

 **Knowledge** to lead

# Monitoring and Evaluation Policy Framework



**unitar**

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

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## Introduction and Background

1. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) was established with the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations in achieving the major objectives of the Organization. Since its inception in 1965, UNITAR has grown to become not only a respected service provider in professional, executive-type training, but also in the broader realm of developing capacities in fields related to the environment; governance; and peace, security and diplomacy. As a result of a strategic transformation process initiated in 2007, the Institute now complements its diverse training repertoire with research on knowledge systems, including research on learning approaches, methods and tools and their application to different learning settings.
2. As a training and research organization, the Institute naturally places much emphasis on delivering learning-related products and services with an aim to bring about changes in behaviour, to enhance on-the-job performance and to develop other capacities of its beneficiaries, be they individual or organizational, with a view to achieve or contribute to the achievement of higher order, longer-term objectives. Parallel to learning, the Institute also engages in programming aimed at achieving broader social and economic development outcomes, such as developing institutional capacities, strengthening public participation in decision-making and improving relief coordination in the wake of humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters.
3. The activities which seek to produce these results are highly diverse and range from the organization of short-term, small scale, stand-alone courses and other learning events to long-term, large-scale technical capacity development projects, many of which are implemented with partners and involve activities linked to multiple outputs and outcomes. The means of delivery are equally diverse and include face-to-face, technology-enhanced and blended forms of training, networking and knowledge sharing and analysis.
4. In the past, the Institute's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices have focused for the most part on the activity level of programming and have tended to reflect process- (as opposed to outcome-) based approaches. This has been largely due to the lack of an overarching result-based M&E policy framework as well as limited institutional capacities, resources, guidance and tools on which to draw.
5. As part of its strategic reforms, the Institute has designed an integrated RBM framework, linking strategic planning, results-based budgeting, and annual and individual work planning to monitoring and evaluation, and programme and staff performance reporting. In 2009, UNITAR established a Monitoring and Evaluation Section to take the lead in the development and implementation of a new monitoring and evaluation framework. The Institute has also identified strengthening accountabilities, effectiveness and efficiencies in delivering results as one of the key priority areas of its 2010-2012 Strategic Plan.

6. The present Monitoring and Evaluation Policy Framework builds on the Institute's M&E experience, including recent RBM achievements; takes into consideration the strategic direction in which the Institute is heading; acknowledges the challenges presented by the diversity of UNITAR programming and operations as well as the sources and characteristics of its funding; and draws on a wealth of M&E policies, practices and guidance of other organizations inside and outside the United Nations system. The purpose is to develop a more credible and consistent framework for strengthened accountability, organizational learning, quality improvement and informed decision-making in programming and operations, as well as to contribute to the professionalization of the monitoring and evaluation functions of the Institute.

### Key Concepts and Definitions

7. The Institute defines **monitoring** as a routine process of collecting and recording information in order to track progress towards expected results. **Evaluation** is the systematic assessment of the design, implementation and/or results of a programme, project, activity, policy, strategy or other undertaking. The intention of evaluation is to provide credible and useful information with a view to determine the worth or significance of the undertaking, incorporate lessons learned into decision-making and enhance the overall quality of the Institute's programming and operations<sup>1</sup>.
8. Functions similar to evaluation include appraisal (an assessment of the potential value of an undertaking during the conception phase), audit (an assessment of management controls and compliance with administrative rules, regulations and policies), investigation (an examination or enquiry into irregularities or wrong doing) and review (a rapid assessment of the performance of a topic or undertaking in absence of evaluation criteria e.g. usually operational issues). The definitions of other terms used in this policy framework are found in Annex 1.

### Complementary and Interdependent Roles

9. While monitoring and evaluation are distinct functions, the Institute recognizes their complementary and interdependent roles. Findings from prospective evaluation (or similar processes such as appraisal or baseline studies), for example, are useful in defining indicators for monitoring purposes. Moreover, results from monitoring progress towards results can help identify important evaluation questions. It is primarily for these reasons that the two functions are integrated into the present policy framework.

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<sup>1</sup> This definition is a variation of the widely-accepted Organizational for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) definition of evaluation, taking into account other definitions as provided by the United Nations Evaluation Group and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). See OECD/DAC Development Assistance Manual, 2002.

