



**Functional Title:** International Consultant for final evaluation of the project *Joint UN Women/ FAO/ IFAD/ WFP Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women*

---

**Location:** 45 fee days in Kyrgyzstan and home-based

**Application Deadline:** 2 January 2018

**Primary Category:** Women's Economic Empowerment

**Type of Contract:** Special Service Agreement (SSA)

**Languages Required:** Proficient English, knowledge of Russian and Kyrgyz are an asset

**Starting Date:**  
(date when the selected candidate is expected to start) 6 February 2018

**Expected Duration of Assignment:** Between 6 February 2018 and 15 April 2018 (estimated 45 fee days)

### **I. Background (programme/project context)**

The creation of UN Women in July 2010 came about as part of the UN reform agenda, consolidating the Organization's resources and mandates on gender equality for greater impact. The mandate of UN-Women calls on UN Women to have universal coverage, strategic presence and ensure closer linkages between the norm-setting inter-governmental work and operations at the field level. UN Women is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to i) support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms, ii) to help Member States to implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it and to forge effective partnerships with civil society, and iii) to hold the UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring of system-wide progress and mobilizing and convening key stakeholders to ensure greater coherence and gender mainstreaming across the UN. Since 2001 UN Women (previously as its predecessor entity UNIFEM) has implemented catalytic initiatives on promoting women's economic, political and social rights. In 2012 a Country Office with Delegation of Authority (DOA) was established in the Kyrgyz Republic. The establishment of UN Women represents a unique opportunity for the United Nations system to strengthen its coordination to deliver its work on GEEW and to enhance accountability on GEEW. UN Women's organizational structure aims to create synergies between normative and operational support functions and to enhance the gender architecture of the UN.

Rural women play a central role in the development of Kyrgyzstan, providing a significant proportion of agricultural labour force, playing a key role in food production and nutrition, and performing most of the unpaid care work, thereby supporting reproduction of the Kyrgyzstani society. The share of

women employed in the agricultural sector, which constitutes 34.5% among women compared to 29.6% (National Statistics Committee) among men, as well as increasing share of women in the category of contributing family members may reflect the tendency that rural women resort to agricultural activities in the absence of other viable employment opportunities, or men moving to either other more productive sectors, or migrating, and leaving de facto female headed households behind. Having recognized the disadvantaged status of the rural women UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in its Concluding Observations to the Fourth Periodic Report have called upon the state to: i. take measures to combat poverty among rural women including effective measures to ensure rural women's access to justice, education, housing, safe drinking water, sanitation, formal employment, skills development and training opportunities, income-generating opportunities and micro-credits, and ownership and use of land, taking into account their specific needs; and ii. to ensure the participation of rural women in decision-making processes at the community level on an equal basis with men.

Rural women and girls have significantly less access to productive resources, which limits the efficiency of the agricultural sector. According to agricultural census of 2002 only 12% of peasant farms in 2002 have been registered to women, and National Statistics Office survey data shows that 57.5% of women report that they do not own any land. Women's lack of land tenure security is historically related to inadequate or discriminatory legal and policy frameworks and social and cultural norms, such as male preference in inheritance. Despite the laws of Kyrgyzstan guarantee women and men the same rights to own, use and control land; customary and traditional practices discriminate against women and undermine the full implementation of national legislation.

They face more difficulty than men in gaining access to public services, social protection, decent employment opportunities, and local and national markets and institutions. Unpaid care work further hampers rural women's ability to take advantage of on- and off-farm employment and market opportunities in the agricultural sector. These challenges facing rural women have been further amplified by the combined impact of the recent economic and financial crises, high and volatile food and fuel prices, climate change, the lack of investment in rural development and agriculture, and demographic changes.

Rural women and girls in Kyrgyzstan should be seen as key agents for achieving the transformational economic, environmental and social changes required for sustainable development. But limited access to climate-resilient assets, skills and technologies, employment, health care, education, and decision-making are among the many challenges they face, which are further aggravated by food and economic crises and climate change. Empowering rural women is key not only to the well-being of individuals, families and rural communities, but also to overall economic productivity, given women's large presence in the agricultural workforce of Kyrgyzstan. The barriers which prevent this need to urgently be removed in order to leverage development benefits of women's engagement in national economic development. These objectives are in line with the SDG targets on women's empowerment (SDG 5), food security (SDG 2), poverty reduction (SDG 1), carbon management and adaptation (SDG 13), and peace and security (SDG 16).

## **II. Description of the programme/project: *Joint UN Women/ FAO/ IFAD/ WFP Programme Rural Women's Economic Empowerment***

### **Project strategy and expected results**

Four UN agencies in Kyrgyzstan, namely UN Women, FAO, IFAD and WFP, have a history of coordinated response to the multidimensional challenges faced by rural women. One of such initiatives Joint

Programme to Accelerate Progress towards Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (JP RWEE) is an example of providing an integrated development package, which also taps onto the leadership potential and the agency of rural women to build sustainable livelihoods and shape laws, policies and service provision systems at the local level. The Joint programme is part of a global joint initiative implemented in seven countries globally, including Guatemala, Niger, Ethiopia, Liberia, Rwanda, Nepal, and Kyrgyzstan. Since 2014 the Joint Programme has directly benefitted over 3,000 rural women across 73 villages in five provinces, indirectly improving livelihoods of 8,400 rural residents in Kyrgyzstan.

