

Terms of Reference

Fund for Gender Equality Meta-Evaluation and Meta-Analysis

Type of Contract: Consultancy

Based in: Home Based

Estimated Time period of Contract: 14 weeks

Background

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) is dedicated to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The mandate and functions of UN Women call for the promotion of organizational and UN system accountability on gender equality through evaluation, strengthening evaluation capacities and learning from evaluation, and developing systems to measure the results and impact of UN-Women with its enhanced role at the country, regional and global levels.

UN Women's multi-donor Fund for Gender Equality (FGE) was launched in 2009 to fast-track commitments to gender equality focused on women's economic and political empowerment at local, national and regional levels. The Fund provides multi-year grants ranging from US \$200,000 – US \$1 million directly to women's organizations and governmental agencies¹ in developing countries; it is dedicated to advancing the economic and political empowerment of women around the world. With generous support from the Governments of Spain, Norway, Mexico, the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland², current grants have reached 9.4 million beneficiaries, including by equipping women with leadership and financial skills, and by helping them secure decent jobs and social protection benefits.

The Fund provides grants on a competitive basis directly to civil society organizations to transform legal commitments into tangible actions that have a positive impact on the lives of women and girls around the world. Its mandate seeks to further the Beijing Platform for Action, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and regional agreements such as the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Belen do Para, among others.

Across these grants, the Fund advances two major inter-related programme priority areas:

- **Programmes focused on women's political empowerment** aim to increase women's political participation and good governance to ensure that decision-making processes are participatory, responsive, equitable and inclusive, increasing women's leadership and influence over decision-making in all spheres of life, and transforming gender equality policies into concrete systems for implementation to advance gender justice.

¹ Starting its 3rd grant-making cycle in 2015, the Fund will award grants to CSOs only.

² In 2014 FGE partners grew to 17 donors, including governments (adding Japan and Israel to the list mentioned above), private sector and foundations, UN Women National Committees and individual donors.

- **Grants awarded for women’s economic empowerment** seek to substantially increase women’s access to and control over economic decision-making, land, labor, livelihoods and other means of production and social protections, especially for women in situations of marginalization.

Since its launch in 2009, the Fund has delivered grants totaling US \$56.5 million to 96 grantee programmes in 72 countries. Awarded programmes reflect a range of interventions in commitments to gender equality laws and policies and embody unique combinations of strategies, partnerships and target beneficiaries.

FGE was established as a bold investment in women’s rights, testing a more focused and better-resourced modality for catalyzing and sustaining gender equality and efforts. Its Programme Document sets forth its mandate to track, assess, and widely share the lessons learned from this pioneering grant programme and to contribute to global know-how in the field of gender equality.

Undertaking strategic evaluations of programmes are a vital piece of FGE’s mandate. The Fund follows a decentralized evaluation approach, by which grantee organizations are responsible to manage (or co-manage) independent evaluations of their programmes, following the guidance and oversight (and in some cases co-management) by FGE’s Regional Monitoring and Reporting Specialist and UN Women field offices. Grantee organizations are expected to follow UN Women/UNEG evaluation guidance provided.

As such, since the Fund’s inception, more than 32 evaluations have been undertaken across the globe, including Mid-Term Evaluations (MTE) and Final Evaluations (FE), and 14 more are currently underway.

The wealth of information captured through these 32 evaluation processes have provided knowledge both on substance of FGE’s supported work on namely political and economic empowerment of women, as well as on the Funds monitoring and evaluation functions and processes. In order to better capture this wealth of information and to use it in a way that it contributes to the Fund and its stakeholders learning process, FGE will undertake a Meta-Evaluation and Analysis of selected reports. The current consultancy will cover MTE and FE Reports that have been finalized by June 1st 2015, however, in the case of programmes that have finalized both a MTE and a FE (7 cases), only the FE report will be part of this exercise³; in total 25 reports will be included in this exercise. For ease of reference from here onwards, the reports that will be part of this evaluation will be stated as Evaluation Reports (ER).