## Monitoring

10. The Institute has introduced a number of tools to monitor progress towards results from the corporate to the individual levels. These tools include medium-term strategic planning, results-based budgeting and work planning, and logical frameworks for projects.
  - a. **Medium-term strategic planning:** At the corporate level, medium-term plans shall be prepared every two to four years providing direction on a number of strategic priority areas with pre-defined indicators of achievement.
  - b. **Results-based budgeting:** Results-based programme budgets are prepared on a biennial basis outlining objectives and expected results. Institute divisions are required to monitor and report progress on achieving pre-defined performance indicators.
  - c. **Annual work planning:** Institute divisions are required to prepare and monitor annual work plans on the basis of the approved budget, the requirements of which are specified in Administrative Circular AC/UNITAR/2009/09.
  - d. **Individual work planning:** All regular staff members and remunerated training and research fellows are required to prepare and monitor individual work plans, the requirements of which are specified in Administrative Circular AC/UNITAR/2009/09.

### Logical framework requirements for donor-funded projects and other undertakings

11. The Institute recognizes the usefulness of logical frameworks as a tool to manage for results. Project proposals should include logical frameworks or other appropriate results formulations and specify major activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts<sup>2</sup>. Performance indicators, means of verification and risks and assumptions should be specified for output and outcome level results; for projects or other undertakings in which an impact evaluation is to be performed, indicators of achievement and means of verification should also be specified for intended impacts.
12. Performance indicators should include baseline and target measures for expected results. In the event baseline information may not be available in the design phase or at the submission time of a proposal, managers should plan to obtain baseline or other relevant information within a reasonable period from project start-up (e.g. inception workshop) to ensure evaluability of results. When projects or undertakings are to be implemented jointly, logical frameworks should be discussed and agreed with respective partners.

### Monitoring criteria

13. For effective results-based monitoring and in order to ensure evaluability (the extent to which projects or undertakings can be evaluated both reliably and credibly), indicators should be formulated using SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound):
  - a. **Specific:** The indicator is sufficiently clear as to what is being measured and specific enough to measure progress towards a result.

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<sup>2</sup> This requirement does not apply to non donor-funded activities, such as stand-alone fee-based e-Learning courses; to high-level knowledge-sharing or other projects which, for political reasons, may not make evaluation feasible; or to non-earmarked donor contributions to programmes.

- b. **Measurable:** The indicator is a reliable measure and is objectively verifiable. Qualitative measures should ideally be translated into some numeric form.
- c. **Attainable:** The indicator can be realistically met.
- d. **Relevant:** The indicator captures what is being measured (i.e. it is relevant to the activity/result).
- e. **Time-bound:** The indicator is expected to be achieved within a defined period of time.

## Evaluation

### Purposes

14. Evaluation serves the following purposes:

- a. **Promoting organizational learning and quality improvement:** Perhaps more than other purposes, UNITAR views evaluation as an opportunity to learn how to do things better, more effectively, with greater relevance, with more efficient utilization of resources and with greater and more sustaining impact. The results of evaluations need to contribute to knowledge management and serve as the basis for enhancing the quality of its products and services.
- b. **Ensuring accountability:** As an organization receiving funds in the form of voluntary contributions from public and private donors, in addition to a growing proportion of funds in the form of self-generated income from individual beneficiaries for training services, the Institute is answerable to its sources of funding for delivering results.
- c. **Improving informed decision-making:** Results from evaluations provide the basis for informed, responsible decisions. Such decisions may include, for example, scaling up, replicating or phasing out a programme, project or undertaking; adjusting learning objectives; redesigning content, changing methodologies, assessment activities or modes of delivery; etc.
- d. **Providing leverage to mobilize resources for outcome-based programming:** One of the constraints facing the Institute is the tendency of donors to provide activity-based funding as opposed to results-based funding. This severely constrains the Institute's capacity to follow-up with beneficiaries as is often required in the field of training in order to determine whether changes in behaviour have taken hold. The Institute thus views evaluation as an opportunity to provide leverage to mobilize sufficient resources for outcome-based programming.

