EVALUATION OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA AND UNICEF SRI LANKA

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Background and Context

The current Country Programme of Cooperation (CPC) between the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and UNICEF covers the period 2002-2006. A Mid-Term Review (MTR) was completed in October 2004. Political developments during the period as well as the tsunami at the end of 2004 deeply affected programme implementation. The Mid-Term Review endorsed a key recommendation of a joint UNICEF-DFID-SIDA evaluation, which took place in 2003, i.e. to adopt a whole country approach.

The Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) between GoSL and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) that came in place in early 2002 created the space to develop programme activities in the entire country as well as to aim for rehabilitation and reconstruction in the conflict affected areas. Yet, the tsunami at the end of 2004 and the consequent emergency response affected character and implementation of the CPC significantly in 2005.

The country programme of cooperation (CPC) is guided by human rights-based approach to programming and is planned and managed largely through results-based management principles. These results are specified hierarchically at three levels: impact, outcome and outputs. At the impact level results are changes in the realization of the rights of children. These are not achieved through the CPC alone but with partners. Similarly, outcomes which are changes of institutional, organizational, and community capacities are achieved in partnership. However, results at output are achieved through the CPC and the UNICEF and its partners in the government and others are accountable for achieving them.

The next CPC cycle will be harmonized among United Nations Development Assistance Framework/Programme (UNDAF/P) partners and cover the period 2008-2012. 2007 will therefore be a bridging period. The Government and the UNDAF/P partners are currently discussing the Common Country Assessment (CCA), which will lay the foundations of the new UNDAF/P. The new UNICEF supported CPC will be part of the UNDAF/P.

Consultations between GoSL, UNICEF and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), which is one of the key donors to the current CPC, have generated the initiative to conduct an evaluation of the UNICEF supported CPC in Sri Lanka with a particular focus on issues of partner capacity and sustainability. The exercise will be overseen by the Ministry of Plan Implementation of GoSL and UNICEF’s, the Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) and UNICEF Sri Lanka.

General Assembly Resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system stresses that national Governments have the primary responsibility for coordinating external assistance and evaluating its contribution to national priorities. Resolution E/ICEF/2006/CRP.10 of 08 June 2006 by UNICEF’s Executive Board calls on UNICEF to conduct evaluations of operations at the country level in close association with national Governments and to assist Governments in the development of national evaluation capacities.
2. Purpose and scope of the Evaluation

The main purpose of the evaluation is to feed into future strategy development particularly in relation to capacity and sustainability. As Sri Lanka has crossed the threshold from low income country to lower middle-income country and is showing several comparatively satisfactory development indicators at national level (e.g. U5MR 17 per 1,000 live births), whilst regional disparities exist. In this context, the issue of type and degree of intensity of interventions required to minimise regional disparities both in terms of capacity needs and ensuring sustainability of interventions is required from an agency like UNICEF. The evaluation is expected to help reflect on key assumptions on which the 2002-2006 country programme has been based in light of improved capacity and ensuring sustainability.

A key aspect of the evaluation will be to analyse the capacity of all stakeholder and sustainability of interventions of the programme and related to this, sustainability of the results achieved for children. The evaluation will build on the MTR, but provide a more in-depth assessment of the role, design and focus of UNICEF support to the realisation of children’s rights. The evaluation also asks fundamental questions about sustainability and synergy of supported initiatives.

The understanding the capacity and sustainability in the context of the country programme evaluation refers to the connotation of continued commitment by duty bearers and rightsholders to provide and seek services within the suggested framework of UNICEF-supported projects beyond direct UNICEF involvement. Sustainability of project interventions and strategies thus has to be seen as related to partner and Unicef capacities, socio-cultural structures, economic/financial feasibilities, policies, participation and ownership. The capacity analysis of the evaluation will form part of the methodology to evaluate sustainability of the country programme interventions.

3. Use of the Evaluation

The evaluation findings will feed in to the current process of UNDAF/P and UNICEF’s Strategy Document and Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP). The CPE should also inform strategy development of major funding agencies, such as SIDA, which is preparing its country programme framework for Sri Lanka.

The Evaluation of the country programmes will be anchored with the government of Sri Lanka who is a main user of the findings and is also increasing emphasis on monitoring and evaluation in public administration and has requested external partners to actively support these initiatives.

4. Objectives of the Evaluation

The objectives of the evaluation are the following:

1. Assess the capacity of partners and Unicef personnel to implement strategies and activities of projects at the different levels of implementation as identified by the CPC within a human rights based approach to programming.

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1 Capacities in this context mean knowledge, attitude, practice, skills, motivation, commitment of duty bearers and institutional capacities including human resources, policy framework and administrative procedures.
2. Evaluate to the extent to which the planned results are achieved and is likely to be sustained within each of the programme areas of the CPC.

3. Assess the cost effectiveness of programmes or selected projects of the CPC.

4. Identify gaps in design and planning of projects that constrained sustainability of implemented programmes

5. **Key Questions**

1). Are duty bearers and claim holders involved and targeted by programmes/projects endorsing the programme/project concepts and accepting and using results?

