developed countries, countries with economies in transition and countries emerging from conflict in their capacity development efforts. The broad objective of the programme is to “support and advance processes aimed at developing the capacity of governments, institutions and individuals to formulate and implement policies for sustainable economic and social development”.³
3. The RPTC is intended to be complementary to other development pillar funding mechanisms to scale up work and/or facilitate the sustainability of interventions. RPTC resources are intended to facilitate “quick responses and initial support by implementing entities and is complementary to other development funds, including the United Nations Development Account and extrabudgetary resources, which optimizes the programme’s impact through strengthened linkages and follow-through”.⁴

B. Implementing entities and activities

4. The programme has a total of 11 Secretariat implementing entities (IEs), with specialized development expertise and knowledge grouped under **sectoral advisory services** implemented by global entities, and **regional advisory services** (and sub-regional advisory) implemented by the economic regional commissions. These are illustrated in Table 1.

¹ ACABQ recommendation V.112 in A/77/7; endorsed in A/RES/77/262.

² OIOS-IAD recommendation 4 in 2018/058.

³ A/77/6 Section 23.

⁴ A/77/6 Section 23.

Table 1: RPTC implementing entities by component

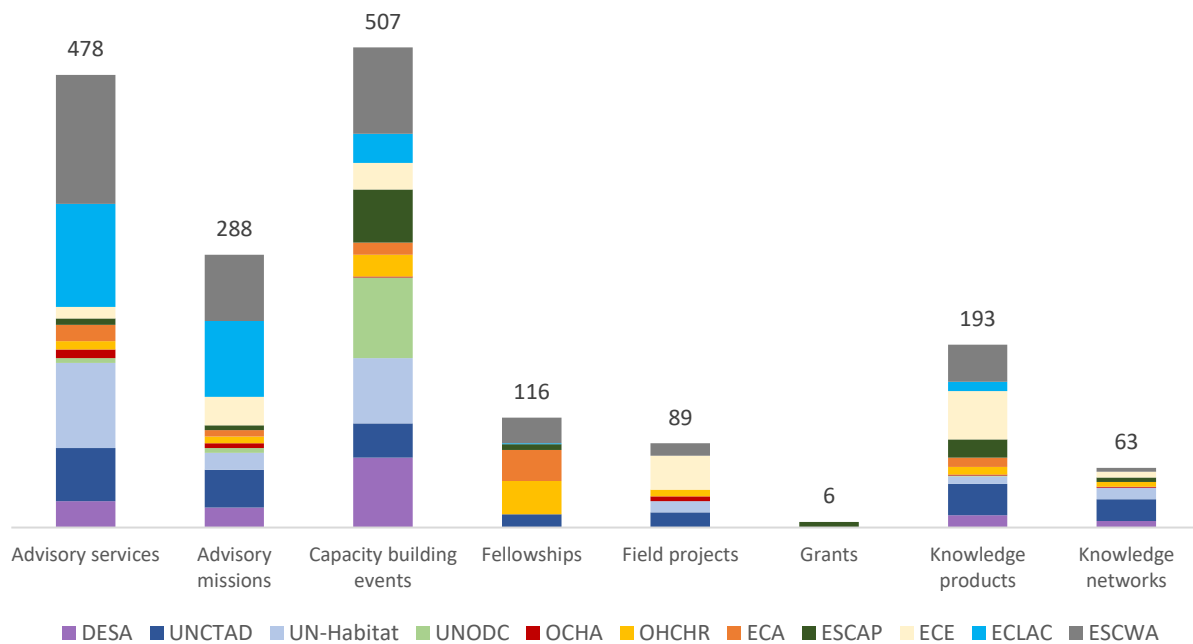
Sectoral advisory services		Regional and subregional advisory services	
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs	ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme	ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
OHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs		

5. Technical cooperation interventions under RPTC focus mainly on short-term advisory services, training and field projects; they rely heavily on IEs' normative and analytical work. They are aligned with the policy guidance and programmes of action agreed by Member States through intergovernmental mechanisms and are intended to promote sharing and exchange of valuable knowledge and good practices across geographic regions. RPTC interventions are implemented at the national, subregional, regional and/or global levels.
6. The RPTC proposed budget programme (A/77/6; Section 23) requires that interventions meet the following four criteria:
 - a. Respond to requests of developing countries within one calendar year⁵;
 - b. Fall within priority areas for which an IE has a mandate or demonstrated leadership;
 - c. Build capacity in developing countries and enrich analytical functions of IEs for the benefit of all Member States; and
 - d. Aid in the preparation of specialized components of a country's development strategy or of requests for larger-scale funding from other sources.

⁵ A/77/6 states two calendar years. However, implementing entities noted that the two-year period no longer applies given the annual budget cycle.

7. To have a common understanding of key terms and definitions and to streamline monitoring of RPTC implementation, IEs agreed on Common Reporting Standards in 2023, which define activities financed under RPTC (see appendix III).
8. Figure 1 below illustrates the total number of RPTC activities implemented in 2022 disaggregated by each IE. Capacity building events and advisory services constituted the bulk of the technical cooperation support in 2022.

Figure 1: Number of implemented RPTC activities, by IE, 2022

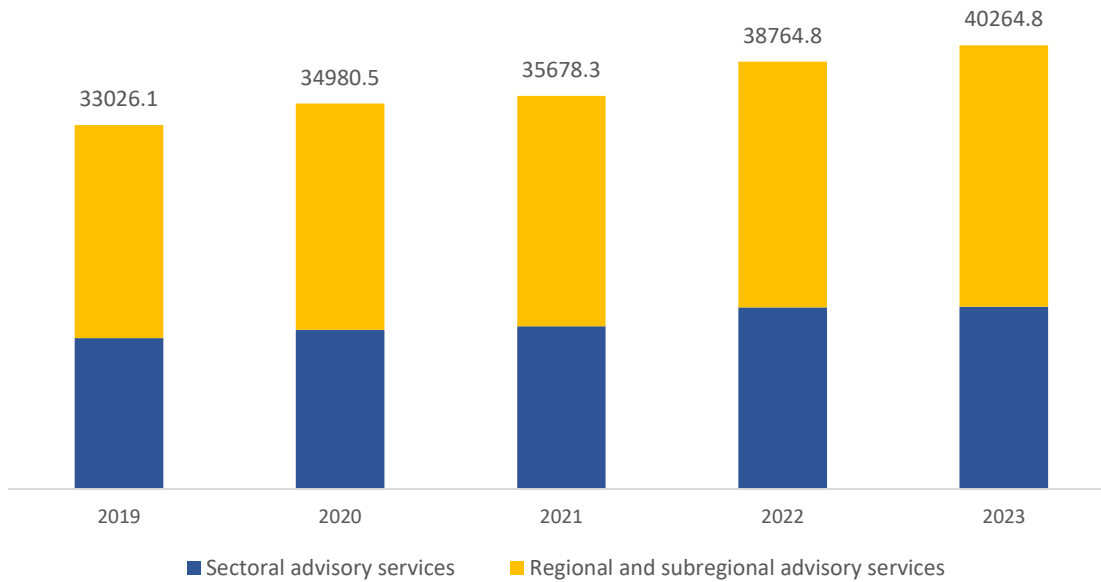


Source: RPTC 8th progress report (last accessed: 5 June 2023). Data is not perfectly comparable between IEs due to legacy monitoring systems for RPTC that predate the common reporting standards agreed to in 2023. IEs are in the process of updating their systems and trackers/methods).

C. Resources

9. The RPTC proposed budget programme (Section 23) is approved by the General Assembly on an annual basis and funded through the Regular Budget. The overall resources proposed for 2023 amounted to USD 40,264,800 before recosting and reflected a gradual increase over the last five years (Figure 2).

