



ADDENDUM JUNE 2011
EVALUATION

**UPDATED GUIDANCE ON EVALUATION
IN THE HANDBOOK ON PLANNING,
MONITORING AND EVALUATING FOR
DEVELOPMENT RESULTS(2009)**



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1. BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1.1. WHY THE ADDENDUM?

The Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results (the Handbook) was launched by the UNDP Administrator in September 2009. UNDP commissioned an independent review of the evaluation policy in 2010, as per the provision made in the organization's first evaluation policy, approved by the Executive Board in 2006. While acknowledging progress made in the implementation of the evaluation policy, the review highlighted a need to revise the evaluation policy to further clarify roles and responsibilities of the key constituents of the organization, emphasize key principles such as national ownership and codify current practice in the policy. In approving the review and UNDP's management response, the UNDP Executive Board requested the organization to revise the policy, as well as relevant guidance and operational directives such as the Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP) and the Handbook. The revised evaluation policy of UNDP was approved by the Executive Board in January 2011. This addendum is intended to present changes in the recently approved evaluation policy and how these changes affect guidance provided in the Handbook.

The overall principles and guidance on what constitutes good planning, monitoring and evaluations continue to be relevant and important to the UNDP efforts as it strives to be a more results-oriented organization.

1.2. HOW SHOULD THIS ADDENDUM BE USED?

The Handbook continues to be UNDP's primary guidance on evaluation. Therefore, UNDP managers, staff and partners should continue to use the Handbook as a reference document when planning, managing and using evaluations. **When using the Handbook as a training material or guidance note to UNDP staff and partners, both the Handbook and this addendum should be made available so that we have access to the most up-to-date information and guidance.**

In addition to the Handbook and this addendum, relevant sections in the Programme and Project Management component of POPP and the guide on outcome-level decentralized evaluations should also be consulted. They provide complementary information based on the changes introduced in the

evaluation policy.

1.3. ORGANIZATION OF THE ADDENDUM

This brief addendum has three sections. To present a clear overview on the basis for this addendum, the following section (Section 2) presents key changes introduced in the 2011 UNDP evaluation policy. Section 3 presents implications for changes in the Chapters pertaining to guidance on evaluation in the Handbook, following the order of appearance in the Handbook. The list below summarizes the Chapters or sub-chapters on which the revisions in the policy had implications.

- Ch. 3.2 (Table 16 Evaluation Plan and Specific Considerations for Planning Evaluations)
- Ch. 5.2 (Evaluation Policy: principles, norms and standards for evaluation)
- Ch. 5.3 (Types of evaluation in UNDP)
- Ch. 5.4 (Roles and responsibilities in evaluation)
- Ch. 5.5 (Mandatory requirements for programme units)
- Ch. 6.2 Step 4 (Management Response)

In section 3 of the addendum where key changes in the Handbook are described, references are made to relevant Chapters or pages in the Handbook.

2. UNDP EVALUATION POLICY 2011

2.1 OVERVIEW ON THE REVISION– WHAT HAS CHANGED?

In response to the request by the Executive Board, UNDP revised the evaluation policy, focusing primarily on the following five areas: national ownership; national evaluation capacity development; independence of the Evaluation Office; strengthening decentralized evaluation; and use of evaluation. The introductory sections of the policy are mostly untouched and no revision was made to the guiding principles or norms other than reinforcing national ownership. The following section summarizes what changes are made in each of these key areas.

National ownership

National ownership has always been a key principle for evaluations in UNDP, and the revised policy gives even greater importance to this principle. Country-led and joint evaluations are promoted both for independent and decentralized evaluations. The revised policy also makes explicit the engagement of national governments in the decentralized evaluation process, from evaluation planning to the preparation of management responses and use of evaluation. For example, the development and revision of evaluation plans, and the development of management responses to evaluations must be done in close consultation with governments and relevant stakeholders.

National evaluation capacity development

As evident from the Triennial Comprehensive Programme Review (TCPR) and other General Assembly resolutions, there has been a growing demand for the UN system and UNDP to respond to the needs for national evaluation capacity development. The revised policy has a sub-section that clarifies the distinct roles of the Evaluation Office and programme units in this important area. It specifies that UNDP provides support to national evaluation capacity development at the request of programme host governments, and emphasizes the promotion of South-South and trilateral cooperation in support of capacity building for evaluation. The Evaluation Office, for its part, will continue to provide countries with a forum for discussion of evaluation issues.