### Guiding Principles, Norms and Standards

15. The international capacity development and evaluation communities have developed a number of guiding principles and good-practice norms and standards to ensure that evaluations meet quality requirements. The following five principles/norms/standards form part of the Institute's evaluation policy framework:

- a. **Utility:** Evaluation should be planned and conducted with a view to serve the information needs of its intended users, be they stakeholders internal or external to the Institute. Evaluation recommendations should flow logically from findings, be actionable and be presented in a clear and timely manner with the intention of incorporating results into learning and decision-making processes.
- b. **Accuracy and credibility:** Evaluation should be conducted with the necessary professional expertise and be based on the principle of impartiality. Evaluation should

use appropriate data collection and analysis which produce accurate, valid and reliable information. Findings should be open to reporting strengths and weaknesses as well as successes and failures.

- c. **Feasibility:** Evaluation should be as practical, politically viable and cost effective as possible, and should take into consideration time and financial and human resource requirements.
- d. **Consultation, access to information and transparency:** Evaluation should be conducted in a transparent manner with stakeholder consultation and access to relevant information. To the extent feasible, stakeholders should be engaged and contribute to the evaluation process by providing views, and such views should be reflected in evaluation findings in an impartial and balanced way. Consultants and others undertaking independent evaluation should have unrestricted access to information of the concerned programme, project or undertaking subject to evaluation, including project documents; terms of reference; training material; beneficiary views; results of decentralized evaluations, if relevant; and financial statements and reports, unless such information is considered by the Institute to be sensitive or confidential.
- e. **Propriety:** Evaluation should be undertaken in a legal and ethical manner with regard to the rights and welfare of those involved in and affected by assessments. Stakeholders invited to contribute to evaluation processes should be made aware of the purposes for and potential consequences of evaluation, and the Institute should seek their consent prior to them taking part in any evaluation exercise.

## Criteria

16. The Institute adopts the five widely-recognized criteria for evaluation that have been recommended by the OECD Development Assistance Committee:
  - a. **Relevance:** The degree to which an undertaking responds to the needs and priorities of the targeted beneficiaries, a contextual situation to be addressed and donor priorities.
  - b. **Effectiveness:** The extent to which an undertaking has achieved its objectives.
  - c. **Efficiency:** The cost effectiveness of transferring inputs into outputs taking into consideration alternative approaches.
  - d. **Impact:** The cumulative and/or long-term effects of an undertaking or series of undertakings which may produce positive or negative, intended or unintended changes.
  - e. **Sustainability:** The likelihood of benefits derived from an undertaking will continue over time after its completion.
17. The Institute acknowledges that not all criteria apply to all evaluations and that decisions on which criteria shall apply to a given situation should be based on the type of evaluation, the main evaluation questions and considerations related to methodology and feasibility. Guidance for the application of criteria is discussed in paragraph 25.

## Categories and Types of Evaluation

### Categories

18. The Institute undertakes two broad categories of evaluations: corporate and decentralized. Corporate evaluations are defined as independent assessments conducted and/or managed by the Institute's Monitoring and Evaluation Section at the request of the Executive Director

or at the request of programmes or other Institute divisions for the purpose of providing independent evaluation of projects or other undertakings<sup>3</sup>. Such evaluations may be undertaken internally (conducted by the Monitoring and Evaluation Section) or externally (in which case expertise outside the Institute would be retained). Corporate evaluations may also include reviews of decentralized evaluations on a selective and periodic basis for quality assurance purposes.

19. Decentralized evaluations are self-assessments conducted by the Institute's programmes, offices, units and sections. For the most part, decentralized evaluations are undertaken at the project or activity level, but may conceivably include any subject under any entity's purview. While self-evaluation has similarities with the monitoring function, the assessment exercise should seek to ask and respond to key evaluation questions and include critical analysis and reflection based on the data collected.
20. Given the characteristics of the Institute and the sources of funding for much of its programming, most evaluations will likely take the form of self-assessments. The Institute further recognizes that self-assessments and independent evaluations are complementary, and that the evaluation of some undertakings may include both approaches.
21. Corporate and decentralized evaluations may be undertaken individually (i.e. in the absence of any partners), jointly (with at least one other partner e.g. donors and/or implementing partners) and/or through participatory (i.e. involving stakeholders and/or beneficiaries) approaches.

Table 1 summarizes the categories and provides examples of evaluation that may be undertaken at the Institute.