1. Justification

The purpose and role of evaluation at UN Women / FGE is to contribute to learning on best ways to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment, enhance UN Women’s accountability, and inform decision-making, planning and future programming. By providing evidence-based information, evaluation contributes to UN Women’s role to generate knowledge on what works to advance gender equality and in particular, for women’s economic and political empowerment.

As such, the FGE is seeking a consultant to conduct a Meta-Evaluation and Meta-Analysis of the 25 evaluation reports.

³ This can be discussed further with evaluation experts during the Inception Phase.

The selected consultant will work in two phases:

- (1) **First Preliminary Phase – Meta-Evaluation:** review the FGE evaluation reports produced to assess them against a tailored set of GERAAS⁴ standards and produce a brief report on the quality and ratings of the reports evaluated.
- (2) **Second more Substantive Phase – Meta-Analysis:** the consultant will review the reports that have been rated “satisfactory and above”⁵, and produce a meta-analysis report by synthesizing key findings, recommendations, conclusions, and lessons learned. This is required to develop constructive lessons for future systemic strengthening of programming, organizational effectiveness and the evaluation function.

Whereas the Meta-Evaluation provides a rating of the quality of evaluation reports according to UN Women standards; the Meta-Analysis synthesizes the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the body of final evaluation reports that meet UN Women quality requirements.

2. Methodology

The consultancy will have **two phases/components**:

Phase 1 – Meta-Evaluation - ME: Review the 25 evaluation reports produced from 2009 until 1 June 2015 that will be part of this exercise and undertake a meta-evaluation of these.

The purpose of the ME is to capture the quality of evaluation reports. This is required to develop constructive lessons for future systemic strengthening of evaluation, and to allow possible trend analysis to examine changes in the quality and credibility of evaluations managed by FGE’s grantees. This phase is mainly designed to strengthen FGE’s evaluation capacity by providing practical recommendations to improve future grantee evaluations.

This will be done, as possible/feasible based on UNW/GERAAS and UNEG standards. Please note that the Evaluation Management Team will work with the consultant once selected, to ensure the applicability of the existing tools to ensure these are tailored to this assignment, for which this preliminary phase of quality verification of reports, is to be done in a coherent but rapid way as the main goal of FGE is linked to the Meta-Analysis of findings (see below). For example, out of the 8 parameters used in a detailed GERAAS process, potentially the four parameters “methodology, findings, conclusions and recommendations” which are the “yardstick of a good quality report” (UNW GERAAS guidance page 7) could be the ones assessed.

Phase 2 – Meta-Analysis - MA: Evaluation Reports that are found to be “satisfactory or above” (using GERAAS), will be selected to take part in the Meta-Analysis. The MA aggregates the recurrent findings, conclusions, lessons learned, good practices and recommendations that have come out of FGE evaluations. The Meta-Analysis is poised to provide a basis to better understand UN Women FGE

⁴ All interested applicants are invited to read the Global Evaluation Report Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS): <http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/about%20us/evaluation/evaluation-geraasmethodology-en.pdf>

⁵ To be discussed further with the evaluation experts during the Inception Phase.

programme interventions around the UNEG criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact). It also provides further analysis on the progress made against FGE’s goals and priorities (and strategies) in the two areas of women’s economic and political empowerment.

This could include, for example, answering questions like: What are the strengths that emerge from the evaluations of FGE regarding political and economic empowerment? Which types of efforts/strategies being implemented have shown high degrees of relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, efficiency and impact and what factors have contributed to this or inhibited success? Are there any patterns and lessons to be learnt regarding results produced by FGE programmes in general? Are there findings and conclusions that point in the same direction? What strengths and challenges do the evaluations expose with regard to FGE’s effort to (1) Women’s political empowerment and (2) women’s economic empowerment? To be explored and discussed further during Inception Phase and after Meta-Evaluation Phase.