2). Is there sufficient capacity to achieve and sustain results in terms of available and allocated resources? What are the capacity gaps for achieving results for children within a rights based approach to programming.

3). Does the CPC assess, analyse and strengthen national capacities adequately? Are there exit strategies for programmatic areas where adequate national capacities exist?

4) Are programmes/projects supported by an adequate policy and institutional environment?

4). Have UNICEF supported initiatives and models been replicated and / or adapted by national partners without direct involvement of UNICEF? How successful were these experiences?

6). Are selected projects cost effective or cost efficient?

7). Has the UNICEF Tsunami recovery Programme added to the sustainability of UNICEF-supported interventions?

8). Are strategies implemented suitable for all areas of the country? Does intensity needs to be varied in more deprived areas of the country

9). Will Unicef supported projects and programmes be continued by partners once support is withdrawn or phased out?

10). To what extent does the CPC contribute towards conflict prevention in the country?

11). What are the gaps in programme theory, design and planning of Unicef CPC that has affected sustainability?

12). What lessons to be incorporated from the current CPC in terms of possible programmatic areas for the next country cycle and to ensuring greater sustainability including assessment, analysis and development of capacities for achieving results for children.

The evaluation questions will be further discussed and finalised in discussion with the consultants.
6. Programme specific focus of the evaluation

While the evaluation will provide an overview of the whole country programme and the sectoral programmes according to the above, the main focus and weight of the evaluation will be clearly laid on selected projects as outlined below.

1. Early Childhood Development Programme
   - Early childhood development programme interventions contribute towards a reduction of maternal, neonatal and infant mortality, child survival, growth, nutrition and development.

2. Learning Years Programme
   - Improvement of quality of education through the child-friendly school concept and catch-up education to improve quality of education within the current education framework.

3. Adolescence/HIV Programme
   - Life skills based education strategy promoting adolescent awareness on risky behaviour.

4. Protection Programme
   - Psycho-social project supporting children in need.
   - Project support to strengthen social service infrastructure for the protection for abused children and women, including the National Child Protection Agency, the children’s and women’s police desks and the District Child Protection Committees (DCPCs).
   - Prevention of commercial sexual exploitation of children.

7. Methodology

The evaluation will be guided by commonly accepted evaluation norms, standards and approaches (especially UNEG Norms and Standards). It will ensure utility (ownership by stakeholders), feasibility (political viability and cost-effectiveness), propriety (impartiality, respect of rights of stakeholders, cultural sensitivity) and accuracy (adequate information). UNICEF’s evaluation report standards and style guide will be followed when preparing the evaluation report.

Key methods and outputs for the conduct of the evaluation will be the following:

a) A comprehensive desk review of external and internal documents that are relevant to the current Country Programmes including a review of past and recent studies, reviews and evaluations of projects and programmes

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2 http://www.uneval.org/docs/ACFFC9F.pdf
Selection of a sample of projects and programmes in all sectors as outlined under “5. Programme specific focus of the evaluation” which will be the subject of more in-depth assessments to illustrate strategic issues implied by objectives and key questions of the evaluation.

b) Within three weeks after the start of the exercise, presentation of an inception report comprising of a broad outline of final report;

c) An extensive round of interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders in the CPC (Government, NGO’s, UN agencies, opinion leaders, children, etc. at both national and local levels)

d) Field visits to the selected provinces and districts to gain first-hand information of the implementation of projects and programmes (pending security clearances)

e) Organisation of a participatory workshop, during which main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation will be discussed, validated and finalised.

f) A management response and action plan by GoSL and UNICEF concerning conclusions and recommendations emanating from the evaluation.

The evaluation will be a participatory process that will give due importance to self-assessment by stakeholders involved in Country Programme design and implementation. All information will to the largest possible extent be triangulated (use of three or more sources of information to verify and substantiate an assessment) and validated. Findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned should clearly be user-oriented and feed into major decision-making during strategy development for the next Country Programme.

The selection of sites for field visits will be inspired by one or more of the following criteria:
- the maturity of the programme, project or activity within the Country Programme;
- the wealth of experiences and the chances of their generating interesting lessons;
- strategic interest of the programme, project or activity for the whole Country Programme.

It should be mentioned that support provided to tsunami-affected areas of Sri Lanka is subject to a separate evaluation process, part of which has already been accomplished and part of which is foreseen to take place in 2007. The emphasis of this evaluation is therefore on the whole country approach recommended by the MTR of 2004.

7.1 Information Sources
Information on the country programme and capacities could be found in the documents.

- Annual Reports
- Evaluations and studies which the country office recommends.
- Tsunami related assessments, evaluations and documentations.
- Other documents for emergency preparedness and response to be recommended by the country office.

