

**MID-TERM EVALUATION OF ACCELERATING CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF URBAN LOW EMISSION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES
(URBAN-LEDS II)**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Background and Context

1.1 United Nations Human Settlements Programme

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is the specialized programme for sustainable urbanization and human settlements in the United Nations system. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all. Pursuant to its mandate, UN-Habitat aims to achieve impact at two levels. At the operational level, it undertakes technical cooperation projects. At the normative level, it seeks to influence governments and non-governmental actors in formulating, adopting, implementing and enforcing policies, norms and standards conducive to sustainable human settlements and sustainable urbanization. Its work is guided by successive six-year strategic plans.

In the current strategic plan for 2014 to 2019, UN-Habitat restructured its substantive work around the seven subprograms below, that corresponds to the its seven Branches.

- (i) Urban legislation, land and governance
- (ii) Urban planning and design
- (iii) Urban economy
- (iv) Urban basic services
- (v) Housing and slum upgrading
- (vi) Risk reduction and rehabilitation
- (vii) Research and capacity development.

This mid-term evaluation of the project “Accelerating climate action through the promotion of urban low emission development strategies” is located in the Urban Planning and Design Branch. The Branch comprises the Regional and Metropolitan Planning Unit (RMPU), the City Planning, Extension and Design Unit (CPEDU) and the Climate Change Planning Unit (CCPU). The project is implemented by the CPPU in close collaboration with implementing partner ICLEI - Local Government for Sustainability (ICLEI), through the Project Management Group (PMG). 80% of project funds are transferred to ICLEI, a global network of more than 1,750 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development.

1.2 Project Description and Background

A growing portion of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is emitted in cities. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change¹ estimates that 71% to 76% of global carbon dioxide emissions from final energy use is attributable to activities in cities.

¹ IPCC, 2014 : <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/>

To address the impact of this development on growing emissions and avoid the lock-in effects of high emission pathways, the European Union (EU) funded the Urban-LEDS Phase I project to support cities in emerging economies (Brazil, India, Indonesia and South Africa) to de-couple urban development and GHG emissions, and embark on a low emission development pathway. The Phase 1 Urban-LEDS Project was titled, **“Promoting Low Emission Urban Development Strategies in Emerging Economy Countries”** and was implemented from 2012 – 2015. Lessons learned from Phase I are based on practical implementation experience, as well as on the Project’s Mid-Term Evaluation, and Final Evaluation.

The Urban-LEDS project Phase II aims to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing climate change resilience by the promotion of Urban Low Emissions Development Strategies (Urban LEDS) in cities/towns in emerging economies and Least Developed Countries. It builds on the Urban-LEDs project phase I and is implemented in countries continued from phase I (Brazil, India, Indonesia and South Africa) as well as in additional countries in Phase II (Bangladesh, Colombia, Lao PDR and Rwanda). Specific Expected Accomplished of Urban-LEDS Phase II are:

- (i) Enhance vertical and horizontal integration of climate action in support of National and Local strategies and policies.
- (ii) Support and guide selected local governments in developing and approving urban low emission development strategies in four new countries (Bangladesh, Colombia, Lao PDR and Rwanda) resulting in measurable GHG emission reductions and adaptation co-benefits.
- (iii) Consolidate Urban LEDS achievements in cities in existing (Phase I) countries (Brazil, India, Indonesia and South Africa).
- (iv) Promote international, regional, national, sub-national and local government cooperation on urban climate action, leading to an increase in urban stakeholders’ capacity to implement climate change.

1.3 Project Funding and Budget

The donor of this project is the European Union through the European Commission’s Directorate General for Development Cooperation Commission (DG DEVCO), Unit C6 – Sustainable Energy and Climate Change. The project reference is DCI-ENV/2017/384-555. Total funding amounts to Euro Eight (8) Million over a four-year period extending from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2021. Funds are managed by UN-Habitat, as the implementer, in close collaboration with ICLEI.

2. Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

The Mid-term evaluation is mandated by both the donor and UN-Habitat Management. It is also in line with the UN-Habitat Evaluation policy 2013. In addition, systematic and timely evaluation of EU programmes and activities is an established priority² of the European Commission³. The focus of

² COM(2013) 686 final “Strengthening the foundations of Smart Regulation – improving evaluation” - http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/docs/com_2013_686_en.pdf; EU Financial regulation (art 27); Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006; Regulation (EC) No 1889/2006; Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006; Regulation (EC) No 1717/2006; Council Regulation (EC) No 215/2008

³ SEC (2007)213 “Responding to Strategic Needs: Reinforcing the use of evaluation”, http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/evaluation/docs/eval_comm_sec_2007_213_en.pdf; SWD (2015)111 “Better Regulation Guidelines”, http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/docs/swd_br_guidelines_en.pdf

evaluations is on the assessment of achievements, the quality and the **results**⁴ of actions in the context of an evolving cooperation policy with an increasing emphasis on **result-oriented approaches**⁵. From this perspective, evaluations should **look for evidence of why, whether or how these results are linked to the EU intervention** and seek to **identify the factors driving or hindering progress**. They should also provide an understanding of the **cause and effects links** between inputs and activities, and outputs, outcomes and impacts; and serve accountability, decision making, learning and management purposes.

This Mid-term evaluation serves both accountability and learning objectives. It is intended to: (i) provide evidence on whether the project is on track towards achieving the project's expected accomplishments and objectives; and to; (ii) enhance learning, identify constraints and challenges which may need corrective measures and improvement. The evaluation therefore will be formative, focusing more on functioning of the project processes, to understand how the project is working and producing its outputs and results. Key audiences of the evaluation are: UN-Habitat, EU Commission (DEVCO and EU Delegations to the countries where the action is implemented), Project Management Group (PMG), management of ICLEI offices involved in the project, targeted Local and Subnational Governments, national governments, and civil society organizations where the project is implemented.

The specific objectives of the mid-term evaluation are to:

- (i) Assess the performance of the project in terms of its progress towards the achievement of results at the expected accomplishment and output levels;
- (ii) Assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, outlook sustainability and impact of the project in integrating climate action in regional, national and local strategies and policies;
- (iii) Assess the planning, adequacy of resources, working arrangements and these may be impacting on the effectiveness of the project;
- (iv) Assess appropriateness of coherence, partnerships and coordination modalities in promoting international, regional, national, sub-national and local governments cooperation on urban climate action;
- (v) Assess how cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, youth and human rights have been integrated in the project;
- (vi) Identify areas of improvement, lessons learned and recommend forward-looking strategic, programmatic and management considerations to improve performance of the project for the remaining period of the project.

⁴ Reference is made to the entire results chain, covering outputs, outcomes and impacts. Cfr. Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 "Laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action" - https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/financial_assistance/ipa/2014/236-2014_cir.pdf.

⁵ COM (2011) 637 final "Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change" - http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/acp/dv/communication_/communication_en.pdf

3. Scope and Purpose

The evaluation will cover the planning, funding, implementation and reporting on Urban-LEDS phase II, starting from 1 April 2017 to the end of the 2nd implementation year. It will assess achievements of outputs and expected accomplishments (outcomes) so far, identify and analyze constraints, challenges and opportunities. Further, it will include assessment on how issues of gender equality, human rights, democracy, good governance, children's rights and indigenous peoples, environmental sustainability and youth have been integrated in the planning and implementation of the project.

4. Evaluation Questions based on the Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation will seek to answer the following overarching evaluation questions:

1. To what extent is the project achieving its outputs and expected accomplishments?
2. To what extent is coherence, partnership, collaboration and coordination at global, regional and national levels achieved and effective?
3. What are critical gaps in respect to delivery of the project?
4. What are recommendations for improvement.

The proposed evaluation questions will be supplemented with sub-questions along the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact outlook. Other criteria such as partnerships and coherence will be used in this evaluation.

Relevance

- Is the project consistent with the EU and UN-Habitat policies and strategies?
- To what extent is the project relevant to the needs and constraints of the targeted countries, regions and relevant sectors?
- What is the relevance of the programme to beneficiaries targeted countries?

Effectiveness

- To what extent is the project on track towards achieving its target results at output and expected accomplishment level?
- Which factors and processes are contributing to achieving or not achieving the expected results (internal and external factors)?
- How appropriate and effective are the partnerships and other institutional relationships with the main target groups in which the operations of the project are engaging?
- To what extent has local capacity been strengthened so far through this programme?
- To what extent are monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the project timely, meaningful and adequate?
- How effectively is the project engaging with national governments to achieve desired outcomes on improving multi-level governance in project countries?