Figure 2: RPTC resources by component, 2019-2023 (thousand USD)

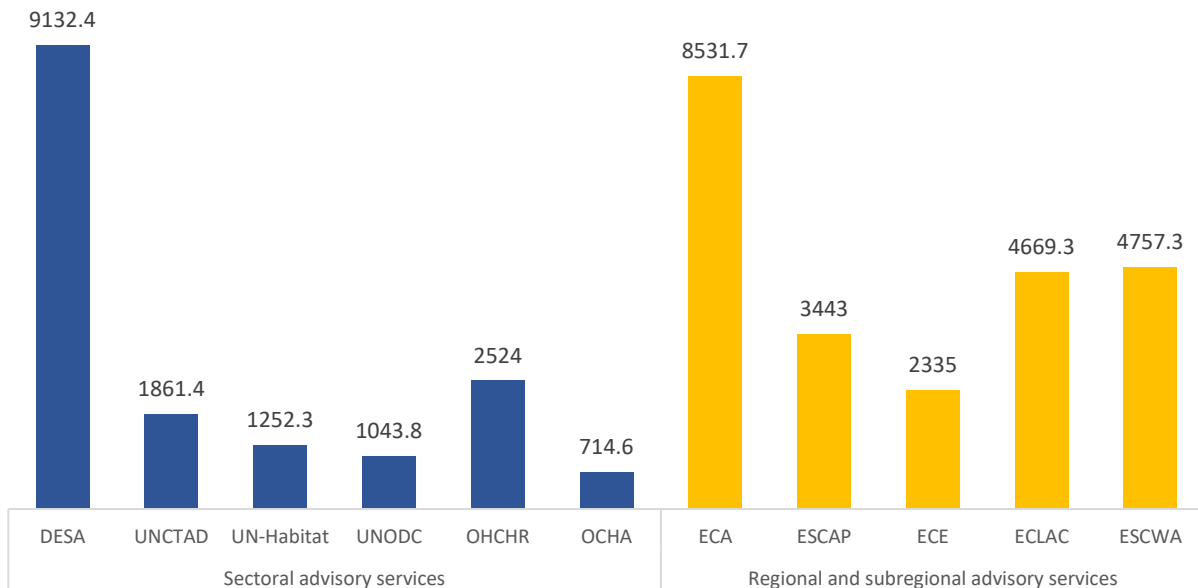


Note: 2019, 2020 and 2021 (expenditure), 2022 (appropriation), 2023 (estimate before recosting)

Source: A/77/6 (Sect. 23), A/76/6 (Sect. 23), A/75/6 (Sect. 23)

10. The distribution of RPTC resources in 2023 reflected, for the most part, the historical allocation over the years and the demand each IE was anticipated to receive from Member States in the coming year (Figure 3).

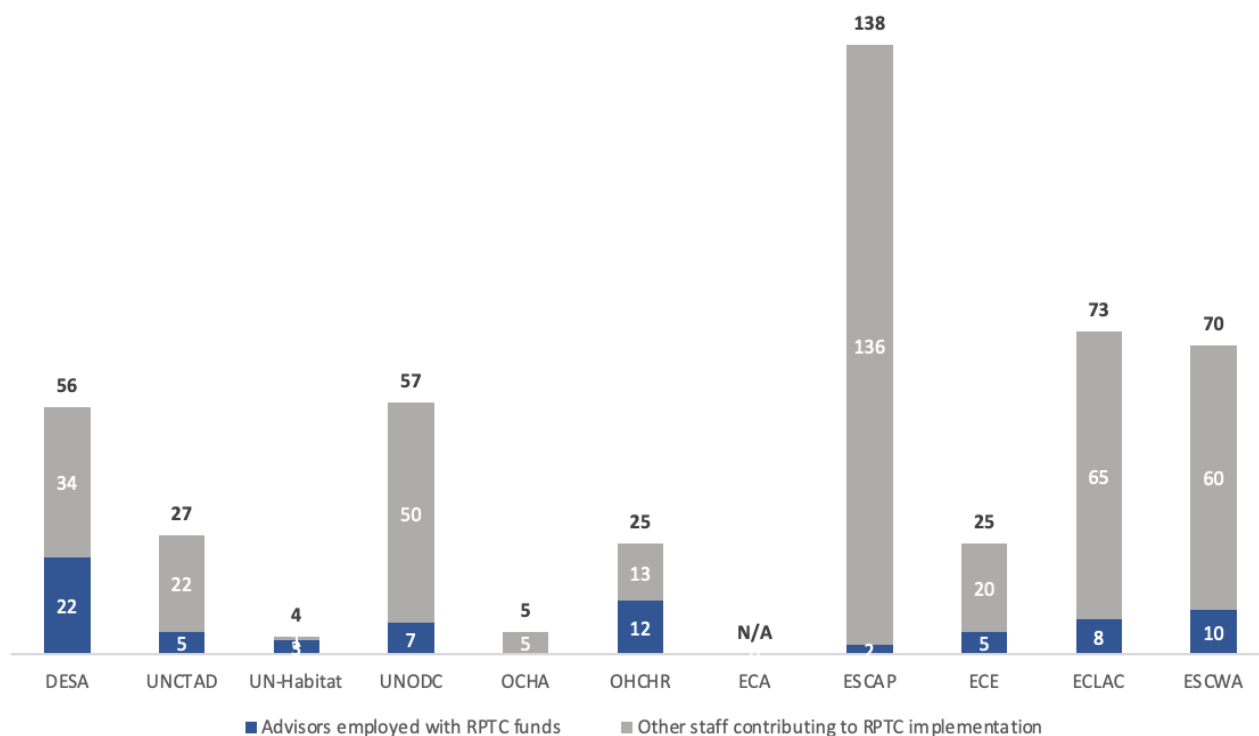
Figure 3: RPTC resources by implementing entity, 2023 (thousand USD, estimate before recosting)



Source: A/77/6 (Sect. 23)

11. Implementing entities employed 49 interregional advisors and 25 regional advisors using RPTC funds in 2021. In addition to the advisors funded with RPTC, a total of 406 regular staff contributed to the implementation of RPTC in the same period as shown in Figure 4.⁶ The eleven IEs contain a total of 85 subprogrammes, out of which 66 implemented RPTC activities.

Figure 4: Staff contributing to RPTC implementation, 2021



Note: Data on regional advisors employed with RPTC funds or on other regular staff contributing to RPTC implementation was not available for ECA. No updated figures provided in the RPTC 8th Progress Report. ESCAP reported that it had 5 regional advisors in 2022.

Source: RPTC 7th Progress Report (p. 40)⁷.

12. The subject matters covered by RPTC are wide ranging depending on the expertise requested from IEs. For example, support in 2021 was provided in areas such as:

Recovery from Covid-19	Statistics	Integrated national financial frameworks	Digital Economy
Sustainable urban development	Criminal justice systems	Violence against women and children	Trafficking in humans and smuggling of migrants

⁶ T7th RPTC Progress Report.