<b>Table 1: Categories of evaluation</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Corporate</b>	Independent evaluations or reviews undertaken or managed by the M&E Section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic and policy evaluations</li> <li>- Meta evaluations</li> <li>- Thematic evaluations</li> <li>- Independent evaluation of programmes or projects</li> <li>- Reviews of decentralized, self evaluations</li> </ul>
<b>Decentralized</b>	Self-assessments conducted by programmes, units, sections or offices	Programme or sub-programme level, including project and activity evaluations (baseline studies, formative evaluations, outcome evaluations, etc.)

<sup>3</sup> By definition, independent evaluation is conducted by entities free from control and undue influence of those responsible for the design and implementation of an undertaking.



## Types of Evaluations

22. Evaluation may be performed at different times and address different elements of the results chain, from assessing needs or determining baseline conditions at project conception to evaluating the impacts of a project's contribution to development goals. Between these two points evaluation may include formative or other types of process-related assessments, evaluations of outputs, and/or summative evaluations focusing on different levels of outcomes.
23. Given the Institute's high number of training-related services with learning objectives, it is useful to distinguish between intermediate outcomes (e.g. enhanced knowledge and skills of beneficiaries) and institutional outcomes (e.g. strengthened organizational capacities as the result of applied knowledge/skills, increased policy coherence or efficiency, etc.).

Table 2 summarizes different types of evaluations based on timing and the level of the results chain.

Table 2: Timing and types of evaluation in relation to levels of results				
Timing	Types	Levels of Results		Remarks/Sample Evaluation Questions
Before the undertaking (ex ante)	Appraisal; quality at entry; baseline study, needs assessment	n/a		Depending on the scope of the project, evaluation may vary from a thorough examination of the entire results chain logic to a (rapid) assessment of training needs and/or determining baseline data indicators.
During the undertaking (process)	Real-time, formative, mid-term evaluation	Inputs		E.g. To what extent are human, financial and material resources <u>adequate</u> ?
		Actions		E.g. How <u>relevant</u> is the course to learning needs of beneficiaries?
After the undertaking (ex post)	Summative evaluation	Outputs		E.g. How <u>relevant</u> and <u>effective</u> were the delivered products (action plan) or services (training)? How <u>efficient</u> were outputs produced?
		Outcomes	Intermediate (short-term)	The <u>first level effect</u> of products and services delivered, directly attributed to outputs. E.g. How much knowledge increased? Did skills improve? Was awareness raised?
			Institutional (medium-term)	<u>Subsequent effects</u> of products or services delivered? E.g. Was there retention and/or on-the-job application of knowledge/skills? Have organizational capacities increased? Are policy instruments more efficient?
		Impact		What is the <u>impact</u> of the outcomes? Were project goals met? How durable are the results over time?

## Evaluation requirements

24. The following evaluations are required:

### General requirements

- a. Evaluation to obtain beneficiary reaction for all activity-events which are more than one day in duration<sup>4</sup>.

### Specific requirements for events/projects in which learning outcomes are sought

- b. Evaluation of intermediate outcomes (learning outcomes) for all training activity-events of two or more days<sup>5</sup>.
- c. Evaluation of institutional capacity outcomes (e.g. increased organizational capacities as a result of the application of knowledge, skills, awareness, etc) for all activity-events/projects budgeted at \$200,000 or more<sup>6</sup>.

### Specific requirements in which broader economic and social development results are sought

- d. Evaluation of project outputs, with an indication of progress towards institutional capacity outcomes (all projects).
- e. Evaluation of institutional capacity outcomes for projects budgeted at \$200,000 or more<sup>7</sup>.

25. Output evaluations should examine relevance, effectiveness and efficiency criteria. Outcome evaluation should examine relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, as well as some assessment on the sustainability of the results.

Table 3 below summarizes the Institute's evaluation requirements.

Table 3: Summary of evaluation requirements by level of results					
Type of project	Evaluation scope	Beneficiary reaction from activity-events	Outputs	Outcomes	
				Intermediate outcomes (short-term)	Institutional capacity outcomes (medium-term)
Learning outcome-related		✓ (≥ 1 day)	✓	✓ (≥ 2 days)	✓ (≥ \$200,000)
Broader socio-development outcome-related		✓ (≥ 1 day)	✓	✓ (≥ \$200,000)	

<sup>4</sup> One day is equivalent to six to eight hours of moderation/facilitation/learning.