The Meta-Analysis will be an important knowledge piece for FGE that has been implementing over 96 programmes on economic and political empowerment for more than 5 years now. The MA helps to paint a global perspective of UN Women FGE interventions at different levels and facilitate better understanding and insight on what works to advance gender equality and women empowerment.

The synthesis of this information will support the use of evaluation findings by UN Women and FGE as well as its grantees. It will also inform donors and other development partners about the effectiveness of the interventions supported by the FGE in its 6 years of existence. Usability will be ensured through different strategies, including tailoring of the deliverables to ensure that the results of the ME and MA are captured in a way that stimulates sharing and understanding of knowledge. Note that 4 stand-alone knowledge pieces (2 pagers of trends per region or strategies per theme for example) will be part of this MA Report.

3. Expected Deliverables

The three main expected deliverables of the consultancy will be⁶:

1- Inception Report		
This report will be completed after initial desk review of program documents. It will be 7 pages maximum in length and will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Background to the evaluation: objectives and overall approach of both phases of this exercise. • Identification of evaluation scope (see points above regarding reports to be included and excluded). • Description of evaluation methodology/methodological approach. • Work Plan with dates and deliverables. 	Expected Duration: 1 week	Management Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This report will be used as an initial point of agreement and understanding between the consultant and the Evaluation Manager & Reference Groups. • Payment: 10% of total on approval of deliverable.
2- Meta-Evaluation Report of FGE		
An 8-10 page Meta-Evaluation report with findings and	Expected	Management Notes:

⁶ Please see Annex for additional information on reports. Please note that the UN Women Evaluation checklist for reports will be shared with the selected evaluation experts as will all other tools as per UN Women Evaluation Handbook. <http://genderevaluation.unwomen.org/en>

<p>assessment based on UNEG and GERAAS standards, all ER will be qualified: [Very Good, Good, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory] and key concrete recommendations for FGE on evaluation and RBM will be provided. It will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Summary (1 page) • Assessment/systematization of key strengths and weaknesses observed/identified and lessons learned and good practices emerging from the review of the 25 FGE evaluation reports. (5 pages) • A set of concrete recommendations for UN Women FGE to improve evaluation based on RBM programme management. (2-3 pages) • Annex: Scoring of the quality of the 25 ER using GERAAS tool (tailored to this assignment as needed) using the Quality Review Template (GERAAS Annex III) of each of the 25 reports. 	<p>Duration: 4-6 Weeks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final Meta-Evaluation report will go through a process of review and approval by the Reference Group. Final approval of findings will be done by FGE Chief. Once approved Phase 2 can begin with selected Evaluation Reports. • Payment: 45% of total on approval of deliverable.
<p>3- Meta-Analysis Report of FGE</p>		
<p>This report will analyze and synthesize what are some of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned and best practices from selected programme evaluations undertaken worldwide.</p> <p>It will be a 25 page report that will help to paint a perspective of the achievement of FGE programmes vis-à-vis its two goals: political and economic empowerment of women.</p> <p>The MA is poised to provide a basis to better understand FGE interventions and achievement of its goal and outcomes in the areas of women’s economic and political empowerment.</p> <p>The content of the report will be discussed with the consultant in detail prior to the MA phase starting – after the ME is finalized and there is a clearer picture of what programme ER will be part of the MA. However, it is important to note that this report will include 4 knowledge pieces produced by the consultant: this can be, for example, 2 page document on strategies that work per Outcome or an analysis of trends per region, etc.</p>	<p>Expected Duration: 6-8 Weeks</p>	<p>Management Notes:</p> <p>The contents and structure of the MA report will be discussed and reviewed by and EM/RG and FGE Chief after completion of Phase 1.</p> <p>The final Meta-Analysis report will go through a process of review and approval. Final approval of findings will be done by FGE Chief.</p> <p>Payment: 45% of total on approval of deliverable.</p>

4. Work Plan

	Weeks													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Inception Report	X													
ME Phase – Desk Review		X	X	X										
Draft ME Report submitted				X										
Validation of ME Report Final ME Report submitted.				X	X									
MA Phase - Desk Review						X	X	X	X	X				
Draft MA Report submitted									X	X				
Validation of MA Report										X	X	X		
Final MA Report submitted													X	X

5. Management of the consultancy

This will be a home-based consultancy with no expected travel. The consultant will work mainly through desk review of all reports and related documents.

- a) Management of the Evaluation:** The consultant reports directly to Chief of FGE Secretariat and to the Evaluation Manager. The Evaluation Manager is the FGE Monitoring and Reporting Specialist for Asia Pacific (based in Bangkok) who has more than 9 years of experience in Monitoring and Evaluation, including in the management of decentralized UN Women evaluations.

The Evaluation Manager is responsible for managing the day to day aspects of the evaluation process. This includes: leading the development of the TOR; managing the selection and recruitment of the evaluation team; managing the contractual arrangements⁷, budget and personnel involved in the evaluation; providing support and coordination to the reference groups; providing the evaluators with administrative support and required data; connecting the evaluation team with the programme unit, senior management and other relevant stakeholders; reviewing the interim reports and final reports to ensure quality.

- b) Reference Group (RG):** A Reference Group will be created to ensure an efficient, participatory and accountable process and facilitate the participation of stakeholders enhancing the use of the meta-evaluation and meta-analysis findings.

The role of the RG will include:

- Identifying information needs, defining objectives and delimiting the scope of the evaluation (approving the IR).
- Facilitating the participation of those involved in the evaluation.
- Facilitating the consultant’s access to all information and documentation relevant to the intervention.

⁷ With the support of FGE Secretariat who will manage payments and contractual/admin issues.

- Monitoring the quality of the process and deliverables that will stem from the exercise (Inception Report, Preliminary findings and Final Report).
- Supporting development and implementation of Management Response (MR) and Dissemination Strategy (DS) as needed.
- Ensuring the successful implementation of the MR and DR, including disseminating the results of the evaluation, especially among the organizations and entities within their interest group.

Invited RG members will include:

- Chief of the Fund for Gender Equality (& and FGE Programme and Reporting Specialist)
- Evaluation Manager
- FGE Monitoring and Reporting Specialists
- 1 FGE Focal Point
- 1 UN Women Evaluation Specialist
- 1 Representative of the UN Women Economic Empowerment Team
- 1 Representative of the UN Women Leadership and Political Empowerment Team
- 1 Representative from the Donors of FGE

- c) Broad Reference Group (BRG):** A Broad Reference Group will be created at the start of the evaluation. The BRG member will receive key evaluation deliverables such as the Inception Report (IR) and Draft Final Report (FR) and Final Report. They will provide input on these deliverables as needed.

** Please note that the number of members in the RG is kept to a manageable number that will ensure the timeliness of the evaluation exercise. The BRG members are a larger group made up of stakeholders that should be informed of all ME/MA phases and deliverables. They are invited to actively participate throughout the entire process; however, remaining cognisant of their time they will be consulted specifically for comments in relation to the IR and FR. It is also important to note that in the case of a ME/MA exercise – the 25 reports included in this exercise from the onset have been undertaken through evaluation processes based on UNEG and UN Women Evaluation Guidelines, including the constitution of Reference Groups for each of these evaluation processes.

6. Ethical Code of Conduct:

The evaluation of the programme is to be carried out according to ethical principles and standards established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

- Anonymity and confidentiality. The evaluation must respect the rights of individuals who provide information, ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality.
- Responsibility. The report must mention any dispute or difference of opinion that may have arisen among the consultants or between the consultant and the heads of the Programme in connection with the findings and/or recommendations. The team must corroborate all assertions, or disagreement with them noted.