⁷ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/cdpmo/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.cdpmo/files/2022-06/RPTC-seventh-report-final.pdf>

Money-laundering and cybercrime	Police reform	Integration of a human rights-based approach	Voluntary National Reviews
Recovery and resilience in the aftermath of natural disasters	Humanitarian response coordination in the climate crisis	Macroeconomic policy and governance	Regional integration and trade

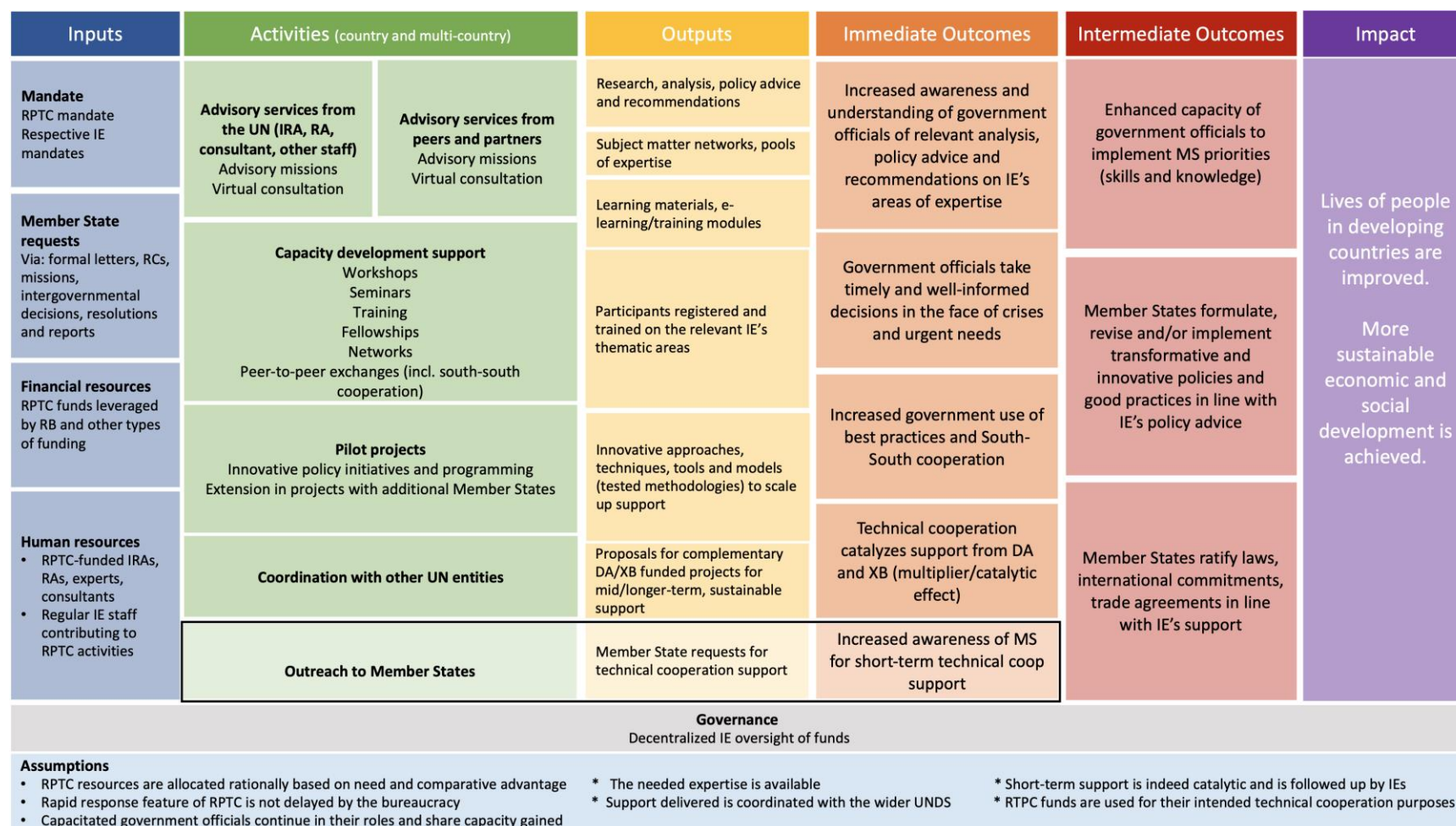
D. Governance

13. The RPTC is intended to provide operational flexibility to IEs in rapidly responding to urgent or short-term Member State needs for capacity building support or advisory services. While it does not have any formal lead entity with a supervision or coordination role, the USG of DESA represents the programme in intergovernmental processes and coordinates the formulation of annual progress reports. The Programme Planning and Budget Division (PPBD) within DMSPC is the lead entity for budgetary and policy matters and, under the guidance of the Controller, decides how RPTC resources are distributed among IEs.
14. The IEs have autonomy over internal distribution and management of the resources allocated to them, managing their own RPTC work plans, activities, data and evaluation exercises. The IEs interviewed for scoping considered this flexibility to be an important feature of the funding, since it allowed them to be agile and responsive to Member State needs and coordinate RPTC with their other activities. In 2022, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendations of the ACABQ (A/RES/77/262) asking that the Secretary-General develop a mechanism incorporating guidelines on governance, coordination and evaluation for all RPTC activities. The Committee also asked for more efforts to facilitate the submission of requests by Member States and consolidate relevant lessons learned and best practices in a progress report. At the time of this inception paper, DESA had commissioned a consultant to explore options and present these to ACABQ in 2023.

E. Theory of Change

15. The theory of change for RPTC was developed in consultation with IEs and is presented in Figure 5 below. It summarizes in the aggregate how IEs seek to achieve their objectives and rests on critical assumptions about the context in which they are delivered. Specific outcomes for each IE are identified in their separate strategic planning documents. OIOS acknowledges that the RPTC is part of a range of interventions influencing results for Member States, and that the achievement of intermediate results can occur several years after delivery of technical cooperation support. This will be accounted for when assessing progress on results.

Figure 5: Theory of Change for the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation



Note: The diagram should not be read as a linear but rather as a multi-directional logic model

F. Monitoring, evaluation and audit

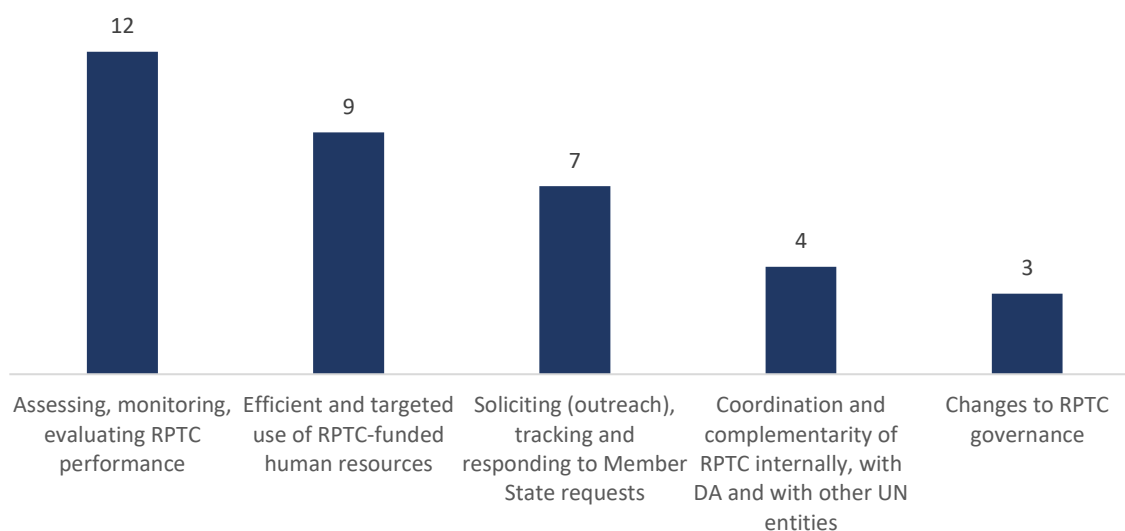
16. The RPTC has been subject to the following previous reviews, audits and internal evaluations. See Table 2.

Table 2: Oversight reports undertaken on RPTC.

Type	Year	Oversight Report Title	Comments
Review	2004	Review of the regular programme of technical cooperation and the Development Account, A/59/397 (also commonly known as the Lindores report)	The latest comprehensive review of RPTC covering its full range of operations and analysis of similarities and differences between RPTC and DA
Audit	2018	OIOS-IAD audit of the management of the regular programme of technical cooperation	Most recent audit on the adequacy and effectiveness of the management of RPTC
Internal evaluation	2022	Evaluation of the UN DESA Proportion of the Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation	Only internal evaluation of RPTC undertaken by an IE (DESA) on its RPTC activities undertaken in 2021
Internal evaluation	2021	Evaluation of the OHCHR Indigenous Fellowship Programme and Minority Fellowship Programme	An independent report taking both a summative and formative approach that examined the results and impacts namely in 2015-2019.