<sup>5</sup> Applicable to stand alone courses and other learning-related events or projects, irrespective of founding source.

<sup>6</sup> Budget values as recorded in letters or memoranda of agreement.

<sup>7</sup> Budget values as recorded in letters or memoranda of agreement.

26. The requirements in paragraphs 24 to 25 will be operationalized through a set of guidance documents, checklists and other tools prepared or made available by the Monitoring and Evaluation Section.
27. The Institute acknowledges that not all undertakings necessarily merit evaluation and some may not be feasible for political reasons or other factors. Exceptions to evaluation requirements include special events/projects as defined in Annex 1, as well as activities and projects to which donors or implementing partners have stated opposition to evaluation.
28. The requirements and exceptions above shall not prejudice any requirements or evaluation preferences that a donor of a project or undertaking may have.

### **Discretionary evaluations**

29. Apart from the requirements enumerated in paragraph 24, other evaluations may be desirable in order to provide information on an undertakings' implementation (e.g. formative evaluations, mid-term evaluations, etc.) or contribution to higher-level achievements (e.g. impact evaluation, return on investment evaluation). Such evaluations are discretionary, unless specifically required by a donor or partner. Given cost and methodological considerations, any decision to perform impact evaluation should be based on an evaluability assessment prior to project implementation.

## **Evaluation Planning and Management**

### **Evaluation Planning**

30. All projects, activities and other undertakings should be conceived in a results-based manner in order to ensure evaluability, as outlined in paragraphs 11-13.
31. All donor-funded projects or other undertakings should include a clause in the project document specifying evaluation requirements and relevant modalities (e.g. joint evaluation, participatory evaluation; self-evaluation, independent evaluation; and type(s) of evaluations in relation to process and/or level(s) of results). In the event a project document is not required, the relevant letter or memorandum of agreement should specify monitoring and evaluation requirements.
32. Evaluation of projects or other undertakings should be included in the work planning of the Institute's divisional entities from which the Monitoring and Evaluation Section will prepare and maintain on a rolling basis a corporate evaluation plan. Evaluation plans should include information related to the category of evaluation (e.g. corporate, decentralized), type, methods, budget, scheduling and reporting.
33. For independent, external evaluations, relevant terms of reference will be prepared using international standards and good practice, and include the following elements: the context and purpose of the evaluation, scope, main evaluation questions, methodology (data collection tools and analysis), work plan, learning products of the evaluation, intended use of results and qualifications.

34. Costs to carry out evaluation vary and depend on the purpose/type/scope of the evaluation, main evaluation questions and data collection methods. Sufficient resources should be identified and made available for both decentralized and corporate evaluations (including internal and/or external independent evaluations).
35. Evaluation costs should be adequately budgeted in project/activity proposals by the relevant Institute divisional entity. Evaluation costs should also be taken into consideration in determining the price structure of fee-paying training and training-related services (e.g. fee-based e-courses).

### Evaluation Management

36. In conducting evaluations, the Institute acknowledges that different evaluation designs as well as quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods for data collection and analysis exist. The most appropriate design(s), method(s), approach(es) and/or technique(s) should be selected, taking into consideration the evaluation question(s), scope, criteria, human and financial resource requirements and availability, as well as guiding principles and good practice standards.
37. All independent evaluations should include a response from management in relation to the evaluation's findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons-learned.

### M&E Reporting

38. Results from the Institute's monitoring and evaluation exercises are to be recorded in the following formats: Programme Performance Reports, Results Summaries, Completion Reports, Corporate Evaluation Reports and Self Evaluation Reviews. Other types of reporting formats such as inception reports, mid-term reports, annual reports, impact evaluation reports, etc. may be used in addition to (or, where relevant, in lieu of) these formats if required by donor or partner.
  - a. **Programme Performance Reports** record programme performance based on expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement and performance measures, as recorded in results-based budgets. PPRs should be prepared by all Institute entities, including both operational and programming divisions and submitted to the Monitoring and Evaluation Section by the end of the first quarter of the subsequent biennium using a standard reporting template. To monitor progress, an interim report will be prepared and submitted at the mid-point of the biennium.
  - b. **Results Summaries** summarize results at the output and outcome level in relation to performance targets. Results summaries are used for small scale stand-alone e-courses and activity-events and projects budgeted at \$50,000 or less.
  - c. **Completion Reports** record findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned (if relevant) from evaluations and focus on the output and/outcome levels of results. Completion Reports should be prepared by all programmes and other entities if an evaluation of results is required.
  - d. **Corporate Evaluation Report** (CER) should be prepared by the Monitoring and Evaluation Section at the end of each biennium based on a review of completed decentralized and corporate evaluations. The CER will highlight outcome-level results and summarize recommendations and lessons-learned, as well as provide an

assessment of how evaluation processes have generated learning, quality improvement and enhanced decision-making. The CER should be presented to the Board of Trustees on a biennial basis.

- e. **Self Evaluation Reviews** are independent reviews conducted by the Monitoring and Evaluation Section of decentralized self evaluations and primarily for quality assurance purposes.

Table 4 below summarized the different reporting formats and requirements of the Institute.

<b>Table 4: Reporting tools and requirements</b>				
<b>Report Type</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Primary use</b>	<b>Requirements</b>	
			<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>Programme Performance Report</b>	Focuses on measuring expected accomplishments as indicated in the results-based budget, and provides a general assessment statement and lessons learned	Programme accountability and monitoring/self-evaluation tool to track progress on achieving results, identify challenges and lessons learned	All divisional entities in the results-based budget with pre-established indicators	Full report by the end of the first quarter of the subsequent biennium; Interim report at the mid-point in the biennium under review
<b>Results Summaries</b>	A concise reporting template summarizing results at the output and outcome level for e-courses and activity-events or small scale projects budgeted at \$50,000 or less	Accountability and activity/project performance reporting	All programmes and offices and other entities completing small scale projects	Periodically, within three months of project completion
<b>Completion Reports</b>	A detailed project evaluation report focusing on the attainment of results for medium to large scale projects	Learning and enhanced decision making and quality improvement. Also for accountability purposes	All programmes and offices and other entities	Periodically, within three months of project completion
<b>Corporate Evaluation Report</b>	Provides a review of completed decentralized and corporate evaluations	To aggregate main findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned	M&E Section	Every two years
<b>Self-Evaluation Reviews</b>	Provides independent review of self-evaluations	Quality assurance and application of standards and guidelines	M&E Section	Periodically

## Dissemination and Disclosure

39. Reports will be accessible in a public depository with a view to ensure transparency and facilitate knowledge management and application of lessons learned.

## Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning

40. As one of the main purposes of evaluation, the creation, storage, management and dissemination of knowledge is essential. In view of promoting organizational learning and contributing to quality improvement of the Institute's products and services, an annual learning forum will be organized to share lessons learned on evaluation processes and outcomes. The learning forum will be organized jointly by the Knowledge Systems Innovation Unit and the Monitoring and Evaluation Section.

## Role and Responsibilities

41. The Institute has a shared system of role and responsibilities in performing monitoring and evaluation functions.

### Office of the Executive Director

42. The Office of the Executive Director provides overall direction, leadership and management of the Institute. The Office's roles and responsibilities are the following:
- a. Submits the Institute's results-based programme budget to the Board of Trustees for approval;
  - b. Submits other relevant documents to the Board of Trustees for review, including the Institute's Strategic Plans, Programme Performance Reports and Corporate Evaluation Reports; and
  - c. Identifies projects and undertaking for, and requests the Monitoring and Evaluation Section to perform, corporate evaluations.

### Monitoring and Evaluation Section

43. The Monitoring and Evaluation Section acts as the custodian of the monitoring and evaluation functions. The section's roles and responsibilities are the following:
- a. Oversees the application of the policy framework, identifies bottlenecks and constraints and makes recommendations for updating the requirements or other elements of the framework, in line with international good practice, lessons learned as well as and the evolving programming and operational needs and characteristics of the Institute;
  - b. Facilitates regular interaction in-house with managers and other staff, collects feedback and facilitates learning on the framework;
  - c. Conducts research and engages in critical and analytical reflection as well as issues recommendations to management for compliance with the framework;
  - d. Prepares and circulates guidelines, checklists, templates and other tools to facilitate the application of the framework;
  - e. Develops and promotes standards for evaluation and quality assurance;
  - f. Conducts and/or manages corporate evaluations at the request of the Executive Director and/or programmes and other Institute divisional entities;

- g. Undertakes reviews of decentralized evaluations on periodic and selective basis for quality assurance purposes;
- h. Prepares and maintains a depository of annual work plans;
- i. Prepares, maintains and monitors the implementation of an annual evaluation plan based on scheduled corporate and decentralized evaluations;
- j. Prepares a synthesis and maintains a compilation of Programme Performance Reports based on submissions from programme management;
- k. Prepares a biennial Corporate Evaluation Report based on a review of completed corporate and decentralized evaluations;
- l. Maintains a public depository of evaluation reports with a view to ensure transparency and facilitate the integration of lessons learned and best practices into the broader concept of knowledge management;
- m. Oversees the development and maintenance of an intranet-based knowledge navigator tool to stock, manage and disseminate lessons-learned from evaluations;
- n. Promotes knowledge management, organizational learning and lessons learned by keeping abreast of innovative practices in the field of evaluation and monitoring, identifying relevant state-of-the art techniques, tools and methods, and providing divisional units with guidance on the use of respective tools and methods;
- o. Commits to sharing best practices and lessons learned for the purpose of enhancing the quality of the Institute's products and services; and
- p. Collaborates and coordinates with UNITAR divisional entities and other United Nations agencies and organizations on issues related to monitoring and evaluation.

### **Programme Management**

44. Programme management is a generic term comprising the manager-level posts of all entities, including programmes, sections, offices and units. Programme management's roles and responsibilities are the following:
- a. Undertakes monitoring and evaluation functions in accordance with the present policy framework, including monitoring progress towards results, as well as planning and conducting decentralized, self-evaluations;
  - b. Informs donors and implementing partners of the Institute's evaluation requirements when preparing and negotiating project agreements and modalities for cooperation, and ensures that monitoring and evaluation modalities are specified in project documents or related agreements;
  - c. Budgets resources for the planning and undertaking of self- and/or independent evaluations in line with applicable evaluation requirements;
  - d. Incorporates evaluation into annual work planning and informs the Monitoring and Evaluation Section of the scheduling of evaluations on a rolling basis;
  - e. Submits copies of results and/or reports of decentralized, self-evaluations undertaken to the Monitoring and Evaluation Section upon completion;
  - f. Follows-up on findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons-learned of independent evaluations in the form of a management response;
  - g. Implements recommendations of evaluations provided that they are relevant and actionable, and indicates expected dates for completing implementation; and,
  - h. Commits to sharing best practices and lessons learned for the purpose of enhancing the quality of the Institute's products and services.

## Coverage and Scope

45. The framework applies to the entirety of the Institute's operations and programming at headquarters and out-posted offices. The policy is limited in scope, however, as concerns projects, activities or other undertakings which are implemented in collaboration with partners or executed entirely by partners on behalf of the Institute.
46. In cases where projects or other undertakings are implemented jointly, including country projects in which UNITAR is accountable to donors for funds disbursed to national partners, the UNITAR divisional entity should inform implementing partner(s) and donors of the present framework and carry out consultations with a view to determine appropriate indicators for measuring results and modalities for evaluation. Should monitoring and/or evaluation modalities deviate from the present policy framework as a result of such consultations, programme management should inform the Monitoring and Evaluation Section.

## Implementation, Amendment and Review

47. The framework is ambitious and will be implemented in a staged approach. The initial stage, beginning in April 2012, will include systematic evaluation of outputs and outcomes, in line with requirements, for programmes and divisions of the Institute's headquarters and out posted offices<sup>8</sup>. The subsequent stage of implementation, beginning in January 2013, will extend requirements to the network of CIFAL centres. The knowledge management navigator tool and learning forum will be implemented in 2013.
48. The implementation of the framework may include the issuance of amendments to account for adjustments in requirements or other elements based on the evolving nature of monitoring and evaluation functions and taking into consideration international good practices.
49. The Institute will request a peer review of its monitoring and evaluation functions at the end of 2013.

