

Terms of Reference

Baseline Evaluation of the CommonSensing Project

Background

1. The **United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)** is a principal training arm of the United Nations, with the aim to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations in achieving its major objectives through training and research. UNITAR's mission is to develop individual, institutional and organizational capacities of countries and other United Nations stakeholders through high quality learning solutions and related knowledge products and services to enhance decision making and to support country-level action for overcoming global challenges. Learning outcomes are associated with about two-thirds of the Institute's 500-some events organized annually, with a cumulative outreach to over 55,000 individuals (including some 35,000 learners). Approximately three-quarters of beneficiaries from learning-related programming are from developing countries. UNITAR programming is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the outcomes of other major outcomes from 2015, including those of the Sendai (Disaster Risk Reduction), Paris (Climate Change) and Addis Ababa (Financing for Development) conferences. In accordance with 2030 Agenda principles of reaching the furthest behind first, emphasis will be placed on the needs of countries in special situations, including the small island developing States (SIDS), the land-locked developing countries (LLDCs) and the least developed countries (LDCs).
2. The **UNITAR Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT)** is a technology-intensive programme that delivers imagery analysis and satellite solutions to relief and development organizations within and outside the United Nations, with the aim to contribute to decision-making in areas such as humanitarian relief, human security and strategic territorial and development planning.
3. Funded under the **International Partnership Programme (IPP) of the UK Space Agency, CommonSensing project** aims to improve resilience towards climate change, including disaster risk reduction, and contribute to sustainable development in three Commonwealth Pacific island countries: Fiji, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. These and other SIDS are exposed to the damaging effects of climate change. Such changes in the climate system have direct effects on the economy as well as overall development and the very existence of many SIDS. Urgent action towards development for climate resilience is therefore required.
4. The CommonSensing project supports the IPP's priorities to deliver a sustainable social and economic benefit to emerging and developing economies, in alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. CommonSensing aims to contribute to helping the beneficiary countries achieve Goal 9 (Innovation and Infrastructure) and Goal 13 (Climate Action) of the 2030 Agenda. The project focusses on developing national capacities for longer-term sustainability and business continuity by providing beneficiary countries the knowledge and skills sets for strengthened evidence-based decision making and dossiers to access climate funding.

Purpose of the baseline evaluation

5. The purpose of the baseline evaluation is to assess the entry level project conditions in order to provide a baseline against which the project's progress can be measured and evaluated. The

specific objectives of the evaluation are to obtain baseline evidence on the project's log frame indicators, including measures such as:

- human loss from natural disasters and economic damages including food security from multi-hazards (2017);
- the number and nature of proposals submitted to Climate Funds, the amount of funds accessed/disbursed from successful funding applications, and the work performed/projects undertaken from the funding (2017); and
- the number of trained technical officers with knowledge and skills sets to contribute to evidence-based decisions.

The purpose of the baseline evaluation is to also validate the project's theory of change; the adequacy of the log frame, including the adequacy of the indicators, performance measures, means of verification and underlying assumptions; and the project's implementation strategy.

Scope of the evaluation

6. The evaluation will cover the project's three beneficiary countries and will focus on identifying measures of the log frame indicators just prior to project start-up, using 2017 as a baseline. In the event 2017 measures are not available, the evaluation will identify earlier measures e.g. 2016 or measures of alternative measures or proxy indicators if required.

Principal evaluation questions

7. The following questions are intended to guide the evaluation:
 - To what extent have Fiji, The Solomon Islands and Vanuatu submitted proposals for climate funding?
 - To what extent have climate fund applications been successful?
 - How much climate funding was received by each of the beneficiary countries?
 - To what extent were Fiji, The Solomon Islands and Vanuatu concerned by human loss from natural disasters and economic damages including food security from multi-hazards?
 - To what extent is geospatial and remote sensing data being used for climate related strategic planning and decision-making?
 - To what extent is the CommonSensing project, as designed, aligned with the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries, including both male and female beneficiaries?
 - What is the level of technical expertise and in the three beneficiary countries to use geospatial and remote sensing technologies?
 - To what extent are other Pacific island countries concerned by human loss from natural disasters and economic damages from multi-hazards and benefitting from climate funding?