Independence of UNDP Evaluation Office

The revised policy clarifies the Evaluation Office's institutional independence in terms of budget, recruitment of staff and programme of work. The role of the Executive Board and the Administrator in the appointment, renewal and dismissal of the director of the Evaluation Office has also been clarified.

Strengthening decentralized evaluations

A separate section on decentralized evaluations has been created to make the specific roles and responsibilities of key constituents in decentralized evaluation distinct from roles and responsibilities for independent evaluations. As requested by the Board, the compliance basis for the coverage by decentralized evaluation has been changed from the implementation of planned outcome evaluations to the entire evaluation plan. This new compliance requirement will provide programme units with more flexibility for strategic choices in evaluation coverage, and a greater range of decentralized evaluation instruments to discuss with partners. Here too, joint evaluations with government partners and/or the UN system and other partners are strongly encouraged as a preferred modality.

The policy requires programme units to ensure adequate coverage of programmatic activities so that sufficient evaluative evidence is produced to inform decision-making and support accountability and learning. At the same time, greater emphasis is put on “quality” as opposed to “quantity” in evaluations planning and conduct.

The revised policy specifies that all new global, regional, country, thematic and South-South programmes have to be presented to the Board with a costed evaluation plan. In the case of country offices, they are requested to budget the plan no later than at the time of adoption of the country programme action plan. This is to ensure that sufficient resources for evaluation are set aside at the planning stage. To improve the quality of evaluations, the revised policy reinforces the responsibility of bureaux and country offices to ensure the evaluability of programmes. And a separate sub-section has been created to clarify the oversight role of regional bureaux’ directors in evaluation at the country office level.

Use of evaluation

UNDP continues to place great importance on use of evaluation, as a learning and knowledge-based organization, and of drawing and internalizing lessons from evaluations. The use of evaluation for learning has been included as one of the key roles and responsibilities of senior management at Headquarters and in country offices.

At a glance: Key changes in the UNDP Evaluation Policy 2011

- The compliance requirement for the coverage by decentralized evaluations has changed to the full implementation of the evaluation plan. All evaluation planned in the plan are mandatory.
- There is a new evaluation plan template (see Annex 1 of this addendum).
- All evaluation plans have to be presented to the Board fully costed (and for CPDs, fully budgeted by CPAP approval).
- Much greater flexibility is provided in terms of decentralized evaluation coverage. The different types of decentralized evaluations are described in Annex I of the revised policy.
- Evaluation plans should be reviewed as part of periodic programme review and where relevant, can be revised with advance clearance from the Regional Bureau and approval from the government and /or relevant stakeholders.
- Joint evaluations are promoted as a preferred modality (while clearly retaining UNDP specific accountability for results).
- All evaluations should have a focus on UNDP’s contribution at the outcome-level so that UNDP can manage for development results beyond the delivery of outputs.
- Regional bureaux directors’ oversight responsibilities and support role to decentralized evaluation (in assuring decentralized evaluation coverage, compliance, quality, as well as use) have been more clearly spelled out.
- The section on “Use of evaluation findings and recommendations” has been reinforced. References to organizational learning through analysis and application of evaluation findings have been added under the responsibilities of senior management in both independent and decentralized evaluations.

2.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In the revised evaluation policy, roles and responsibilities for key constituents of the organization have not changed significantly. However, for ease of reference and enhanced clarity, they have been separated for independent and decentralized evaluations. The oversight and support responsibilities of the regional bureaux vis-à-vis country offices and the Executive Board's role in evaluation have been further clarified. The table below summarises key actors and their roles and responsibilities in decentralized evaluations. [Note: the evaluation policy outlines key constituents of the organization who are ultimately accountable. In practice, some roles and responsibilities are delegated to most appropriate individuals or groups of people – e.g. while the senior management of the country office is responsible for ensuring that the information in the ERC is up-to-date, the actual entry and management of data in the system might be delegated to the evaluation focal point or M&E specialist]

For detailed roles and responsibilities during the evaluation process (demonstrating good practice of operationalizing these principles in practice), please see table 23 on page 141 of the Handbook.