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<sup>8</sup> The policy framework shall apply on a discretionary basis to projects and other undertakings which have commenced prior to April 2012 and are ongoing.



## Annex 1 – Glossary of Terms

### **Accomplishment**

The achievement of specific results producing changes in behaviour or developmental conditions. See outcome.

### **Activity**

Any action undertaken or work performed with the objective of transforming inputs into measurable outputs.

### **Baseline**

Data describing a situation to be addressed by an undertaking which serve as the starting point for measuring performance.

### **Beneficiaries**

Individuals, entities or groups which may be targeted or not and which may benefit directly or indirectly from a programme, project or other undertaking.

### **Best practices**

Planning, organizational and/or managerial methods, processes, techniques or other practices which have produced consistent superior results to those achieved by other means.

### **Corporate evaluation**

Independent evaluations undertaken and/or managed by the Monitoring and Evaluation Section.

### **Decentralized evaluation**

Self-assessment evaluations conducted by programmes or other divisional entities of the Institute.

### **Effectiveness**

The extent to which a programme, project or other undertaking achieves its planned results (outputs outcomes and/or goals).

### **Efficiency**

The cost effectiveness of transforming actions into outputs, taking into consideration alternative paths.

### **Evaluability**

The extent to which an activity, project, programme or other undertaking can be subject to evaluation in a credible and reliable manner.

### **Evaluation**

The systematic assessment of the design, implementation and/or results of a programme, project, activity, policy, strategy or other undertaking. The intention of evaluation is to provide credible and useful information, in view of determining the worth or significance of the undertaking, incorporating lessons learned into decision-making and enhancing the overall quality of the Institute's programming and operations

**Event (or activity-event)**

A major activity organized in the form of a briefing, conference, course, fellowship programme, lecture, meeting, seminar, workshop, side-event, webinar, etc. and announced on the Institute's online events management system.

**Ex ante evaluation**

An evaluation performed prior to the implementation of an undertaking. See baseline.

**Ex post evaluation**

An evaluation performed after the implementation of an undertaking.

**Formative Evaluation**

A type of evaluation conducted during the implementation of a project or other undertaking with the aim to provide information that will guide project improvement. This type of evaluation typically focuses on determining whether a programme is being implemented according to plan.

**Indicator**

A quantitative or qualitative measure of programme performance that is used to demonstrate change and which details the extent to which results are being or have been achieved.

**Institutional outcome**

Effects produced as the result of intermediate outcomes. E.g. increased organizational effectiveness as the result of the application of knowledge or skills by beneficiaries or as the results of other intermediate outcomes.

**Intermediate outcome**

Subsequent effects of products and/or services delivered. E.g. increased level of knowledge or skills retained after training or knowledge and skills applied on the job as a result of training.

**Impact**

The totality and/or long-term effects of an undertaking. Effects may be positive or negative, intended or unintended.

**Knowledge management**

A range of strategies, processes and techniques used to create, share and manage knowledge.

**Lessons learned**

A generalization derived from an evaluation and applicable to a generic rather than a specific situation.

**Logical framework**

A results-based project framework design based on a causal relationship linking inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact, with objectively verifiably indicators to measure progress towards the achievement of results.

**Monitoring**

The routine process of collecting and recording information in order to track progress towards expected results.

**Output**

Final products or services delivered.

**Outcome**

Changes in behaviour or development conditions.

**Project**

A set of planned and interrelated activities designed to achieve specific objectives within a given budget, time period and operating framework.

**Programme**

A set of sub-programmes, projects and/or activities producing outputs and accomplishments with a defined budget and under a set of specific objectives linked to the Institute's mandate and organizational goals.

**Special event**

An event organized at the corporate level with the participation of high-ranking personalities. Special events include meetings of the Board of Trustees; meetings organized at the request of the United Nations Secretary-General (Annual Retreat of the Secretary-General, Annual Seminar of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, Annual Retreat of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs); as well as the Geneva Lecture Series and Panel Discussions organized in connection with the Board of Trustees.

**Undertaking**

A general term for any programme, project, activity, policy, strategy, etc. which may be subject to evaluation.

**Summative Evaluation**

A type of evaluation intended to provide information about the merit, worth and impact of a programme or project (OIOS). Summative evaluation is usually conducted at the end of a programme or project to determine if anticipated results were achieved.



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