17. A descriptive summary of recommendations made for RPTC by previous assessments and audits noted above, as well as by ACABQ deliberations in 2021-2023, is presented in Figure 6. The recommendations were mainly focused on aspects of RPTC performance measurement and management practices.

Figure 6: Previous RPTC related recommendations have been most frequently made towards assessing, monitoring and evaluating RPTC performance (n=12)



18. All of the 2021–2023 OIOS-IED evaluations of subprogrammes from the five regional commissions⁸, included RPTC in their scope and recommendations. The OIOS-IED evaluations of ECE and ECLAC made recommendations towards improved monitoring of technical cooperation requests and/or activities. Meanwhile, the evaluations of ESCAP and ESCWA noted the importance of personal connections between regional commissions and requesting countries as facilitating effective technical cooperation, including on the delivery of RPTC projects.
19. The IEs monitor RPTC implementation independently and, under the coordination of DESA, produce annual progress reports (2022 was the 8th year). These reports, based on IE self-reported data that are not independently validated, provide detailed data on RPTC implementation and highlight specific IE achievements and best practices. The latest, eighth progress report covered RPTC activities implemented in 2022. Individual IE monitoring systems of RPTC have different levels of maturity; however, recently agreed common reporting standards agreed to in 2023 are expected to facilitate IE reporting of RPTC data towards a more standardized format in the future.

⁸ The evaluations of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (E/AC.51/2022/7), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (E/AC.51/2023/6), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (E/AC.51/2023/4), the Economic Commission for Africa (E/AC.51/2022/12) and the Economic Commission for Europe (E/AC.51/2023/5).

III. Selection of topic

G. Risk assessment and scoping process

20. The RPTC was rated as high risk in the 2022 OIOS risk assessment of Secretariat programmes conducted in 2022. The main factors contributing to the high-risk rating were:
- **Lack of evaluations and unclear M&E systems:** While the programme has existed since 1946, the RPTC has never been independently evaluated. Each implementing entity is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of their RPTC funded interventions individually, but with different monitoring approaches. As noted above, only one IE – DESA – has conducted an RPTC evaluation.
 - **Materiality:** The annual proposed programme budget has risen steadily from \$33 million in 2019 to \$40 million in 2023, representing a significant expenditure of the Secretariat.
 - **ACABQ and OIOS-IAD recommendations for evaluation:** As noted in the introduction to this paper, both the 2018 OIOS-IAD audit of RPTC and the ACABQ in 2022 recommended an independent assessment of the performance of RPTC be conducted.
21. OIOS-IED conducted an inception scoping process in March and April 2023 encompassing the following activities:
- **Document review** including reviews of mandates, organizational charts, budgets and oversight reports;
 - **Theory of change development** in consultation with RPTC focal points;
 - **Scoping interviews** totaling 13 interviews with 27 IE staff, including focal points, RPTC management colleagues, two interregional advisors and PPBD-DMSPC;
 - **Informal meetings** with the RPTC data consultant and OIOS-IAD colleagues that conducted the RPTC audit in 2018;
 - **Secondary data analysis** of compiled data on RPTC implementation in 2021 and 2022 provided by individual entities for the annual progress report;
 - **Divisional brainstorming** session within OIOS-IED; and
 - **Discussions with RPTC focal points** through briefings on the initial topic selection, scoping phase activities and identification of the evaluation objective and questions.

IV. Evaluation terms of reference

H. Purpose, objective and approach

22. The evaluation will have a two-fold purpose in terms of accountability and learning in keeping with the OIOS-IED commitment to help entities to learn and improve.
23. The evaluation will determine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance, effectiveness, coherence and efficiency⁹ of RPTC support to Member States, with a focus on how that support enhances their capacity to revise, formulate and/or implement national development policies, national plans, strategies and laws.
24. The evaluation will have both a formative and summative focus. The formative focus will include mapping and assessing the reach of RPTC among Member States, different implementation arrangements used by entities to deliver RPTC funds, and the identification of good practices in administration of the RPTC. The summative focus will include assessing the following intermediate outcomes from the Theory of Change (See Figure 5):
 - a. Enhanced capacity of government officials to implement Member State priorities (skills and knowledge)
 - b. Member States formulate, revise, and/or implement transformative and innovative policies and good practices in line with IE's policy advice

To assess these intermediate level outcomes, the evaluation will also assess the immediate outcomes upon which the intermediate level outcomes are built.

I. Evaluation scope and questions

25. The evaluation scope will have the following parameters:
 - **Focus on country level outcomes:** In addition to the global, regional and subregional scope, the evaluation will assess in-depth outcomes for a sample of countries. Countries will be selected based on clear sampling criteria and in consultation with IEs (criteria are detailed in the methodology section below, see para 30d).
 - **Views of potentially underserved countries:** The evaluation will include the views of both countries that receive RPTC support and countries that receive little or no RPTC support. Underserved countries include developing countries that receive no technical cooperation support, receive a much lower proportion of technical cooperation support than requested¹⁰ and /or rank the lowest in terms of overall submissions of request for technical cooperation support.

⁹ While OIOS-IED typically does not evaluate programme efficiency, the efficiency of RPTC support was added to the evaluation scope following inception briefings and consultations with IE evaluation focal points in April 2023. OIOS Internal Audit Division (OIOS-IAD) will support OIOS-IED with analyses of the efficiency criterion as part of an integrated exercise.

¹⁰ The evaluation team will be using the term "request" broadly to reflect the number of ways in which Member States may ask for technical cooperation support, in line with RPTC goal to respond to emerging needs and demands from Member States.

- **Exclusion of an RPTC inventory:** OIOS will not attempt to conduct an inventory of entity RPTC support provided over time. Where the data exists, it will be analyzed, and where it does not exist OIOS will simply take note.
- **Exclusion of entity level outcomes:** As RPTC is utilized by 66 subprogrammes across the 11 IEs, the evaluation will not assess the individual progress of each entity in achieving its subprogramme outcomes.
- **Timeframe:** The evaluation will cover RPTC activities implemented during the period from 2019 to the first two quarters of 2023. The timeframe was selected to balance the ability of beneficiaries to apply RPTC support they have received and recognizing that it can take time for outcomes related to RPTC activities to occur and to account for the disruptions to work that occurred due to COVID-19 in 2020.¹¹

J. Evaluation Questions

26. The evaluation will seek to answer four overarching evaluation questions that will be addressed by a series of sub-questions, presented below. These are repeated in the evaluation design matrix (Appendix 1) with corresponding measurement indicators and data sources.

1. **Relevance: To what extent do IEs have the appropriate arrangements in place to respond to Member State short-term needs for technical cooperation?**

- 1.1. To what extent do the IEs' structures, mechanisms, strategies and tools facilitate appropriate and flexible RPTC support?
- 1.2. To what extent are IEs responsive (timeliness and ability to respond) enough to adequately meet the short-term technical cooperation needs of Member States?
- 1.3. Do IEs have the right expertise to support Member States with technical cooperation?
- 1.4. To what extent has RPTC been used to support countries that are furthest behind (SIDS, LDCs, LLDCs and emerging from conflict)?
- 1.5. To what extent has RPTC addressed Member State needs for technical cooperation on cross-cutting issues (gender, disability inclusion, environment, and human rights)?

2. **Effectiveness: How effectively has RPTC contributed to Member State capacity to formulate, revise and/or implement policies, national plans, strategies and laws?**

- 2.1. To what extent has RPTC enhanced the capacity of Member State officials to implement their national development priorities?
- 2.2. To what extent has RPTC support contributed, through IE analyses, training and advice, to government officials implementing new development policies, practices and approaches?