- Integrity. The evaluator will be responsible for highlighting issues not specifically mentioned in the TOR, if this is needed to obtain a more complete analysis of the intervention.
- Independence. The consultant should ensure his or her independence from the intervention under review, and he or she must not be associated with its management or any element thereof.
- Incidents. If problems arise at any other stage of the evaluation, they must be reported immediately to the manager of the evaluation. If this is not done, the existence of such problems may in no case be used to justify the failure to obtain the results stipulated in these terms of reference.
- Validation of information. The consultant will be responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the information collected while preparing the reports and will be ultimately responsible for the information presented in the evaluation report.
- Intellectual property. In handling information sources, the consultant shall respect the intellectual property rights of the institutions and communities that are under review.
- Delivery of reports. If delivery of the reports is delayed, or in the event that the quality of the reports delivered is clearly lower than what was agreed, the penalties stipulated in these terms of reference will be applicable.

7. Skills and Competencies and requirements of consultant

Education:

- A Masters or higher level degree in International Development or a similar field related to political and economic development, monitoring and evaluation, etc.

Work Experience:

- A minimum of 7 years relevant experience undertaking evaluations is required including proven practical professional experience in designing and conducting major evaluations.
- Substantive experience in evaluating similar development projects related to local development and political and economic empowerment of women.
- Substantive experience in evaluating projects and programmes with a strong gender focus is preferred.
- Excellent and proven knowledge of evaluation methodologies and approaches.
- Experience with meta-evaluation and meta-analysis of evaluation reports, preferably with UN agencies, is an asset.
- Proven experience in producing coherent, clear analytic reports and knowledge pieces is a requirement.

Language Requirements:

- Excellent English writing and communication and analytical skills are required.
- Working knowledge of Spanish is necessary – as several reports will be in Spanish.

ANNEX: Report Quality Standards (extract from UNEG standards)

The following UNEG standards⁸ should be taken into account when writing all evaluation reports:

- The **final report should be logically structured, containing evidence-based findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations** and should be free of information that is not relevant to the overall analysis (S-3.16).
- **A reader of an evaluation report must be able to understand:** the purpose of the evaluation; exactly what was evaluated; how the evaluation was designed and conducted; what evidence was found; what conclusions were drawn; what recommendations were made; what lessons were distilled. (S-3.16)
- In all cases, evaluators should strive to **present results as clearly and simply as possible** so that clients and other stakeholders can easily understand the evaluation process and results.(S-3.16)
- **The level of participation of stakeholders in the evaluation** should be described, including the rationale for selecting that particular level. (S-4.10)
- **The programme being evaluated should be clearly described** (as short as possible while ensuring that all pertinent information is provided). It should include the purpose, logic model, expected results chain and intended impact, its implementation strategy and key assumptions. Additional important elements include: the importance, scope and scale of the programme; a description of the recipients/ intended beneficiaries and stakeholders; and budget figures. (S-4.3)
- The **role and contributions of the UN organizations and other stakeholders** to the programme being evaluated should be clearly described (who is involved, roles and contributions, participation, leadership). (S-4.4)
- **In presenting the findings, inputs, outputs, and outcomes/ impacts should be measured to the extent possible (or an appropriate rationale given as to why not).** The report should make a logical distinction in the **findings, showing the progression from implementation to results with an appropriate measurement** (use benchmarks when available) and analysis of the results chain (and unintended effects), or a rationale as to why an analysis of results was not provided. Findings regarding inputs for the completion of activities or process achievements should be distinguished clearly from outputs, outcomes. (S-4.12)
- Additionally, reports should **not segregate findings by data source.** (S-4.12)
- **Conclusions need to be substantiated by findings** consistent with data collected and methodology, and represent insights into identification and/ or solutions of important problems or issues. (S-4.15)
- **Recommendations should be firmly based on evidence and analysis,** be relevant and realistic, with priorities for action made clear. (S-4.16)
- **Lessons, when presented, should be generalized beyond the immediate subject being evaluated** to indicate what wider relevance they might have. (S-4.17)

⁸ See UNEG Guidance Document "[Standards for Evaluation in the UN System](#)", UNEG/FN/Standards (2005).