8. Organisation and Management

The evaluation will be overseen by a Steering committee comprising of members from the Ministry of Plan Implementation of GoSL (Foreign Budget Monitoring Department) and UNICEF (Country and Regional Office for South Asia in Kathmandu), and the Sri Lankan Evaluation Association. The SIDA may provide an evaluation consultant to be part of the steering committee and provide input to the Evaluation team. This Steering committee will periodically review and advise on interim products (TOR, inception report, draft report etc.).

The Team Leader will formulate the required evaluation team consisting of international and national consultants, who will conduct the evaluation. The team leader will be contracted by Unicef Sri Lanka for this task.

The Evaluation Team will comprise of 03 international consultants (including the team leader) and 01 national consultant:

The team leader (international) will coordinate the activities of all team members and deal with overall issues related to the evaluation. The team leader formulate the team of International consultants and national consultants (where will S/he will notably cover aspects related to overall programmatic choices, capacity strengthening, the gender dimension and children affected by armed conflict. S/he will also be primarily responsible for the identification of issues that will require more in-depth attention. S/he should have extensive experience in programmatic evaluation (preferably in UNICEF and / or the UN), have some experience in humanitarian evaluation, and possess proven communication, facilitation and writing skills. Previous experience in Sri Lanka and / or in countries in the region would be an advantage. The Team leader will also need to be able to cover one of the three areas where international consultants is required.

(a). The (international) nutrition and health expert will deal with all issues related to the integrated early childhood development (IECD) strategy with a special focus on capacity building for health and nutrition programmes in the North East. S/he will conduct the illustrative in-depth assessments of projects and programmes in this area.

(b) The (international) education expert will deal with all issues related to the improvement of the quality of education through the child-friendly school concept. S/he will also deal with the Life-Skills Programme for adolescents related to HIV/AIDS. S/he will conduct the illustrative in-depth assessments of projects and programmes in this area.

(c ). The (international) child protection expert will deal with issues related to protection strategies for children and women having suffered from abuse and exploitation, strategies adopted by the under-age recruitment project and the psycho-social support project under the protection programme. S/he will conduct the illustrative in-depth assessments of projects and programmes in this area. S/he will conduct the illustrative in-depth assessments of projects and programmes in this area.

(d) The (National) consultant on evaluation with a Development/Sociology/ Economic academic qualifications will assist in contextualising the programmes.
9. **Qualifications**

All team members will have

i. Postgraduate qualification in social sciences preferably with academic training in evaluation

ii. At least 10 years experience in evaluating large development programmes

iii. Good understanding and experience with evaluating human rights based approach to programming and results based management.

At least one team member to have experience in evaluating programmes related to one or more of the following programmes: integrated young child development, HIV/AIDS programmes, education, child protection, conflict and humanitarian assistance.

In addition the team leader should have similar experiences in management of a team of evaluators in a developing country setting.

Experience with evaluating UN, especially UNICEF country programmes is an advantage.

All team members should be fluent in English, both written and spoken.

All members of the team should be highly gender-sensitive.

9. **Deliverables**

The Team Leader will deliver the following:

i. Detailed proposal with a) specific methodology for the evaluation. b) Detailed outline of the report.

ii. Draft evaluation report for comments

iv. Final report incorporating the comments conforming to UNICEF writing style, the agreed outline, and UN evaluation standards.

iv. A summary of the analysis for wider dissemination and a power point presentation for dissemination of results.

v. An electronic file on CD containing all relevant discussions and proceedings including the notes and proceedings of participatory assessments.

The Sri Lanka Country Office of UNICEF will assume responsibility for all aspects related to relations with GoSL and ensure UN security arrangements.

10. **Schedule of major tasks for the consultant**

*(please note that start date may differ due to the current security situation in the country)*

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<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Period/Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Submission of proposal to Unicef including the evaluation methodology, time frame, budget, team members (at least the international team and once selected Unicef Sri Lanka will assist in recruitment of national consultants).</td>
<td>15 October 2006</td>
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4. Documentary review and development of detailed methodology and conceptual framework for the assessment with report outline  
15th Oct – 30th October

5. Discussion with key stakeholders, Unicef staff and field visits  
1st November – 1st December

6. Preparation of the draft report  
1st December-15th December

7. Validation workshop of draft report  
20th December

8. Submission of final report to UNICEF  
10th January

10. Applications:

Applications should provide the following:

A brief proposal including the following:

i. A brief description of the process and methodology to be followed

ii. Team members with their CVs. If institution, institution profile and CVs of proposed consultants.

iii. Financial proposal

iv. Reference to any recent evaluations of a comparable nature. Not to attached.

All applications should be sent to the following:

Ms. Romi Pradhan,  
Asst. Human Resource Officer,  
UNICEF regional Office for South Asia  
PO Box 5815, Lekhnath Marg  
Kathmandu  
Nepal.

Tel: 977 1 4375488  
E mail: rpradhan@unicef.org

With copy to Ms. Indra Tudawe  
Monitoring and Evaluation officer  
UNICEF  
5, Galle Road Colombo4.  
Sri Lanka  
e-mail: itudwe@unicef.org
Applications should reach the above before 25th September 2006