Actors	Roles and Responsibilities
The Administrator of UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensures compliance with the evaluation policy; ▪ Provides sufficient resources and capacity for decentralized evaluations; ▪ Approves any revisions to evaluation plans attached to regional, global and thematic programmes; ▪ Ensures that UNDP prepares a management response to decentralized evaluations; ▪ Ensures that senior management responds to and utilizes decentralized evaluation and that appropriate follow-up action is taken by the relevant units.
The senior management of practice and policy bureaux, regional bureaux and country offices that manage global, regional, country and thematic programmes (RBx, BDP, BCPR, PB, SS/SSC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensures the evaluability of programmes by identifying clear results, developing measurable indicators, and establishing performance targets and baseline information; ▪ In collaboration with stakeholders and partners, ensures the effective monitoring of implementation and performance of programmes to generate relevant, timely information for management for results and evaluation; ▪ With partner governments and key stakeholders, develops a costed evaluation plan attached to programme documents. In the case of country offices, budgets the plan no later than at the time of adoption of the country programme action plan. Periodically reviews and updates the plan to ensure its relevance to national priorities; ▪ Establishes an appropriate institutional arrangement to manage evaluation; ▪ Ensures adequate resources for evaluation; ▪ Safeguards the independence of the evaluation process and product; ▪ Ensures the implementation of the evaluation plan in line with established quality standards; ▪ Makes all necessary information available to the evaluation team; ▪ Promotes joint evaluation work with the UN system and other partners, while ensuring accountability for the specific contributions of UNDP to development results; ▪ Prepares, in consultation with national partners, management responses to all evaluations, and ensures and tracks appropriate, timely implementation of the agreed evaluation recommendations; ▪ Draws on evaluation findings to improve the quality of programmes, guide strategic decision-making on future programming and positioning, and share knowledge on development experience; ▪ Ensures the transparency of and public access to all evaluation reports; ▪ Promotes organizational learning through analysis and application of evaluation findings across regions, themes and results areas, including through knowledge systems and products.

<p>In their exercise of line oversight and support to evaluations commissioned by country offices, the Directors of regional bureaux</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure evaluability of country programmes, quality of evaluation plans and evaluation practices by country offices and the full implementation of costed evaluation plans; ▪ Support and guide country office capacity in evaluation, including establishing regional expertise and regional evaluation support systems; ▪ Review and clear revisions of evaluation plans attached to country programmes; ▪ Ensure effective use of evaluations for oversight.
<p>The Evaluation Office</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sets evaluation standards for planning, conducting and using decentralized evaluations, and assesses the quality of evaluation reports; ▪ Disseminates methodology and good practice standards for evaluation management in UNDP; ▪ Provides a roster of evaluation experts; ▪ Supports a network of evaluation practitioners; ▪ Maintains a public depository of evaluation resources to facilitate sharing of evaluative knowledge.

Source: UNDP Evaluation Policy DP/2011/3

3. KEY CHANGES RELATING TO CHAPTERS OF THE HANDBOOK

3.1 HOW TO PLAN FOR EVALUATIONS (HB: CHAPTER 3.2)

Developing an evaluation plan continues to be an integral part of the dialogue UNDP holds with partners during the UNDAF (as the UNDP CPD evaluation plan drives from the UNDAF M&E plan) and CPD design. The revised policy requires that the costed evaluation plan is presented to the Executive Board as an annex to the global, regional, country and south-south programme document. After the approval of the programme document, the evaluation plan needs to be budgeted before the operationalization of a programme (for country offices, this means by the time of CPAP approval). Evaluation plans are reviewed as part of the annual programme review process to ensure relevance of the planned evaluations.