Efficiency

- To what extent does the management structure of the project support efficient implementation?
- To what extent is the project being implemented efficiently in terms of delivering the expected results according to quality standards, in a timely manner according to budget and ensuring value for money?
- Are activities and outputs delivered in an efficient and timely manner? Specifically, what is the efficiency of the project for the development of capacity within target countries?

Sustainability

- To what extent is the capacity being developed in targeted countries in order to ensure sustainability of the project's efforts and benefits?
- How will the benefits of the project be secured for beneficiaries?

Cross cutting issues

- To what extent have cross-cutting issues of gender equality, human rights and youth consideration been integrated into the project design and implementation?
- Are there any outstanding examples of how these cross-cutting issues have been successfully applied in the project?

Partnerships

- To what extent has coordination of project partners been efficient?
- To what extent have management structures been efficient in developing partnerships, also with other relevant projects? What needs to improve?
- To what extent is the project supporting the promotion of urban climate change mitigation and adaptation in regional and global processes and networks?

Coherence

- To what extent is this project coherent with other global action on climate change?
- How has the project used the lessons learned and recommendations from evaluations of the Urban-LEDS phase I?
- To what extent has Urban-LEDS phase II coordinated with other EU and non-EU climate initiatives to create synergies and avoid duplication?

In addition, the evaluation will assess:

- The EU added value (the extent to which the EU Action add benefits to what would have resulted from Member States' interventions only);
- The coherence of the Action itself, with the EU strategy and projects in the different targeted countries and with other EU policies and Member State Actions, and other donors when relevant.

5. Stakeholders participation

It is expected that this evaluation will be participatory, providing for active and meaningful stakeholders involvement. Stakeholders will be kept informed of the evaluation process including design, information collection, and evaluation reporting and results dissemination. Key stakeholders will be involved either directly through interviews, survey or group discussions. They will be given opportunity to comment on evaluation deliverables.

6. Evaluation Approach and Methods

The evaluation should employ a mix of approaches and methods. A results-based approach, (Theory of Change Approach) should be applied to this evaluation; to demonstrate how the project is supposed to achieve its objectives by describing the causal logic of inputs, activities, expected accomplishments; and conditions and assumptions needed for the causal changes to take place. Also, the Context Input Process Product (CIPP) approach should be used to assess project implementation structures, procedures, collaboration, coordination, partnerships and targeted beneficiary needs. In addition, the evaluation should be inclusive, participatory and consultative with partners and stakeholders. It should be conducted in a transparent way in line with the Norms and Standards of evaluations in the EU and the UN system and the UN-Habitat Evaluation Policy.

6.1 Evaluation Methods

A variety of methods will be used to collect information. Methods used will be guided by Norms and Standards of the UNEG. They will include but not be limited to:

- Review of relevant documents in pursuit of specific data points or facts, including project documents, project logframe, key deliverables, meeting minutes, UN-Habitat work programmes, evaluations of the Urban-LEDs Phase I, COP21 documents, EU Delegation Agreement DCI-ENV/2017/384-555, etc.
- Key informant Interviews and consultation including possible group discussions to explore the perspectives of main stakeholder constituents. An interview protocol to cover key evaluation questions will be developed.
- A survey will be determined if it is necessary given the time constraints for this evaluation.
- Field visits in selected countries (TBD) Due to resource limitation, one field visit is expected to be undertaken to Europe to join a global project event at which many local authority beneficiaries and project staff will be present and available for engagement with the evaluation consultant

The evaluation consultant will describe expected data analysis and instruments to be used in the evaluation inception report. Presentation of the evaluation findings should follow a standard format of the UN-Habitat Evaluation report.

7. Evaluation consultant's skills and experiences

The evaluation will be conducted by an independent external evaluation consultant. He/she must have proven experience in evaluating project/programmes and should have knowledge of Results-Based Management and strong methodological and analytical skills.

In addition, the consultant should have:

- a) Knowledge in climate change issues
- b) Extensive evaluation experience with ability to present credible findings derived from evidence and putting conclusions and recommendations supported by findings.

- c) Knowledge and understanding of UN-Habitat mandate and its operations
- d) Knowledge and experience of projects of a global nature
- e) Advanced academic degree in political sciences, communication, information technology, sociology or another relevant field.
- f) Fluent in English.

8. Evaluation Management and responsibilities

Impartiality is an important principle of evaluation because it ensures credibility of the evaluation and avoids a conflict of interest. For this purpose, officers responsible for design and implementation of the project should not manage the evaluation process. The independent Evaluation Unit will manage the evaluation process, ensuring that the evaluation is conducted by a suitable evaluation team, providing technical support and advice on methodology, explaining evaluation standards and ensuring they are respected, ensuring contractual requirements are met, approving all deliverables (TOR, Inception Reports; draft and final evaluation reports), sharing the evaluation results, supporting use and follow-up of the implementation of the evaluation recommendations. The Climate Change Planning Unit will be responsible for supporting the evaluation by providing information and documentation required as well as providing contacts of stakeholders to engage with for provision of evaluation information. The Evaluation Reference Group, established as a consultative arrangement and having representatives of EU, UN-Habitat, and ICLEI, will oversee the evaluation process to maximize the relevance, credibility, quality, uptake and use of the evaluation. Responsibilities of the ERG will include:

- Acting as source of knowledge for the evaluation;
- Acting as informant of the evaluation process;
- Assisting in identifying other stakeholders to be consulted during the evaluation process;
- Playing a key role is promoting use of evaluation findings;
- Participating in meetings of the reference group;
- Providing inputs and quality assurance on the key evaluation products: TOR, Inception report and draft evaluation report; and
- Participating in validation meeting of the final evaluation report.

9. Provisional work schedule

The mid-term evaluation will be conducted during the period of June-August. The table 2 below indicates timelines and expected deliverables for the evaluation process.

Item	Description	Timeframe
1	Vacancy announcement and Recruitment of the consultant	April-May, 2019
2	Inception phase, including formal document review, development of inception report	June 2019
3	Data collection phase and report writing. The phase will include a visit to Europe, where the consultant will engage with key stakeholders versed with the project that will be attending a project meeting from June 21 to 28 June 2019 (exact dates tbc)	June-July 2019
4	Final Mid-term Evaluation Report	July- August, 2019

10. Key Evaluation Deliverables

The three primary deliverables for this evaluation are:

- (i) **Inception report** (not more than 15 pages). The consultant is expected to review relevant information including TOR and develop fully informed inception report, detailing how the evaluation is to be conducted, what is to be delivered and when. The inception report should include evaluation purpose and objectives, scope and focus, evaluation issues and tailored questions, methodology, evaluation work plan and deliverables. Once approved, it will become the key management document for the evaluation, guiding the evaluation delivery in accordance with UN-Habitat's expectations. The inception report should include:
 - Context of evaluation
 - Purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation
 - Theory of Change (Reconstruction of Intervention logic)
 - Approach and Methodology for the evaluation
 - Evaluation Questions and judgement criteria
 - Data collection and analysis methods
 - Stakeholder mapping
 - Consultation arrangements to maximize the relevance, credibility, quality and uptake of the evaluation
 - Field visit approach
 - Work plan and timelines of evaluation
- (ii) **Draft evaluation report (s)**. The consultant will prepare draft evaluation report (s) to be reviewed and endorsed the Evaluation Reference Group. It should contain an executive summary that can act as standalone document. The executive summary should include an overview of what is evaluated, purpose and objectives of the evaluation and intended audience, the evaluation methodology, most important findings and main recommendations.
- (iii) **Briefs and presentations of key findings**, for the meeting of Key stakeholders of the project in in Europe.
- (iv) **Final evaluation report** should not exceed 40 pages (including Executive Summary). In general, the report should be technically easy to comprehend for non-specialists, containing detailed evaluation findings, lessons learned and recommendations.

11. Resources and Payment

The evaluation consultant will be paid a professional evaluation fee based on the level of expertise and experience. DSA will be paid only when travelling on mission outside duty station of the consultant. All travel costs will be covered by UN-Habitat.