Evaluation Approach and Methods

8. The evaluation is to be undertaken in accordance with the [UNITAR Monitoring and Evaluation Policy Framework](#) and the [Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group](#). The evaluation will be undertaken by a supplier or an international consultant (the "evaluator") under the overall responsibility of the UNITAR Planning, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (PPME) Manager.

9. The evaluation shall follow a participatory approach and engage a range of project stakeholders in the process. Data collection should be triangulated to the extent possible to ensure validity and reliability of findings and draw on the following methods: comprehensive desk review, including a stakeholder analysis; surveys; key informant interviews; focus groups; field visits and comparison groups. These data collection tools are discussed below.
10. The evaluator should engage in quantitative and qualitative analysis in responding to the principal evaluation questions and present the findings qualitatively or quantitatively as most appropriate. In so far as the mid-line and end-line evaluations will include [cost effectiveness analysis](#), the baseline evaluation should identify alternative activities to CommonSensing with a view to comparing costs and outcomes of CommonSensing and the alternative courses of action. Moreover, [quasi-experimental approaches require identifying a comparison group not subject to the project](#) with similar geographical and socio-economic characteristics as the treatment groups to assess the counterfactual. Baseline data for the comparison group shall be collected as well.

Data collection methods:

Comprehensive desk review

The evaluator will compile, review and analyze background documents and secondary data/information related to the CommonSensing project. A list of background documentation for the desk review is included in Annex A.

Stakeholder analysis

The evaluator will identify the different stakeholders involved in the CommonSensing project. Key stakeholders at the national and regional levels include, but are not limited, to:

Treatment Countries:

Fiji

Ministry of Lands & Mineral Resources

Ministry of Economy

Fiji National Development Bank

World Bank, UNDP, ADB, FAO

The Solomon Islands

Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management & Meteorology

World Bank, ADB, GEF

Ministry of Finance

Vanuatu

Ministry of climate change adaptation, meteorology, geo-hazards, environment & energy and NDMO

National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

Department of Strategic Policy Planning and Aid Coordination

SPREP, World Bank, GIZ

Partners:

1. Satellite Applications Catapult
2. UK Meteorological Office
3. Sensonomic
4. Devex
5. University of Portsmouth
6. Airbus UK (data provider, not project partner)

International:

7. Commonwealth Secretariat (London) with Governments of Fiji, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu
8. Radiant.Earth

Survey(s)

With a view to maximizing feedback from the widest possible range of project stakeholders, the evaluator shall develop and deploy a survey(s) following the comprehensive desk study to provide an initial set of findings and allow the evaluator to easily probe during the key informant interviews.

Key informant interviews

Based on stakeholder identification, the evaluator will identify and interview key informants. The list of global focal points is available in Annex B. In preparation for the interviews with key informants, the consultant will define interview protocols to determine the questions and modalities with flexibility to adapt to the particularities of the different informants, either at the global or at the national level.

Focus groups

Focus groups should be organized with selected project stakeholders at the national and regional levels to complement/triangulate findings from other collection tools.

Field visit

A field visit to Fiji, Solomon Island and Vanuatu (treatment countries) and one additional Pacific Island country (non-treatment) shall be organized and the evaluator shall identify national informants, whom he/she will interview.

Identify and interview key informants (national)

Based on the stakeholder analysis, the evaluator will identify national informants, whom he/she will interview. The list of national focal points is available in Annex B.

Comparison Groups (quasi-experimental design)

A comparison of 'treatment' and 'comparison' groups shall be involved against a selection of outcome and impact level Log frame indicators to determine the extent of changes that are attributable to the project, being the difference between the two groups. A 'treatment' group is made up of people who are included in/affected by the CommonSensing project while the comparison group receives no intervention.