Chapter 3.2 (page 88) of the Handbook discusses specific considerations for planning evaluations and they continue to be relevant. In addition, national evaluation contexts - which entail, inter alia, understanding who is doing what evaluation, how and when - should be carefully analyzed so that evaluation efforts can be harmonized, to the extent possible, for optimal use of evaluation. By discussing with national partner on evaluation at an early stage of programming, UNDP and partners can also identify opportunities for joint evaluations. For example, if the programme government is initiating an evaluation of a national programme on decentralization, to which UNDP contributes, UNDP may join this national effort as a member of the evaluation management group and jointly carry out the evaluation. A major donor of UNDP might also be planning an evaluation of its country assistance. In lieu of the donor independently carrying out the evaluation of UNDP's contribution, UNDP may jointly conduct the evaluation, while promoting the principles of national ownership and good practices as outlined in the UNDP evaluation policy. There are numerous benefits of joint evaluations, one of which being avoiding unnecessary duplication of evaluation efforts. For the reasons of national ownership and enhanced use of evaluation, the revised evaluation policy places a renewed importance on joint evaluations with other partners, such as programme country governments and UN organizations – particularly in the framework of UNDAF. [Chapter 5.3 page 138 of the Handbook discussed possible benefits and challenges of joint evaluations, and Chapter 6.3 presented key elements of the joint evaluation process.]

Since the majority of UNDP interventions are implemented through the National Execution/Implementation modality (NEX/NIM), the involvement of national partners is a pre-requisite in

UNDP evaluations at the country level. For this reason, it is often thought that all UNDP evaluations are, by nature, joint evaluations. While there are different degrees of ‘jointness’ depending on the extent to which individual partners cooperate in the evaluation process, for an evaluation to be considered as a joint evaluation, it requires a more structured approach than merely consulting national programme or project partners at certain stages of the evaluation process. For example, there should be an agreed management structure with roles and responsibilities identified for all key parties.

There are also disadvantages in joint evaluations (page 138 of the Handbook). Joint evaluations often pose methodological challenges, due to differences in RBM and reporting systems and it is not always easy to ensure that these joint evaluations do assess UNDP’s contribution and fulfil the organization’s accountability requirements. Before initiating a joint evaluation, UNDP should carefully assess the degree of ‘jointness’, management structures and implications of such partnerships (see Chapter 6.3 of the Handbook).

While the CPD, GPD and RPD evaluation plans should only include the evaluations for which UNDP programme units are accountable in terms of the conduct and resources (this includes joint evaluations, in which UNDP participates), relevant evaluations that have influenced the choice of UNDP evaluations should be reflected in the narrative box in the ERC (such as independent evaluations conducted by the Evaluation Office and evaluations by donors, national government and civil society, etc...).

3.2 TYPES OF DECENTRALIZED EVALUATIONS (HB: CHAPTER 5.3)

In line with their respective evaluation plans, country offices, regional bureaux, and practice and policy bureaux commission independent consultants to conduct decentralized evaluations in the programmatic frameworks for which they are responsible.

Decentralized evaluations should always address UNDP’s contribution to development results at the outcome level, and address the short-term, medium-term and long-term contributions of UNDP to the attainment of outcomes in the framework of the following as outlined in the table below.

Decentralized evaluations could also include other types of evaluations that management of programmes units may consider appropriate and useful. What, how and when to evaluate is a strategic management decision and should be based on the sound analysis of information needs and the evaluation context, as well as close consultation with national governments.

In order to ensure that UNDP can better manage for development results and real changes in people’s lives, no evaluations, including project evaluations, should be limited to assessing UNDP’s inputs, activities and outputs. They should assess the extent to which UNDP’s investments have contributed to the attainment of stated outcome(s). Therefore, all evaluations in UNDP are outcome-level evaluations.

3.3 MANDATORY EVALUATIONS (HB: CHAPTER 5.5)

In order to meet expectations for accountability and learning, UNDP should plan evaluations in a way that together, they provide sufficient coverage of programmatic activities, address all outcomes in the programme document, and produce evaluative evidence to inform decision-making and support accountability and learning.

Unit of analysis for evaluation	
UNDAF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNDAF evaluations ▪ UNDAF evaluations are conducted jointly with other UN organizations. ▪ The UNDG guide mandates a mid-term or end-of-cycle evaluation of UNDAF. ▪ When UNDP participates in UNDAF evaluations, they are included in the evaluation plan of UNDP, which is an integral part of UNDAF M&E plan.
Global, regional and country and south-south programmes (looking at the programme as a whole)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independent and decentralized evaluations of global, regional and S-S programmes ▪ The Evaluation Office is responsible for end-of-cycle independent evaluations of global, regional and south-south programme evaluations, which are submitted to the Executive Board. In addition to these independent evaluations, BDP, regional bureaux and the SU/SSC may commission mid-term programme evaluations (decentralized evaluations) of their respective programmes. ▪ In the case of country offices, they may commission mid-term or end-of-the-cycle programme evaluation.
Project clusters and/or programme components that aim to contribute to an outcome or outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outcome evaluations ▪ Outcome evaluations are strategic and important to UNDP as the organization strives to make a difference through its contribution to the attainment of national outcomes.
Individual projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project evaluations ▪ Project evaluations can be invaluable in managing for results, and serve to reinforce the accountability of project managers. ▪ Project evaluation provides a basis for the evaluation of strategic and programmatic evaluations and ADRs, and for distilling lessons from experience for learning and sharing knowledge. ▪ When called for in the partnership protocols (e.g. GEF), UNDP needs to carry out these project evaluations and include them in the evaluation plan. ▪ Recommended if it is a pilot project, the duration of the project is more than 5 years, or the project is going to the next phase of implementation.
Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thematic evaluations covering, for example, UNDP results areas, cross-cutting issues such as gender and capacity development, partnerships, programmatic approaches, cooperation modalities, or business models

While the revised evaluation policy gives greater flexibility as to what to be evaluated, certain evaluations are by default included in the evaluation plan: for example, UNDAF evaluations in which UNDP participates, and GEF evaluations that are required by the partnership protocol. A comprehensive and strategic evaluation plan should include an appropriate mix of outcome-level/oriented evaluations of programmes or programme components, projects and themes, as well as other types of outcome-level evaluations, as appropriate. The implementation of the entire evaluation plan, which includes all relevant evaluations, is the basis for decentralized evaluation compliance for evaluation coverage.

With the advance clearance by the regional bureau, the evaluation plans for country offices can be revised, with government agreement, for compelling reasons such as major changes in policy, programme or evaluation context. The regional bureau should discuss any suggested changes with the country offices prior to the revision is made and also approves the revised plan in the ERC. The Administrator approves any changes in the regional, global, thematic and South-South programme evaluation plans. The latest evaluation plan that has gone through the appropriate review and clearance process provides the basis for compliance.

Evaluation requirements for associated funds and programmes (page 143 in the Handbook)

Mandatory evaluation criteria for UNCDF are:

- At least one strategic or thematic assessment per year in response to corporate priorities;
- Mid-term or final evaluations of selected projects in critical areas of relevance to the two UNCDF practice areas of local development and inclusive finance;
- Project evaluations when required by a partnership protocol; and
- Participation in evaluations of joint programmes as required by approved joint programme documents.

Mandatory evaluations for UNV are:

- One strategic or thematic assessment per year in response to demands identified during a corporate consultative process;
- Mid-term or final evaluations of selected projects and initiatives financed from the Special Voluntary Fund, in critical areas and/or areas where there is a need to learn about the contribution of volunteerism to peace and development;
- Project evaluations when required by a partnership protocol; and
- Participation in evaluations of joint programmes when required by the programme

3.4 FOLLOW UP TO EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE (HB: CHAPTER 6.2 PAGE 158)

The revised evaluation policy re-states that all evaluations require a management response, and also explicitly states that management responses are prepared in close consultation with national governments and partners.

In joint evaluations, it is important that UNDP makes it clear to all parties about the UNDP requirement on management responses and agrees on a mechanism to develop and follow up on management response to joint evaluations. At a minimum, UNDP, in consultation with partners, should prepare a management response to the recommendations that are relevant to UNDP. The same set of compliance requirements will be applied to joint evaluations, and the Executive Office reports on the status in the Annual Report of the Administrator. More information is provided in the guidance on management responses to evaluations, prepared by the OSG and the Evaluation Office [<http://www.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/templates/Independent-Evaluation-Management-response.doc>].