¹¹ While the evaluation is not focusing on COVID -19's effect on RPTC implementation explicitly, interviews and surveys will ask about what have been significant factors impacting the delivery of RPTC, including the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Coherence: To what extent have IEs coordinated with other UN entities to provide coherent technical cooperation support to Member States?

- 3.1. To what extent have IEs coordinated both among themselves and with the larger UN system to maximize and harmonize their RPTC support?
- 3.2. To what extent are IE sufficiently using data to facilitate coherent planning, monitoring and/or reporting on RPTC support across the UN system?

4. Efficiency:¹² How efficiently have IEs utilized RPTC resources to respond to the technical cooperation needs of Member States?

- 4.1. How well do the procedures in place for allocating RPTC funds between entities result in a rational allocation based on Member State needs?
- 4.2. How well do the procedures in place within each IE ensure the most cost-effective use of RPTC funds?

K. Evaluation methodology

27. The evaluation will employ a mixed-methods approach, relying on the most appropriate combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to answer the questions elaborated in the evaluation design matrix (Appendix 1). By triangulating data sources, the evaluation will use the strongest evidence available and thus maximize the credibility of its analyses.
28. To manage the need for broad data across IEs, and to ensure adequate specificity of data at country and/or request and activity level to assess outcomes, the evaluation team will collect data at two levels – broad measures of RPTC across entities, and specific examples at country level.
29. The following methods will be used by OIOS-IED:
 - a) **Secondary data analysis:** OIOS will analyze RPTC data that IEs have already been compiling for 2021 and 2022 annual progress reporting, the entities' own internal RPTC project databases (for those who have them). This data will be used to assess the distribution of RPTC demand, support, outcomes achieved, trends, as well as to support country sampling for methods below.
 - b) **RPTC implementation mapping:** A survey will be administered to focal points in each implementing entity to collect standardized and comparable information on the approach taken by each to deliver RPTC interventions from receipt of requests to implementation of activities. The results of the survey will be used to map the RPTC approach and processes across the Secretariat.
 - c) **Structured document review:** Most IEs produce an annual report on technical cooperation, have programme evaluations of technical cooperation projects, and have contributed submission to the DESA led annual progress report (now in its eighth year) and strategic

¹² This criterion will be tested in collaboration with OIOS-IAD using audit tests as noted in paragraph 30 (k) below

framework processes. Using a structured review instrument, these reports will be analyzed for reporting on RPTC outcomes at the country level, and where relevant at the regional and global levels.

- d) **Country case studies:** The evaluation team will select six country case studies where a more in-depth assessment of the outcomes of technical cooperation provided through RPTC will be made.
- **Criteria:** Cases will be selected in consultation with implementing entities and will be purposefully selected using 2021 and 2022 RPTC progress report data based on a combination of the following criteria:
 - *Geographic distribution by regional groups of Member States* to ensure all regions are represented. A total of 1-2 country case studies per region will be selected. To efficiently use OIOS resources, countries that host regional commissions and receive RPTC support will be automatically selected.
 - *Entity involvement* to ensure that a high number of entities implementing RPTC activities are sufficiently captured in each country case study to allow for making inferences broadly across implementing entities. Countries having received technical cooperation support from at least three IEs will be selected.
 - *Number of outcomes reported by entities* will be taken into consideration to focus on localities where technical cooperation support has been reported to have resulted in new or updated policies, laws, national development plans, strategies, reporting obligations or signature of regional and/or international conventions. Any reporting bias concerning the number of outcomes will be reduced due to stratification by region.
 - *Furthest behind Member States* with SIDS/LDC/LLDC status will be prioritized in each region, and ensure that at least a SIDS, an LDC and/or an LLDC country is selected as a case study.
 - *Evaluation burden:* Certain countries will be excluded from the sample as they have been recently selected as case studies in the 2023 OIOS-IED evaluation of the RC system.
 - **Case study data collection** will comprise a) interviews with government officials, direct beneficiaries of RPTC services and programme staff, and where applicable resident coordinators and other partners; b) lite review of documents providing context for the interventions, and evidence of outcomes; and c) where possible observations of technical cooperation services. Case studies will be conducted through a mix of virtual and in person data collection.
- e) **Missions:** To support interviews with programme staff and government officials in case study countries, missions will be conducted to regional commission offices (where government

officials will also be interviewed) and from there to selected case study countries. In addition to the support from the IEs, the evaluation team will reach out to resident coordinator offices to assist in organizing the missions in countries where there is no regional commission in order to have focal point on the ground and given their role in supporting non-resident agency interactions with government. The evaluation team will also interview the RCs as part of the country case studies.

- f) **Survey of RPTC programme staff:** This will include the universe of approximately 400 programme officers managing RPTC, interregional and regional advisors and other IE regular staff contributing to RPTC implementation. This data is readily available from IE focal points.
- g) **Survey of RPTC beneficiaries:** Country government officials and other beneficiary contact data will be drawn for a sample of success stories reported in the annual progress reports to potentially validate reported outcomes, and a selection of countries who received interventions that are not reported in the success stories to balance the sample.
- h) **Interviews with RPTC programme staff:** This will include interviews with a) programme officers managing RPTC, b) interregional and regional advisors, and other IE's regular staff contributing to RPTC implementation in case study countries, and c) a sample of regular staff and advisors selected across IE subprogrammes.
- i) **Interviews with officials from underserved countries:** The evaluation team will interview official representatives from countries that receive much less technical cooperation than they request, and that receive comparatively little technical cooperation support compared to others. These will be official representatives that would normally request technical cooperation support on behalf of their government
- j) **Interviews with other UN partners:** The evaluation team will interview UN staff in entities with whom RPTC implementing entities are coordinating in case study countries. This includes the Resident Coordinators¹³, as well as other UN partners. In addition, the evaluation team will interview officials with whom RPTC implementing entities have been asked to coordinate including for example, special advisors for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing states, and the special advisor for Africa.
- k) **Audit tests:** OIOS-IAD will support the evaluation with audit tests to answer the efficiency questions, and will provide analysis for discrete indicators in the evaluation design matrix found in Annex I. Any data needed will be coordinated and collected jointly with IED. The audit tests are identified in Annex II.

L. Consultation with stakeholders

30. While OIOS-IED maintains its independence as an oversight body, it will consult with the designated RPTC evaluation focal points on an ongoing basis throughout the evaluation to keep them apprised of progress, request data and seek clarification on any data collected and analyzed. OIOS-IED will also

¹³ OIOS may also conduct a survey of resident coordinators by adding questions to an already planned survey as part of an OIOS evaluation of the Development Coordination Office (DCO)

brief the RPTC focal points and senior management as necessary at key junctures of the evaluation, namely during the inception phase, during the identification of country case studies and once preliminary results have been identified following data collection and analysis. The goal is to have a participatory and collaborative approach to data collection and to ensure that IE focal points can be used as a reference at critical phases to maximize the utility of the evaluation results and recommendations.

M. Human rights, gender, disability inclusion and environment perspectives

31. In line with UN Secretariat guidance, OIOS has committed in its budget to assess, where feasible, entities' mainstreaming of gender perspectives, disability inclusion, environmental issues and human rights. As mandated by General Assembly resolutions, human rights (A/RES/60/1), gender (A/RES/71/243) and disability inclusion (A/RES/75/154) must be mainstreamed into all UN policies and programmes. In addition, the 2020 resolution (A/RES/75/233) on the QCPR requests all entities of the UN development system to "assist Governments upon their request and in consultation with them, in their efforts to respect and fulfil their human rights obligations and commitments under international law, as a critical tool to operationalize the pledge to leave no one behind". UNEG Norms and Standards further require the explicit inclusion of these considerations in evaluations.

32. OIOS will examine the crosscutting issues from two perspectives:
 - a. **Leave no one behind:** the evaluation team will assess Member State awareness and access to technical cooperation among potentially underserved countries. The team will also assess if there has been a focus on SIDS, LLDCs and LDCs and countries emerging from conflict status as stated in the RPTC programme criteria. Where possible, data will be disaggregated to examine differences between these groups. Within case study countries, the team will also assess the extent to which RPTC projects have contributed to decreasing discrimination and inequalities with disadvantaged groups
 - b. **Cross-cutting issues integration:** the evaluation team will assess the extent to which the RPTC addressed Member State needs for technical cooperation on cross-cutting issues, including the integration in RPTC programming of human rights, gender, disability inclusion and environment.

N. Risk management

33. OIOS-IED foresees several potential risks to the timely completion of a credible review, which OIOS-IED will monitor and manage. These are listed below with an accompanying risk mitigation strategy:
 - a) **Low awareness of RPTC among government beneficiaries and partners:** Evidence from scoping interviews showed that it is unlikely that government officials and other beneficiaries of RPTC funded technical cooperation will know that it was provided using RPTC funds or be able to discern between RPTC support and other related capacity development support that may have been provided. The evaluation team will mitigate against this by ensuring it has

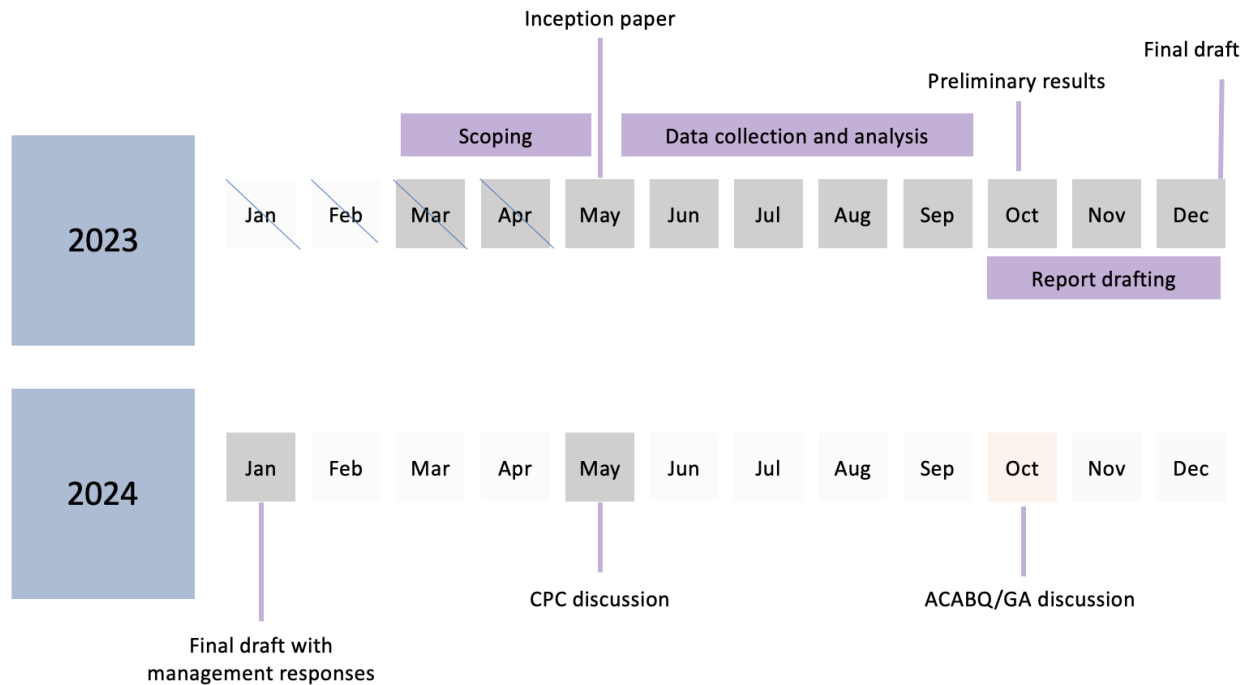
information on specific projects or interventions that beneficiaries will recognize and be asked about in interviews and surveys.

- b) **Short time frame to complete:** OIOS will manage the intensity of data collection to ensure it meets the milestones needed to arrive at CPC in 2024 (see timeline Figure 7). OIOS-IED will work closely with IE focal points to ensure data and other support requests are targeted and clearly understood so that they may be responded to quickly. In addition, OIOS will be mindful to ensure data requests are specific, targeted, clearly scoped and do not duplicate existing data.
- c) **Potential for oversight burden:** Given that there are 11 IEs, each of whom have just completed submissions to DESA for the annual progress report on RPTC, and interventions delivered in 161 countries, there is high potential for oversight burden. To mitigate against this risk, the evaluation team will coordinate closely with other oversight entities, will be mindful of opportunities to use existing analyses to avoid duplication and will avoid the selection of case studies in overburdened countries.
- d) **Ability to conduct interviews and case studies in person:** OIOS-IED will take a hybrid approach to interviewing, conducting interviews in person, where feasible, and others remotely. Reaching out to programme beneficiaries remotely is a challenge, so efforts will be made to ensure this group is prioritized for in-person data collection.
- e) **Data quality issues in programme performance data:** Preliminary review of programme data revealed significant data gaps, which included entities without any RPTC-related data on requests, interventions or outcomes achieved or without disaggregated data by country or gender. In addition, the granularity of compiled data for reporting progress is not at the request or activity level, which would be the targeted information needed when reaching out to sampled beneficiaries. Moreover, available RPTC-related data is self-reported by IEs and not validated. IEs understanding of concepts and indicators seems to have varied before the agreed common reporting standards addressed some data comparability issues. To mitigate against these risks, the evaluation team will be transparent about the limitations of available data in its analyses and comparisons and will triangulate multiple sources of evidence to fill gaps where appropriate and possible.

O. Timeline and work plan

- 34. OIOS-IED will undertake the evaluation according to the timeline articulated in Figure 7. The draft report will be shared with RPTC for comment by December 2023. The final report will be issued to RPTC by the end of January 2024. The report will be available for Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) consideration in June 2024.

Figure 7: Project Timeline for 2023 Evaluation of RPTC



P. Dissemination and follow-up strategy

35. RPTC implementing entities will prepare a short letter of management response to the evaluation and an action plan. The action plan will indicate – for each accepted recommendation – anticipated action(s), responsible entity(ies) and target date(s) for completion. OIOS-IED will assist RPTC implementing entities with refining the action plan, ensuring that the anticipated actions are in line with the recommendations. The letter(s) of management response will be appended to the evaluation report, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 64/263. The report may also be considered by the CPC at its 64th session in 2024 and will be submitted as a General Assembly report in February 2024.
36. The final report will be posted on the OIOS-IED internet and intranet and on the UNEG website. OIOS-IED will disseminate the report to all stakeholders (e.g., focal points, interviewees and survey respondents) who participated in the evaluation, where appropriate, and will follow up with a post-evaluation client satisfaction survey. OIOS-IED may also disseminate the report on iSeek and through other means.

Appendix 1: Evaluation design matrix (EDM)

Criterion	Evaluation Question	Sub-question	Indicator	Possible method(s)
Relevance	1. To what extent do IEs have the appropriate arrangements in place to respond to Member State short-term needs for technical cooperation?	1.1. To what extent do the IEs' structures, mechanisms, strategies and tools provide for appropriate and flexible RPTC support?	Number of IEs with structures and parameters in place to ensure that their RPTC support is demand-driven (e.g., requirement for evidence of request)	- IE focal point survey
			Number of entities that track the implementation status of received technical cooperation requests that use RPTC funds	- IE focal point survey
			Number of IEs with a systematic protocol/process to receive Member State requests for technical cooperation support	- IE focal point survey - Audit test to be performed by OIOS-IAD
			Extent to which RPTC support provided is within IE's mandate	- Document review of IE mandates and sampled examples of RPTC support - Audit test to be performed by OIOS-IAD
			Evidence of alignment between RPTC support provided by IEs and requests and priorities expressed by Member States	-Data submission - Government official and staff interviews in select countries
			Perceptions of Member States on the degree of alignment between forms of RPTC support provided by IEs and requests and priorities expressed by Member States	- Government official and staff interviews in select countries - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey
			Number of IEs that maintain a repository of Member State requests for technical cooperation support by thematic area and/or responding to a particular outcome	- IE focal point survey
			Types of requests received for technical cooperation support, by entity	- IE focal point survey
			Evidence of use of good practices to administer RPTC funds	- Audit test to be performed by OIOS-IAD
			Number of IEs with mechanisms that facilitate linkages between (including conversion/mobilization) RPTC support and longer-term XB/DA funded projects	- IE focal point survey - Document or project database review - Audit test to be performed by OIOS-IAD
		1.2. To what extent are IEs responsive (timeliness and ability to	Percentage of completed/partially implemented Member State requests for technical cooperation support	- Data submission (if tracked)
			Proportion of unmet requests for technical cooperation	- Data submission (if tracked)

	respond) enough to adequately meet the short-term technical cooperation needs of Member States?	Average time for subprogrammes implementing RPTC support to receive RPTC disbursements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data submission (if tracked) - RPTC programme staff survey - Audit test to be performed by OIOS-IAD
		Average time IEs take to acknowledge and/or respond to a Member State request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data submission (if tracked) - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey
		Average time IEs take to (partially/fully) implement a Member State request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data submission (if tracked) - RPTC programme staff survey - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey - Audit test to be performed by OIOS-IAD
		Proportion of RPTC interventions completed within one year after the Member State request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data submission (if tracked) - RPTC programme staff survey - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey
		Degree of Member States satisfaction with responsiveness of IEs to technical cooperation support needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government official interviews in select countries - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey
		Degree of satisfaction of Member States with the timeliness of IEs for technical cooperation support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government official interviews in select countries - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey
	1.3. Do IEs have the right expertise to support Member States with technical cooperation?	Degree of alignment between the RPTC-funded expertise in IEs (IRAs, RAs, consultants and experts) and the requests and needs expressed by Member States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RPTC programme staff survey - conditional q for directors
		Degree of satisfaction of Member States with the alignment between the expertise housed by IEs and the requests and needs expressed by Member States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey - Government official interviews in select countries
		Degree of satisfaction of Member states with the value addition provided by the technical cooperation support received using RPTC funds in terms of substantive support and flexibility of the response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey - Government official interviews in select countries

	Degree of complementarity/overlap of expertise among interregional advisors and regional advisors and/or consultants and staff that implement RPTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RPTC programme staff survey - conditional q for IRAs/Ras - Document review of PHPs of 74+ IRAs and RAs (where possible, overlaps) - Audit test to be performed by OIOS-IAD
1.4. To what extent has RPTC been used to support countries that are furthest behind (SIDS, LDCs, LLDCs, and emerging from conflict)?	Extent to which IEs prioritize technical cooperation for countries with the greatest need (SIDS, LDCs, LLDCs, and emerging from conflict)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -IE focal point survey -Interviews with RPTC programme staff
	Number of entities that track received RPTC requests with a marker on SIDS/LDC/LLDC, and emerging from conflict status	- IE focal point survey
	Distribution of Member States requesting technical cooperation support, by region and by SIDS/LDC/LLDC, and emerging from conflict status	- Secondary analysis of compiled RPTC data
	Distribution of Member States receiving technical cooperation support, by region and by SIDS/LDC/LLDC and emerging from conflict status	- Secondary analysis of compiled RPTC data
	Proportion of Member States with SIDS/LDC/LLDC and emerging from conflict status that did not request technical cooperation support	- Secondary analysis of compiled RPTC data
	Perceptions of Member States with SIDS/LDC/LLDC status and emerging from conflict on the degree of alignment between forms of RPTC support provided by IEs and requests and priorities expressed by Member States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey - Overall response vs. disaggregated response
	Evidence of RPTC support that facilitated south-south cooperation involving Member States with SIDS/LDC/LLDC and emerging from conflict status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RPTC programme staff survey - Government official interviews in select countries - Document review
1.5. To what extent has RPTC addressed Member State needs for technical cooperation on cross-cutting issues (gender, disability inclusion, environment, and human rights)?	Number of entities that track received RPTC requests with a marker on cross-cutting issues (gender, disability inclusion, environment and human rights)	- IE focal point survey
	Number of entities that received Member State requests for technical cooperation support on a specific cross-cutting issue	- RPTC programme staff survey
	Number of entities that utilized disaggregated data (by gender, disability, etc.) in their monitoring and reporting of RPTC implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IE focal point survey - Secondary analysis of compiled RPTC data
	Perceptions of Member States on the extent to which technical cooperation support from IEs addressed their cross-cutting needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey - conditional q - Government official interviews in select countries

			Number of entities with RPTC guidelines that reference cross-cutting issues	-Document review -IE focal point survey
Effectiveness	2. How effectively has RPTC contributed to Member State capacity to formulate, revise and/or implement policies, national plans, strategies, and laws?	2.1. To what extent has RPTC enhanced the capacity of Member State officials to implement their national development priorities?	Evidence of government officials and fellows that attended training events having acquired new skills and approaches	- Government official interviews in select countries - Programme staff interviews (IRAs, RAs, directors)
			Evidence of beneficial use among government officials and fellows of new skills and approaches as a result of enhanced capacity [to implement Member State priorities]	- Government official interviews in select countries - Programme staff interviews (IRAs, RAs, directors)
			Extent to which government officials have received high quality IE policy advice, recommendations and analysis tailored to meet their needs	- Government official interviews in select countries - Programme staff interviews (IRAs, RAs, directors)
			Evidence of government officials and fellows with enhanced capacity sharing the support they received with colleagues	- Government official interviews in select countries - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey
			Number of IEs that have facilitated sharing good practices regionally or inter-regionally (i.e., south-south cooperation)	- Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey - RPTC programme staff survey
			Number of IEs that have mechanisms in place to follow up (sustainability) on implemented training events	- IE focal point survey
			Degree of satisfaction of Member States with the quality of IE capacity building and advisory activities for technical cooperation support	- Government official interviews in select countries - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey
			Degree of satisfaction of Member States with the follow up (sustainability) of IE capacity building activities for technical cooperation	- Government official interviews in select countries - Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey
		2.2. To what extent has RPTC support contributed,	Extent to which government officials report having taken timely, well-informed action/decision based on IE advice and recommendations	- Government official interviews in select countries - Programme staff interviews (IRAs, RAs, directors)

		through IE analyses, training and advice, to government officials implementing new policies, practices and approaches?	Extent to which government officials report having used new and innovative approaches, tools and models based on advisory services, training events and pilot projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government official interviews in select countries - Programme staff interviews (IRAs, RAs, directors)
			Number and quality of Member State policies, national plans, strategies and laws revised or formulated as a result of IE RPTC support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review - Government official interviews in select countries
			Number and quality of Member State policies, national plans, strategies and laws revised that are implemented as a result of IE RPTC support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government official interviews in select countries - Programme staff interviews (IRAs, RAs, directors)
Coherence	3. To what extent have IEs coordinated with other UN entities to provide coherent technical cooperation support to Member States?	3.1. To what extent have IEs coordinated both among themselves and with the larger UN system to maximize and harmonize their RPTC support?	Number of IEs that have a mechanism or mechanisms in place to notify relevant entities (RCOs, OHRLLS, OSAA and/or an overlapping regional IE) after receiving an RPTC request from a Member State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IE focal point survey - RPTC programme staff survey
			Evidence of RCO/OHRLLS/OSAA awareness about relevant Member State requests for technical cooperation support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RC survey (appended q)
			Number of IEs that have received an RPTC request from a Member State channeled through an RCO, OHRLLS and/or OSAA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IE focal point survey - RC survey (appended q)
			Number of IEs that have mechanisms in place to inform relevant entities (RCOs, OHRLLS, OSAA and/or overlapping regional IE) on RPTC implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IE focal point survey
			Evidence of RCO/OHRLLS/OSAA awareness about RPTC implementation in relevant Member States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RC survey (appended q)
			Evidence of RPTC co-implementation by multiple IEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RPTC programme staff survey
			Evidence of RPTC implementation by different IEs with comparative advantage that did not receive the original Member State request for technical cooperation support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RPTC programme staff survey
			The extent to which IEs have mechanisms in place to avoid duplication in RPTC implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IE focal point survey - Programme staff interviews (IRAs, RAs, directors)
			Perceptions of IE programme staff on possible areas of duplication and overlaps in technical cooperation support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme staff interviews
			Perceptions of Member States on possible areas of duplication and overlaps in technical cooperation support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government official interviews in select countries

		Number of IEs that have mechanisms to coordinate among subprogrammes implementing RPTC	- Programme staff interviews
		Number of entities with mechanisms in place to facilitate RPTC's complementarity with technical cooperation support funded through XB or DA	- IE focal point survey
		Evidence of an informal/online network bringing together units in charge of RPTC planning/oversight across IEs	- RPTC programme staff survey
		Evidence of an informal/online network bringing together RPTC-funded expertise (interregional advisors, regional advisors, consultants and experts)	- RPTC programme staff survey conditional q for IRAs/RAs
		Evidence of collaboration and linkages among RPTC-funded expertise (interregional advisors, regional advisors, consultants and experts) across IEs	- RPTC programme staff survey - conditional q for IRAs/RAs
	3.2. To what extent are IEs sufficiently using data to facilitate coherent planning, monitoring and/or reporting on RPTC support across the UN system?	Proportion of sampled RPTC interventions that are followed up for beneficiary feedback related to outcomes	- Sampled govt. officials and other beneficiaries survey
		Number of IEs that monitor and report on actions taken by government officials as a result of RPTC support	
		Assessment of data quality for RPTC support planning, monitoring, and reporting	- Secondary analysis of compiled RPTC data - Audit test to be performed by OIOS-IAD
		Degree of comparability across IEs of data used for reporting on RPTC results	- Secondary analysis of compiled RPTC data
		Number of entities that have centralized/decentralized data entry/revision procedures to plan, monitor and/report on their RPTC support	- IE focal point survey
		Degree of comparability within IEs of data used for reporting on RPTC results	- IE focal point survey
		Number of entities that utilized disaggregated data (by gender, disability, etc.) in their monitoring and reporting of RPTC implementation	- IE focal point survey - Secondary analysis of compiled RPTC data

Efficiency	4. How efficiently have IEs utilized RPTC resources to respond to technical cooperation needs of Member States?	4.1 How well do the procedures in place for allocating RPTC funds between entities result in a rational allocation based on needs?	Assessment of PPBD and Controller procedures for allocating RPTC funds between entities	- Audit test to be performed by OIOS-IAD
		4.2 How well do the procedures in place within each IE ensure cost-effective use of RPTC funds?	Assessment of the allocation of and procedures for allocating RPTC funds within implementing entities, including to hiring of advisors through General Temporary Assistance (GTA), consultants and travel	- Audit test to be performed by OIOS-IAD
			Implementation rates for RPTC funds for each IE from 2019 to 2022	- Audit test to be performed by OIOS-IAD
			Cost effectiveness of the RPTC modality compared to other approaches to technical cooperation support.	- Interviews with programme staff - Audit test to be performed by IAD
			Number of IEs that review their RPTC-funded expertise periodically to accommodate evolving Member State needs	- IE focal point survey - Review sample of advisor's work plans; review UMOJA data for all - Audit test to be performed by OIOS-IAD

Notes: 1) Further indicators might be developed as evaluation work proceeds and any indicators for which data does not exist might be replaced by proxy measures. Any such modifications will be discussed with the evaluand. 2) Audit tests to be performed by OIOS-IAD will be completed as part of the evaluation and not as a separate exercise. These are identified in Annex II.

Annex II: OIOS-IAD Audit Tests

The following table presents the audit tests to be performed by IAD in support of the evaluation of RPTC. Note that tests may be adjusted based on availability of data.

OIOS-IAD Audit Test	EDM Questions
Determine the governance structures in place for accepting member states (MS) requests and for submitting reports on RPTC funds	1.1
Assess whether there are linkages between RPTC and the strategic frameworks of the IEs	1.1
Determine timelines between receipt of request and disbursement of funds and submission of final reports	1.2
Determine the composition of resources (levels and numbers of advisors, other staff and consultants) used to implement RPTC projects and determine whether they were based on needs	1.3
Assess whether the IE has made efforts to localize their technical capacity and make efficient use of the resources as follows: i) Determine the levels of the advisors ii) Determine the numbers of national level advisors and consultants used since 2019 iii) Determine whether the IEs have made efforts to work with national and regional consultants	1.3
Determine whether IEs include RPTC in their performance reports	3.2
Assess whether the IE prepared comprehensive work plans specifying responsibilities, activities, timeframe and key deliverables	3.2
Determine the criteria used by PPBD and the controller to allocate RPTC funds to each IE and assess whether it's based on needs	4.1
Assess the procedures for allocating RPTC funds within IEs including hiring of advisors, consultants, and travel	4.2
Assess the RPTC implementation rates of each entity over time, and reasons for delayed implementation	4.2
Assess the procedures they have in place for updating their advisory capacities and using them efficiently i) Determine whether they prepared results-based work plan iii) Determine the duration of incumbency	4.2

Appendix III: Definitions of RPTC activities found in the Common Reporting Standards

The following definitions were agreed to by the RPTC implementing entities in April 2023, to further standardize reporting. The evaluation will use these definitions.

An **advisory mission** is the provision of advice to a government, involving travel to that country. Advisory missions involve staff members / consultants / experts working closely with members of the government, for example, to develop a policy or strategy. Advisory missions are a sub-set of Advisory Services.

Advisory services respond to a relevant request, help a Member State respond to a specific problem, and have a clear start and end point. Services do not have any specific learning goals, but provide advice to governments, for example advising on a certain law, a white paper. The advisory service could end at this point - the provision of advice - or it could lead to a field project, a workshop etc. Advisory Services may be provided by Inter-Regional Advisors, Regional Advisors, national consultants supported by the IE, or any other member of staff tasked with programming RPTC funds. Services may be provided through an advisory mission (involving travel to the target country), through virtual means; or through hybrid means.

Capacity building activities consist of trainings, workshops, seminars, fellowships, study tours, distance learning, or the sharing of experience across countries or regions.

Field projects may be country-based, regional, subregional or interregional events, which should be geared to: (i) testing or operationalizing new approaches or pilot activities; (ii) providing (seed) funding for action which has not been planned for under XB funded resources; (iii) developing or implementing new 'one UN' or joint UN action in IE mandated areas (RPTC contributions matched with other UN agency cost-sharing), or (iv) developing regional expert and knowledge-sharing networks/technologies between Member States.

Knowledge products may include toolkits, case studies, guides, technical papers etc.

Knowledge networks, also referred to as Communities of Practice, are groups of people with a defined area of professional interest working on a common body of knowledge in their respective organizations. Such networks are often used as a way to promote South-South exchange. Knowledge Networks tend to last longer than the typical duration of an RPTC intervention, but such interventions may be used to spur the creation of such networks, for example.

Grants: Funds transferred from the IE, from the RPTC budget (Section 23) to partners on the ground, backed up by formal agreements and contracts