The comparison group is designed to be as similar to the treatment group as possible across a large number of characteristics. For example, when comparing with groups from other small island developing states, they need to be of similar geography, demographics, socio-economic status, level of education, development status, climate change vulnerability and risk of natural disasters etc. Potential groups can be matched based on the average difference across key characteristics by using a 'propensity score matching'.

The evaluator should identify at least one to two comparison groups.

Gender and human rights

11. The evaluator should incorporate human rights, gender and equity perspectives in the evaluation process and findings, particularly by involving women and other disadvantaged groups subject to discrimination. All key data collected shall be disaggregated by sex and age grouping and be included in the draft and final evaluation report.
12. The guiding principles for the evaluation should respect transparency, engage stakeholders and beneficiaries; ensure confidentiality of data and anonymity of responses; and follow ethical and professional standards.

Timeframe, work plan, deliverables and review

13. The proposed timeframe for the baseline evaluation spans from 10 January 2019 (initial desk review and data collection) to 5 April 2019 (submission of final baseline evaluation report). An indicative work plan is provided in the table below.
14. The consultant shall submit a brief evaluation design/question matrix following the comprehensive desk study, stakeholder analysis and initial key informant interviews. The evaluation design/question matrix should include a discussion on the evaluation objectives, methods and, if required, revisions to the suggested evaluation questions or data collection methods. The Evaluation design/question matrix should indicate any foreseen difficulties or challenges in collecting data and confirm the final timeframe for the completion of the evaluation exercise.
15. Following data collection and analysis, the consultant shall submit a zero draft of the evaluation report to the evaluation manager and revise the draft based on comments made by the evaluation manager.
16. The draft evaluation report should follow the structure presented under Annex C. The report should state the purpose of the evaluation and the methods used and include a discussion on the limitations to the evaluation. The report should present evidence-based and balanced findings, including strengths and weaknesses, consequent conclusions and recommendations, and lessons to be learned. The length of the report should be approximately 20-30 pages, excluding annexes.
17. Following the submission of the zero draft, a draft report will then be submitted to the CommonSensing project management team to review and comment on the draft report and provide any additional information using the form provided under Annex D by 15 March 2019. Within one week of receiving feedback, the evaluator shall submit the final evaluation report. The target date for this submission is 5 April 2019.

18. Measurable outputs/Deliverables/Schedule of Deliverables*:

Deliverable	From	To	Deadline
Evaluation design/question matrix	Evaluator	Evaluation manager	18 January 2019
Comments on evaluation design/question matrix	Evaluation manager/ CommonSensing project manager	Evaluator	25 January 2019
Zero draft report	Evaluator	Evaluation manager	1 March 2019
Comments on zero draft	Evaluation manager	Evaluator	8 March 2019
Draft report	Evaluator	Evaluation manager/ CommonSensing project manager	15 March 2019
Comments on draft report	CommonSensing project manager	Evaluation manager	29 March 2019
Final report	Evaluation manager	CommonSensing project manager	5 April 2019

*Subject to review and adjustment on agreement between the consultant and the Evaluation Manager.

Communication/dissemination of results

19. The baseline evaluation report shall be written in English. The final report will be shared with all partners and be posted on an online repository of evaluation reports open to the public.

Professional requirements

20. The evaluator should have the following qualifications and experience:

- MA degree or equivalent in international relations, political science, environmental science, development or a related discipline. Training and/or experience in the area of GIS, climate change and/or disaster risk reduction would be a clear advantage.
- At least 7 years of professional experience conducting evaluation in the field of capacity building, sustainable learning, GIS and climate change and disaster risk reduction.
- Technical knowledge of the focal area.
- Field work experience in developing countries, preferably in Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
- Excellent research and analytical skills, including experience in a variety of evaluation methods and approaches.
- Excellent writing skills.
- Strong communication and presentation skills.
- Cross-cultural awareness and flexibility.
- Availability to travel.
- Fluency in English.