The programme has been supported by the Governments of Sweden and Norway. The total amount invested in this project is USD 2.53 million. It has been officially launched in 2012 and the first funding has been received in November 2014 from the Government of Norway, and then in March 2015 from the Government of Sweden.

Together, this partnership between UN Women, FAO, and WFP is expected to generate synergies that capitalize on each agency's mandate, comparative advantage and institutional strength to generate more lasting and wider scale results. The partnership of three UN agencies, each having a specialized mandate is premised on a successful support model provided by UN Women, FAO and WFP during their joint Delivering as One programme. This proved to be effective and mutually reinforcing. Group solidarity and membership discipline in self-help groups mobilized by UN Women ensured accurate use of seeds, fertilizers, and food, as well as consistent and systematic application of new knowledge on agricultural technologies and food security. Following this model, the programme utilizes the comparative advantages of four agencies: FAO's policy assistance on agriculture and food security, value chain training and normative work; WFP's food assistance innovations; and UN Women's technical expertise on women's economic empowerment and its mandate to promote accountability for gender equality and women's empowerment.

ARWEE aims to promote rural women's economic empowerment in the Kyrgyz Republic through securing rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development and the post-MDGs agenda. Programme is designed around the following three outcome areas: (i) increased income opportunities and food security for rural women; (ii) enhanced leadership and participation of rural women in decision-making processes at the local and national levels; and (iii) a more gender responsive policy environment in the country. The agencies aim to provide a harmonized, political, and institutional framework for complex programme interventions aiming at overcoming deep-rooted inequalities in rural areas.

#### **i. Economic Empowerment**

The programme shifts from the rights awareness discourse to actions and ensures tangible opportunities for women to become economically effective. The programme focus is critically important for reducing rural poverty and improvement of rural families' livelihoods. It addresses the complex range of challenges in rural areas, including providing access to land, irrigation, agricultural extension services, and access to new knowledge and innovative technologies that enable good yields from agricultural activities. Programme support to rural women in applying innovative approaches, new technologies, diversification of agricultural and livestock production, participation in value chains, effectively using market information aims to increase economic profitability and thus help to overcome stereotypes regarding women's inability to manage effective agricultural production. **Above and beyond economic gains, rural women must also advance their social status to be able to influence policy decisions and transform the power relations** at family, community and government levels. These way rural women are considered as **agents of change rather than beneficiaries of the programme.**

Helping women to unite, for instance in **rural cooperatives** addresses the issues of small land plots and low productivity of agricultural activities. Processing plants prefer to work with farmers with bigger volumes of production; poor rural women are usually excluded from more profitable and highly productive economic relations. This impacts the food security status of women headed households, as the level of vulnerability increases when there is lack of economic opportunities and inability for effective use of the available land plots. There are some positive practices of joint lease of land within the borders of one territory to produce crops that can be cultivated only in big areas. There is demand for knowledge and tools to set up and operationalize cooperatives in rural areas. Self-help groups, which have a good organisational basis can be the basis for cooperatives.

As microfinance institutions currently impose extremely unfavorable crediting terms, **establishing a Revolving Fund** within the programme may fill the gap of limited access to financial resources for women from vulnerable groups and stimulate practical economic activities of rural women, by supporting packages of services and innovative approaches for enabling productive agricultural activities run by rural women. The Guide on the Revolving Fund has been developed in the framework of the project.

## ii. Female Leadership & Participation

**Working with local government is an essential prerequisite for sustainability of the results of the planned programme.** The programme targets local governments, rural women leaders and communities to build their capacities, to ensure **genuine participation of rural women in local development processes** and adequate reflection of rural women's priorities in local plans and budgets. The programme also focuses on methodological support to strengthen the normative and institutional systems so that participatory initiatives and human rights based approaches by local governments are maintained beyond the duration of the programme. The programme attempts to avoid fragmentation of support and has been in line with the administrative reform of the local governance system, which proposes transferring the discretionary power to local governments on issues of education, health, social protection and gender equality.

The administrative reform aims to improve the local governance system in relation to land and pasture management, irrigation management, taxation, planning and budgeting, support to public-private partnership with businesses on agricultural extension services, cooperatives, and seeds funds. Therefore, it is important to use this momentum to form local organisations, such as Pasture Committees and Water User Associations, and promote **rural women's participation**. Currently women's participation in these organizations is extremely low, limiting rural women's opportunities to benefit from its services and their voices to be heard.

Rural women/young women who may possess specialized technical knowledge and skills and have an interest in upgrading and acquiring a new profession have been trained / re-trained for the professions which are in demand at village level and may provide possibilities for the women to get remuneration for their work. To enhance **leadership and participation** support has been provided to improving governance systems and strengthening capacities of three major actors.

Rural women have received leadership training to initiate and hold dialogues with local governments on local development planning and budgeting to prioritize and address local development needs from gender perspectives. This way women activists have improved their position to raise issues and challenges they face in rural areas preventing them to enhance their economic activities.

Local and central governments as duty bearers have received technical support on gender responsive local development planning and budgeting, including the principles of transparency and partnership relations with local constituencies.

Women activists have received support in strengthening their capacities for genuine membership and participation in local specialized organizations – Water User Association, Pasture Committees, Seeds Funds, etc.

### **iii. Enabling Policy Environment**

To achieve a more **gender responsive policy environment** technical assistance has been provided to strengthen the capacity of policy makers, such as the Ministries of Agriculture and Ministry of Labour Social Development to create a policy environment that promotes rural women's economic empowerment. The programme has also strengthened the capacity of the National Statistics Committee (NSC) to track progress in the economic empowerment of rural women.

**Key results of the JP RWEE** to date include:

#### **Under Outcome 1 – Rural women have increased income, better livelihoods and food security (relates to Global JP Outcomes 1 and 2)**

- two women's cooperatives and two women's associations established, to start providing services to at least 1,500 women-members to access inputs, extension support, finance from its revolving capital, information, and joint marketing. These organizations will allow for joint procurement of inputs, joint processing of the produce and better negotiation power with value chain actors. Cumulative revolving capital of the four organizations is over USD 107,000, which is used for funding self-help group based business initiatives of rural women;
- 2,712 women are engaged in productive and sustainable agriculture with productivity increase of 30-70%, average additional income of USD 488 per agricultural season. Of them 1416 women are running small businesses achieving an average of 29.5% increase in income. This is expected to improve livelihoods of rural women, increasing their resilience to food and economic crises, and invest in the health and education of their family members;
- 63% reduction of share of households with 'poor' or 'borderline' Food Consumption Score, and Dietary Diversity Score increased from 6 to 7 food items, adding the categories of vegetables to the regular diet of rural families;
- 28 public awareness campaigns conducted by rural women at community and district levels reaching over 3,000 people on topics such as violence against women, reproductive rights and health, early marriages, etc. The campaigns through participatory tools, such as forum theatres, are aimed at challenges gender stereotypes and eliminating harmful practices in communities;

#### **Under Outcome 2: Rural women have mastered leadership skills and actively participate in local development planning and service provision (relates to Global JP Outcome 3)**

- 32 women elected as members of local councils from among 93 trained. These women have initiated a national forum on the results of elections, raising a concern over decreasing representation of women in local councils, where they have called for introduction of a gender quota in local council elections. These women have been capacitated to meaningfully participate in the decision-making and influence allocation of local resources for gender needs and priorities;

- 15 gender-responsive local development strategies developed for 2017-2030. These strategies have been developed through inclusive consultative processes ensuring needs and priorities of all population groups are integrated;
- 12 social initiatives implemented to reduce women's unpaid care burden through improved access to information, Internet, better child care facilities, access to electricity, improved road conditions, and IT training facilities in communities, which is expected to benefit 12,549 people, including 6,726 women. Co-funding of 43.5% provided by local governments, communities and private sector. These initiatives have been identified in the local development strategies, proposed to the selection committee, and identified through a competitive process;
- 38 champions trained on an innovative household strategy – Gender Action Learning System (GALS), and reached out to about 3000 people to influence gender power relations towards more equitable distribution of care work, and life free of violence.

**Under Outcome 3: More gender-sensitive policy environment for economic empowerment of rural women (relates to Global JP Outcome 4)**

- Legislation on social insurance tariffs changed to remove discriminatory provisions for rural women and smallholders. An increase of social insurance tariffs for rural smallholders by up to 20 times has led to households consolidating land plots and registering the title on one family members' name, which is traditionally a man. Hence, there was a threat of women losing land titles in favour of men to avoid the burden of increased tariffs. The new amendments have incorporated proposed recommendations and brought the tariff rates to the previous levels;
- Women participated in lobbying for two other legislative initiatives banning child marriage and on introduction of gender quotas in local councils;
- Gender analysis of agricultural strategies and policies undertaken and recommendations provided to the Ministry of Agriculture to strengthen human dimension of agricultural policies; technical assistance provided to localization of SDG indicators in the agricultural sector, specifically in identifying the local data available and propose possible indicators for SDGs relating to the agricultural sector;

**Project beneficiaries and stakeholders**

**The programme targets rural women, in particular those who are most vulnerable, who are unemployed.** In rural areas, there are **limited opportunities for remunerated employment** (local government specialists, teachers, and medical workers) and rural entrepreneurship (small shops, dressmaking, hairdresser, bakeries, catering, etc.), and demand in those categories is very low. The programme feeds into on-going process of vocational training reform (supported by Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GIZ). The programme promotes policy and institutional measures to improve the system of re-training unemployed women in professions in demand at local labour markets, including non-traditional professions for women.

Government counterparts in the project are the Gender Unit at Ministry of Labour and Social Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Melioration and various district administrations and municipalities involved in the project. Responsible parties are the NGO Community Development Alliance (CDA), NGO Alliance for Budget Transparency (ABT), Rural Advisory Service Chuy-Talas.



## **Budget and geographical scope and timeframe**

The project is implemented in 5 provinces, 73 villages of the Kyrgyz Republic jointly selected by the four participating agencies. The programme has applied a phased approach starting with four provinces and 45 villages first in 2015, and adding an additional province and 28 villages in 2016.

Total project budget is USD 2,538,255 contributed by the Government of Norway and Sida. UN Women's contribution is USD 40,000 over the period of 2015-2017.

## **Project management**

### **Operational Management of the programme**

UN agencies is supported in achieving project results by a Programme Management Unit (PMU) headed by a Programme Manager and including relevant operational support staff. The unit is established by UN Women. This joint PMU is responsible for the implementation of the joint programme, to build synergies, address intersectionalities and review progress in the implementation of the programme's activities.

Joint monthly co-ordination meetings of all agencies are held at the county level to share progress, challenges, constraints, good practices and to discuss the way forward for each project site.

### **National Steering Committee**

A National Steering Committee is set up. It will be co-chaired by the Minister of Labour and Social Development and the head of a UN agency on a rotating basis.

The members of the national SC include:

- One representative from each of the participating entities: UN Women, FAO, IFAD, and WFP.
- One representative from each of the following ministries: agriculture, social development, economy, finance and a representative of the State Agency on local self-governance
- One representative of the President's Office

Representatives of the beneficiaries of the targeted areas and representatives of local authorities will be invited on an ad hoc basis to the meetings of the national SC.

The main tasks and responsibilities of the national SC include the following:

- To give strategic direction
- To oversee programme implementation
- To oversee the allocation of funds to the different components of the programme.

## **III. Purpose (and use of the evaluation)**

A final evaluation of the *Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment* is conducted with a special focus on lessons learnt both from programmatic and coordination perspectives. The main purpose of this final evaluation is to assess in more detail the programmatic progress and performance of the above described intervention from the point of view of relevance, effectiveness, impact, organizational efficiency and sustainability. The evaluation will not be able to fully assess the Joint Programme's performance, as some activities are still ongoing; however, it will address the following questions with the results and evidence that is available to date.

The findings of the evaluation will contribute to effective programming, refining the approaches of participating UN agencies to women's economic empowerment, organizational learning and accountability. It will also be a key input to knowledge management on joint programmes and

programmes for gender equality and women's empowerment. The findings of the evaluation will moreover be used to engage policy makers and other stakeholders at local, national and regional levels in evidence-based dialogues and to advocate for gender-responsive strategies to promote inclusive local and national economic development with a particular focus on rural women.

Targeted users of the evaluation are the personnel of the participating UN agencies in Kyrgyzstan and in the six other countries globally, where the JPRWEE is being implemented, the responsible parties, and the government counterparts at local and national levels, CSOs, and other UN agencies, donor community and development partners present in Kyrgyzstan, and the programme beneficiaries. The evaluation should also provide specific recommendations as to the priority areas that should be considered to inform future work of participating UN agencies in the frameworks of Women's Economic Empowerment agenda and a potential Phase Two of the Joint Programme. This would include interventions that require continued support, successful interventions for expansion, and recommendations on prioritizing interventions to maximize impact. It should also define recommendations to improve project management and maximize ownership by national partners.

#### **IV. Objectives**

The objectives of this evaluation are to:

- Analyse the relevance of the programme objectives, strategy and approach at the local and national levels for the economic empowerment of rural women
- Assess effectiveness and a potential measurable impact of the programme intervention on the target group across all five dimensions of empowerment as per the Women Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI): i) decisions about agricultural production; ii) access to and decision-making power over productive resources, iii) control over use of income, iv) leadership in the community, and v) time use. Impact on off-farm production and other productive activities should also be considered.
- Assess organizational efficiency and coordination mechanisms in progressing towards the achievement of the project results, including the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment results as defined in the intervention
- Assess the sustainability of the results and the intervention in advancing gender equality in the target group
- Analyze how human rights based approach and gender equality principles are integrated in the programme implementation
- Assess how the intervention and its results relate and contribute to the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals
- Identify and document lessons learned, good practices and innovations, success stories and challenges within the project, to inform future work of participating UN agencies in the frameworks of Women's Economic Empowerment agenda and beyond
- Identify strategies for replication and up-scaling of the project's best practices
- Provide actionable recommendations with respect to UN Women's work on Women's Economic Empowerment in Kyrgyzstan.

#### **Key evaluation questions**

Considering the mandates to incorporate human rights and gender equality in all UN work and the UN Women Evaluation Policy, which promotes the integration of women's rights and gender equality



principles, these dimensions will have a special attention in this evaluation and will be considered under each evaluation criterion.

### **Relevance**

- To what extent was the design of the intervention and its results relevant to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries? Was the choice of interventions relevant to the situation of the target group?
- To what extent is the intervention consistent with the national development strategies in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment, food and nutrition security, and economic development, and reflect national priorities and commitments on GE/WE, new aid modalities and the UNDAF?
- To what extent key national partners were involved in the project's conceptualization and design process?
- To what extent has gender and human rights principles and strategies been integrated into the programme design and implementation?
- To what extent has the project been catalytic in addressing some of the root causes of inequalities related to rural women's economic empowerment?
- To what extent is the intervention aligned with international agreements and conventions on gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of inclusive economic growth?
- To what extent did the participating agencies possess the comparative advantage in the programme's area of work in comparison with other UN entities and key partners in the Kyrgyz Republic?
- To what extent did the project's design process include a collaborative process, shared vision for delivering results, strategies for joint delivery and sharing of risks among implementing UN entities?

### **Effectiveness**

- To what extent have the expected results of the project been achieved on both outcome and output levels?
- What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results? Has project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom? What are the good practices and the obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How were they overcome?
- How effective have the selected programme strategies and approaches been in achieving programme results?
- How well did the intervention succeed in involving and building the capacities of rights-holders, duty-bearers, as well as the project partners?
- To what extent are the programme approaches and strategies are innovative for achieving economic empowerment of rural women? What -if any- types of innovative good practices have been introduced in the programme for the achievement of GEEW results?
- What contribution are participating UN agencies making to implementing global norms and standards for gender equality and economic empowerment of rural women?
- To what extent the joint programme modality led to improved communication, coordination and information exchange within the United Nations family in Kyrgyzstan?

### **Impact**

- What evidence exist that the joint programme has delivered longer term results from processes through to benefits? Have any unintended results been delivered?

- Is there a potential measurable impact of the programme intervention on the target group across all dimensions of empowerment?
- To what extent is the programme changing the dynamics of power in relationships between different groups?
- To what extent is the programme bringing about gender transformative changes that address the root causes of gender inequalities – including prevailing social norms, attitudes and behaviours, discrimination and social systems

### **Efficiency**

- Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated and split between the four participating agencies strategically to achieve the project outcomes?
- How has the joint nature of the project affected efficiency of delivery, including reduced duplication and increased cost-sharing, reduced/transferred burdens and transaction costs? What factors have influenced this?
- Has JP RWEE led to improved efficiency in the management of resources and what has been the relationship between increased/decreased efficiency and (potential) results on GEWE? Does the established levels or mechanism of “jointness” lead to better GEWE results?
- Has there been effective leadership and management of the project including the structuring of management and administration roles to maximize results? Where does accountability lie?
- Have the outputs been delivered in a timely manner?
- To what extent are the programme’s individual entity and joint monitoring mechanisms in place effective for measuring and informing management of project performance and progress towards targets? To what extent was the monitoring data objectively used for management action and decision making?

### **Sustainability**

- What is the likelihood that the benefits from the project will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the project phase out?
- To what extent the intervention succeeded in building individual and institutional capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers to ensure sustainability of benefits and more inclusive practices to local development and water governance?
- How effectively has the project generated national ownership of the results achieved, the establishment of partnerships with relevant stakeholders and the development of national capacities to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits?
- What voice and influence do key national partners including women’s movement etc. have within the programme’s decision-making structure and hierarchy?
- What steps were taken to develop and/or reinforce the operating capacities of national partners during the implementation of the programme?
- What local accountability and oversight systems have been established?
- To what extent has the project been able to promote replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices?
- To what extent has the exit strategy been well planned and successfully implemented?

Considering the mandates to incorporate human rights and gender equality in all UN work and the UN Women Evaluation Policy, which promotes the integration of women's rights and gender equality principles into evaluation, these dimensions will require special attention for this evaluation and will be considered under each evaluation criterion.

It is expected that the evaluation team will develop an evaluation matrix, which will relate to the above questions (and refine them as needed), the areas they refer to, the criteria for evaluating them, the indicators and the means for verification as a tool for the evaluation. Final evaluation matrix will be approved in the evaluation inception report.

## **V. Scope of the evaluation**

The final evaluation of the *Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment* will be conducted at the end of project implementation and will cover the entire duration of the project 01-11-2014-31.03.2018. The evaluation is scheduled between January and April 2018.

The evaluation includes a data collection mission to Bishkek and up to eight selected project sites in Kyrgyzstan, both in its southern and its northern part.

The evaluation shall cover all aspects of the project, and broadly allocate resources (time) in relation to the relative expenditure between the various project components.

The *Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment* has been included in the Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) conducted in 2017 as part of the project portfolio of UN Women Country Office in Kyrgyzstan. The CPE report with findings and recommendations relevant to the JP RWEE will be made available to the evaluation team to inform the evaluation design, methodologies, and final evaluation report.

## **VI. Evaluation design (process and methods)**

### **Methodology**

The evaluation will be a transparent and participatory process involving relevant UN Women stakeholders and partners in Kyrgyzstan. The evaluation will be based on gender and human rights principles and adhere to the UNEG Norms and Standards and Ethical Code of Conduct and UN Women Evaluation Policy and guidelines. (Please see section XI References below)

The evaluation is a final programme evaluation and both a summative approach focusing on capturing the lessons learned during the implementation and assessing the achievement of the results at output and outcome levels, as well as a formative, forward-looking approach assessing the applicability of the results will be employed. The evaluation methodology will furthermore follow a ToC approach and employ mixed methods including quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and analytical approaches to account for complexity of gender relations and to ensure participatory and inclusive processes that are culturally appropriate. Methods may include but are not limited to:

- Desk review of relevant documents such as project and programme documents, progress reports, financial records, meeting minutes and monitoring reports, and secondary data or studies relating to the country context and situation
- Online consultations and discussions with the senior management, programme and project management staff of the four participating UN agencies

- Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, surveys with direct and indirect beneficiaries, implementing partners, donor and other stakeholders
- Field visits to and observation at selected project sites

Data from different research sources will be triangulated to increase its validity. The proposed approach and methodology has to be considered as flexible guidelines rather than final requirements, and the evaluators will have an opportunity to make their inputs and propose changes in the evaluation design. The methodology and approach should, however, incorporate human rights and gender equality perspectives. It is expected that the Evaluation Team will further refine the approach and methodology and submit a detailed description in the inception report.

Comments provided by the evaluation reference and management groups are aimed at methodological rigor, factual errors, errors of interpretation, or omission of information and must be considered by the evaluators to ensure a high-quality product. The final evaluation report should reflect the evaluator's consideration of the comments and acknowledge any substantive disagreements.

### **Evaluation Process**

The evaluation process has five phases:

1) Preparation: gathering and analysing programme data, conceptualizing the evaluation approach, internal consultations on the approach, preparing the TOR, establishment of the Evaluation Management Group (EMG) and the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG), stakeholders mapping and selection of evaluation team.

2) Inception: consultations between the evaluation team and the EMG, programme portfolio review, finalization of stakeholder mapping, inception meetings with the ERG, review of the result logics, analysis of information relevant to the initiative, finalization of evaluation methodology and preparation and validation of inception report.

3) Data collection and analysis: in depth desk research, in-depth review of the project documents and monitoring frameworks, in online interviews as necessary, staff and partner survey/s, and field visits.

4) Analysis and synthesis stage: analysis of data and interpretation of findings, and drafting and validation of an evaluation report and other communication products.

5) Dissemination and follow-up: once the evaluation is completed UN Women is responsible for the development of a Management Response, publishing of the evaluation report, uploading the published report on the GATE website, and the dissemination of evaluation findings.

Participating UN agencies are entirely responsible for phases 1 and 5 outlined above which will not foresee the involvement of the independent evaluation team.

### **VII. Stakeholder participation and evaluation management**

The UN Women Kyrgyzstan National Programme Officer, who was providing overall programmatic support for the JPRWEE, but was not involved in direct management of the programme, will serve as the evaluation task manager responsible for the day-to-day management of the evaluation and ensures that the evaluation is conducted in accordance with the UN Women Evaluation Policy, United Nations Evaluation Group Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the United Nations system and other key guidance documents. Moreover, an evaluation management group comprising of senior management of the participating UN agencies and their delegated programme staff will be

established to oversee the evaluation process, make key decisions and quality assure the different deliverables.

The establishment of an evaluation reference group facilitates participation of the key stakeholders in the evaluation process and will help to ensure that the evaluation approach is robust and relevant to staff and stakeholders. Furthermore, it will make certain that factual errors or errors of omission or interpretation are identified in evaluation products. The reference group will provide input and relevant information at key stages of the evaluation: terms of reference, inception report, draft and final reports and dissemination of the results.

### VIII. Timeframe and expected outputs<sup>1</sup>

<b>Task</b>	<b>Tentative Timeframe</b>	<b>Est No of Fee Days</b>
<b>Inception Phase</b>		
<b>February 2018</b>		
Desk review of background documentation	February 7-9, 2018	3
Inception meeting with EMG and ERG	February 12-13, 2018	2
Inception report (including two rounds of revision)	By February 22, 2018	9
<b>Data collection phase</b>		
<b>February 2018</b>		
Documents review, (online) interviews	February 2018	5
Visit to project sites	February 26 – March 9, 2018	12
<b>Analysis and reporting phase</b>		
<b>March 2018</b>		
Drafting and presentation of preliminary findings (including one round of revision)	March 13, 2018	1
Draft report (including two rounds of Revision)	March 26 – April 2, 2018	8
Final report Evaluation communication products (brief PPT, two-pager)	April 11, 2018	5

### Expected deliverables

The evaluation team is expected to deliver:

- **An inception report:** The evaluation team will present a refined scope, a detailed outline of the evaluation design and methodology, evaluation questions, and criteria for the approach for in-depth desk review and field work to be conducted in the data collection phase. The report will include an evaluation matrix and detailed work plan. A first draft report will be shared with the evaluation management group and, based upon the comments received the evaluation team will revise the draft. The revised draft will be shared with the evaluation

---

<sup>1</sup> Since this evaluation will be conducted by an international and a national evaluator the distribution of the days amongst them are indicative and based on preliminar distribution of responsibilities.

reference group for feedback. The evaluation team will maintain an audit trail of the comments received and provide a response on how the comments were addressed in the final inception report.

- **Presentation of preliminary findings:** A PowerPoint presentation detailing the emerging findings of the evaluation will be shared with the evaluation management group for feedback. The revised presentation will be delivered to the reference group for comment and validation. The evaluation team will incorporate the feedback received into the draft report.
- **A draft evaluation report:** A first draft report will be shared with the evaluation management group for initial feedback. The second draft report will incorporate evaluation management group feedback and will be shared with the evaluation reference group for identification of factual errors, errors of omission and/or misinterpretation of information. The third draft report will incorporate this feedback and then be shared with the reference group for final validation. The evaluation team will maintain an audit trail of the comments received and provide a response on how the comments were addressed in the revised drafts.
- **The final evaluation report:** The final report will include a concise Executive Summary and annexes detailing the methodological approach and any analytical products developed during the course of the evaluation. The structure of the report will be defined in the inception report.
- **Evaluation communication products:** Online presentation of the preliminary findings at the closing event of the project in March 2018 (date TBD), a PowerPoint/Prezi presentation of the final key evaluation findings and recommendations, and a 2-pager/infographics on the final key findings, lessons learned and recommendations in a format preferably adjustable for individual project sites both in English and Russian.

Payment will be issued in three instalments upon the satisfactory submission of the deliverables cleared by the evaluation task manager to certify that the services have been satisfactorily performed: 15% upon the signing of the contract, 20% upon approval of evaluation inception report, 25% upon the submission of the draft report and 40% upon the validation of the final evaluation report and communication products.

#### **IX. Evaluation team composition and requirements**

An evaluation team consisting of an international consultant as a Team Leader and a national consultant as a Team Member supporting in all substantive aspects of the evaluation. Both have some experience of each of the following: conducting evaluations, gender equality, women's economic empowerment, and food and nutrition security and agriculture. The international consultant as team leader is responsible for coordination during all phases of the evaluation process, ensuring the quality of outputs and application of methodology as well as timely delivery of all evaluation products in close collaboration with the evaluation task manager and the evaluation management group. The national consultant will provide support to the international consultant in all the aspects of conducting the evaluation, including translation and interpretation where necessary.

In further detail, the duties and responsibilities of the international consultant are as follows:

- Leading the inception phase and developing an inception report outlining design, approach and methodology of the evaluation and an indicative workplan of the evaluation team within the framework of this ToR.
- Directing and supervising the national consultant in carrying out collection, research and analysis of relevant documentation and other data, and reporting.



- Overseeing and assuring quality of data collection and leading the analysis of the evaluation evidence.
- Preparing for meetings with the evaluation management group, evaluation reference group and other stakeholders to review findings, conclusions and recommendations.
- Leading the preparation of the evaluation communication products.

## **Required skills and expertise of the International Consultant**

### **Competencies**

- Sensitivity and adaptability to culture, gender, religion, nationality and age
- Strong analytical, writing and reporting abilities
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, ability to lead a team and negotiate amongst a wide range of stakeholders
- Commitment to quality products and deadlines

### **Qualifications**

- At least a master's degree in economics, social sciences, international relations, gender studies or a related area

### **Required experience**

- 7 years of relevant experience of periodically conducting evaluations of strategies, policies and/or development programmes and projects
- Proven experience of designing and leading or participating in gender-responsive and human rights based evaluations utilising participatory approaches and methodologies
- Knowledge and experience in gender equality and women's empowerment, gender mainstreaming, gender analysis and the related mandates
- Demonstrated facilitation and communications skills, experience in participatory approaches and ability to negotiate amongst a wide range of stakeholders
- Ability to produce well-written analytical reports
- Previous work experience of countries in transition. Previous experience working in Central Asia and/or in particular in Kyrgyzstan will be considered a strong asset
- Experience with the United Nations system will be considered an asset
- Fluency in English. Knowledge of Russian or Kyrgyz will be considered an asset

## **X. Application procedure**

Applications should include

- Offeror's letter to UN Women confirming interest and availability for the assignment, including financial proposal, indicating a total lump sum to include all costs relating to the delivery of outputs as per above description
- P11 form including past experience in similar assignments. This form can be downloaded at [www.unwomen.org/about-us/employment](http://www.unwomen.org/about-us/employment)

- Copies of previous evaluation reports submitted separately by email to [hr.kyrgyzstan@unwomen.org](mailto:hr.kyrgyzstan@unwomen.org)

All online application must include (as an attachment) the completed UN Women, UNDP or UN Personal History form (P11) in English accessible via the following link: [www.unwomen.org/about-us/employment](http://www.unwomen.org/about-us/employment). Kindly note that the system will only allow one attachment, which must be the P11. **Please upload the P11 form combined with other application documents, including the financial proposal and a possible CV, as one (1) single PDF document. Copies of the previous evaluation reports should be sent to: [hr.kyrgyzstan@unwomen.org](mailto:hr.kyrgyzstan@unwomen.org).**

Please carefully respond to the requirements of the Terms of Reference in the P11 that you submit.

Please note that the financial proposal should all-inclusive and take into account various expenses incurred by the consultant during the contract period itemizing the following: fee rate per working day, daily subsistence allowance rate for every day in field for the purposes of the assignment, necessary local travel expenses by the most appropriate means of transportation and the most direct economy class practicable route and any other relevant expenses required for the purposes of the assignment. The financial proposal should be provided in USD; if the proposal is provided in any other currency it would be converted as per UN exchange rate on the date of post closure.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Candidates can only be shortlisted if they profess to meet all the mandatory requirements in the Terms of Reference. Applications without the completed P11 form are incomplete and will NOT be considered for further assessment.

The Consultant shall promote a client-oriented approach consistent with UN Women rules and regulations and commits to high standards of quality, productivity and timeliness in the delivery of tasks. The Consultant will meet and apply the highest standards of integrity and impartiality.

The Consultant must be fully dedicated to the mandate and the values of UN Women, particularly to promoting Gender Equality as a strategy to reduce conflict, improve livelihoods and ensure fairness and justice; to Women Empowerment underpinning Gender Equality promotion efforts; to inter-ethnic tolerance and concord; and to respect for diversity.

### **Evaluation of applicants**

Candidates will be evaluated using a cumulative analysis method taking into consideration the combination of the applicants' technical qualifications and experience, and their Financial Proposal. Candidates meeting the mandatory requirements in the Terms of Reference as per the P11 submitted will be longlisted and passed on for further technical evaluation. The technical evaluation of the longlisted candidates comprises a desk review of the submitted documents, including the mandatory P-11, and an interview for candidates clearing the threshold in the desk review. Candidates obtaining a minimum of 70% (28 points of 40) in the desk review, which accounts for 40% of total assessment marks, will be shortlisted and invited for an interview. Candidates obtaining a minimum of 70% (49 points of 70) from the aggregated marks for desk review and the interview will be further considered for financial evaluation. The interview thus accounts for 30% of total marks, and the Financial Proposal for 30% also.

The contract will thus be awarded to the individual consultant whose application documents including the Financial Proposal, and performance in an interview have been evaluated and determined as:

- Technically responsive/compliant/acceptable to the requirements of the ToR and

- Having received the highest cumulative (technical evaluation and interview, and financial evaluation) score against the below defined criteria.

Applications without the documents indicated as required are incomplete and will NOT be considered for further assessment. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

**Technical Criteria for International Consultant - 70% of total evaluation - max. 70 points**

Criteria	Mandatory requirement used for longlisting		
At least a master's degree in economics, social sciences, international relations, gender studies or a related area	X	Yes/No	
7 years of relevant experience of periodically conducting evaluations of strategies, policies and/or development programmes and projects	X	Yes/No	
Experience of working in countries in transition	X	Yes/No	
Fluency in English	X	Yes/No	
<b>Technical evaluation</b>		<b>Points in desk review 40</b>	<b>Points in interview 30</b>
Proven experience of designing and leading or participating in gender-responsive and human rights based evaluations utilising participatory approaches and methodologies		Up to 8	Up to 10
Knowledge and experience in gender equality and women's empowerment, gender mainstreaming, gender analysis and the related mandates		Up to 5	Up to 10
Demonstrated facilitation and communications skills, experience in participatory approaches and ability to negotiate amongst a wide range of stakeholders		Up to 5	Up to 10
Ability to produce well-written analytical reports		Up to 10	
Proven work experience in Central Asia and specifically Kyrgyzstan an advantage		Up to 5	
Experience within the United Nations system will be considered an asset		Up to 4	
Knowledge of Russian or Kyrgyz will be considered an asset		Up to 3	

**Financial Criteria - 30% of total evaluation - max. 30 points**

The maximum number of points assigned to the Financial Proposal is allocated to the lowest price proposal. All other price proposals receive points in inverse proportion.

A suggested formula is as follows:  $p \cdot 30 (\mu/z)$

Where:

p - points for the financial proposal being evaluated

$\mu$  - price of the lowest priced proposal  
z - price of the proposal being evaluated

## **XI References**

Evaluation Policy of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNW/2012/8): [www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=UNW/2012/12&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=UNW/2012/12&Lang=E)

How to Manage Gender Responsive Evaluation. Evaluation Handbook:  
[www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/4/un-women-evaluation-handbook-how-to-manage-gender-responsive-evaluation](http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/4/un-women-evaluation-handbook-how-to-manage-gender-responsive-evaluation)

UN Women Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS):  
[www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/about%20us/evaluation/evaluation-geraasmethodology-en.pdf](http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/about%20us/evaluation/evaluation-geraasmethodology-en.pdf)

Standards for Evaluation in the UN System: [www.uneval.org/document/detail/22](http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/22)

Norms for Evaluation in the UN System: [www.uneval.org/document/detail/21](http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/21)

Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – towards UNEG Guidance:  
[www.uneval.org/document/detail/980](http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/980)

UNEG Guidance Integrating Human Rights and Gender into Evaluation:  
[www.uneval.org/document/detail/1616](http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1616)

UN SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator: [www.uneval.org/document/detail/1452](http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1452)

UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports: [www.uneval.org/document/detail/607](http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/607)

UNEG Ethical Guidelines: [www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102](http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102)

UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN: [www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100](http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100)

UN Women Kyrgyzstan Country Portfolio Evaluation:  
<http://gate.unwomen.org/Evaluation/Details?EvaluationId=5014>

Joint Evaluation of Joint Gender Programmes:  
<http://gate.unwomen.org/Evaluation/Details?evaluationId=4603>