Resources/budget:

Task/deliverable	Estimated number of work days	Comments
Desk study and submission of evaluation design/question matrix	5	
Data collection, including field visits (including field visit preparation)	15	
Data analysis and preparation of zero draft	15	
Preparation of draft report	3	
Final report	2	
Total estimated	40	

Fees: 30,000 USD lump sum, excluding field travel costs (airfare and daily subsistence allowance)

Payment schedule:

Upon submission of evaluation design/question matrix	10,000 USD
Upon submission of evaluation report and satisfactory completion of assignment	20,000 USD

Contractual arrangements

21. The evaluator will be contracted by UNITAR and will report directly to the Manager of the Planning, Performance Monitoring, and Evaluation Unit ('evaluation manager'). The evaluator should consult with the evaluation manager on any procedural or methodological matter requiring attention. The evaluator is responsible for planning any meetings, organizing online surveys and undertaking administrative arrangements for any travel that may be required (e.g. accommodation, visas, etc.). The travel arrangements will be in accordance with the UN rules and regulations for consultants.
22. The Manager of PPME reports directly to the Executive Director of UNITAR. The unit is independent from all programming related management functions at UNITAR. According to UNITAR's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, PPME formulates annual corporate evaluation plans within the established budgetary appropriations in due consultation with the Executive Director and Management and conducts and/or manages corporate evaluations at the request of the Executive Director and/or programmes and other Institute divisional entities. Moreover, in due consultation with the Executive Director and Management, PPME issues and discloses final evaluation reports without prior clearance from other UNITAR Management or functions. In managing mandated, independent project evaluations, PPME may access the expenditure account within the ledger account of the relevant project and raise obligations for expenditure. This builds the foundations of UNITAR's evaluation function's independence and ability to better support learning and accountability.

Evaluator Ethics

23. The evaluator selected should not have participated in the project's design or implementation or have a conflict of interest with project related activities. The selected consultant shall sign and return a copy of the code of conduct under Annex D prior to initiating the assignment.

Annexes:

- A: List of documents and data to be reviewed**
- B: List of Project Partners and Contact Points**
- C: Structure of evaluation report**
- D: Evaluator code of conduct**

Annex A: List of documents/data to be reviewed

- *Mission Report*
- *Landscape Report*
- Legal Agreement
- Project document
- Any other document deemed to be useful to the evaluation

Annex B: List of CommonSensing Contact Points (to be completed by project Management)

Partners	
Organization	Focal Point

Annex C: Indicative Structure of baseline evaluation report

1. Table of contents
2. Acronyms
3. Executive Summary
4. Introduction and Background
5. Methodology
 - 5.1. Limitations to Methodology
6. Analysis of the Findings
 - 6.1. Context of the project in country
 - 6.2. Indicator specific narrative (contextual) information
7. Quantitative measurements of each Logframe indicator (a table)
8. Assessment of potential (suspected) negative and unintended impacts
9. Timing of midline and endline evaluations (and legacy evaluation if planned)
10. Conclusions
 - 10.1. Qualitative assessment of likelihood of achieving outcome and impacts
 - 10.2. Recommendations of changes to Logframe or M&E plan (if needed)
 - 10.3. How findings will be used
11. Appendices (e.g. copies of surveys or interview transcripts used, TORs developed etc.)

Annex D: Evaluation Consultant Code of Conduct and Agreement Form*

The evaluator:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. He/she should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. He/she must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. He/she are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncovers evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. He/she should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, he/she must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. He/she should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom he/she comes in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, he/she should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Is responsible for his/her performance and his/her product(s). He/she is responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form¹

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant: _____

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): _____

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at *place* on *date*

Signature: _____

*This form is required to be signed by each evaluator involved in the evaluation.

¹www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct