



Juba Office

Terms of Reference (ToR) for Endline Evaluation of the Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in South Sudan Project

October – December 2024

List of abbreviations and acronyms

ACROSS – Association of Christian Resource Organizations Serving Sudan.

FCA – Finn Church Aid.

NRC – Norwegian Refugee Council.

OPRD – Organization for Peace, Relief and Development.

Sida – Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

IOS – International Oversight Services

UNSDCF – United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

GESP – General Education Strategic Plan.

R-NDS – Revised National Development Strategy

The UNESCO Field Office for South Sudan (Juba Office) is commissioning an independent external evaluation of the project titled “Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in South Sudan”.

1. Project Specific Information

Project Location	Central Equatoria, Eastern Equatoria, Western Equatoria, Jonglei, Lakes, Western Bahr el Ghazal, and Warrap States.
Project Name	Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training in South Sudan.
Project Reference No.	503RSS1000
Donor/Funding Source	Swedish Government through the Sida.
Project Start/End Date	December 2021 – December 2024.
Implementing unit	UNESCO Juba Office
Implementing Partners	NRC (Jonglei, Western Gahr el Ghazal and Warrap States), FCA (Western Equatoria State), ACROSS (Lakes State), and OPRD (Eastern and Central Equatoria States).

2. Project background

In 2021, UNESCO received funds from the government of Sweden through Sida to implement a four-year project that aims to reduce unemployment and boost livelihood amongst young women and men from poorer families through strengthening gender responsive governance, quality, and relevance of the TVET system in South Sudan, including strengthening environment and climate change awareness and adaptation capacity to reduce vulnerability and incident of internal communal conflict. The project fits within the overall UNESCO’s broader mandates expressed in the Organization’s global programme (41 C/5) in which outcome 1 requires the Organization to ensure that, among other commitments, learners are equipped with relevant skills to meet individual, labour-market and societal demands through literacy, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and higher education. The project contributes to the implementation of the Organization’s priority areas for TVET particularly:

- i. Building flexible lifelong learning pathways through combination of institution-based and mobile TVET, and integration of functional literacy.
- ii. Developing targeted measures for inclusion and gender equality through mainstreaming gender transformative approaches.
- iii. Developing guidelines and building capacity for greening TVET for the transition to green economies.
- iv. Addressing youth unemployment through developing market-responsive employable and entrepreneurship skills.
- v. Supporting TVET teachers and institutions to foster quality, innovation and excellence through improving the teachers’/instructors’ pedagogical competences.
- vi. Reinforcing governance and unlock investment through strengthening capacity of the National TVET Ad Hoc Committee and mobilizing the private sector.

- vii. Integrating rights-based education for global and participatory citizenship and promote TVET institutions as places for social integration, cohesion and green citizenship through the establishment of peace clubs in the institutions and centres.

Finally, it contributes to two of the goals of Flagship Programme 1 (Campus Africa) of the Organization's Strategy for Priority Africa 2022-2029. These are to improve access to higher education and TVET for all in Africa, and promote equal opportunities for learners of all backgrounds, including vulnerable and marginalized groups in pursuing learning opportunities and individual development; and promote recognition of qualifications backed up by mutually recognized quality assurance mechanism.

The project focuses on three intervention areas. The first area of intervention is to strengthen TVET governance and equip key actors (keeping women at the center of the governance system) with sustainable capacities and tools to develop evidence-based policies and the related legal frameworks, while mobilizing at the same time private sector involvement in TVET governance, including in key economic sectors affected by climate change. The second area of intervention aims to improve the quality of TVET provision by reinforcing national capacities and institutions in charge of TVET teachers training design and implementation as well as those responsible for TVET curricula development, adopting a gender transformative, conflict prevention and greening lens. The third area of intervention aims to contribute to enabling TVET institutions to develop labour market-responsive TVET, work-based learning and internship opportunities in conflict-affected remote locations through the provision of mobile TVET, micro-entrepreneurship skills programme and private-public partnerships at institution level, with a cross-sectoral focus on women empowerment, conflict prevention, climate change mitigation, and basic literacy and numeracy as foundation for lifelong learning in the TVET progression path or transition to the academic path.

The project initially intended to reach about 25,000 people including 13,000 young people (50% girls and young women) and 2,000 teachers/trainers/key stakeholders as direct beneficiaries. However, after lessons learned from the inception phase of the project as well as from market dynamics, these targets were revised downward.

The project's impact was envisioned to be seen in a labour market responsive TVET (governance and provision) in South Sudan that fosters youth employment and contributes to peace, resilience and nation building as well as to achieving SDG 2030, specifically goals 4 and 5. This is to be realized through interventions that result in three broad outcomes:

1. National inclusive TVET governance structures established, and evidence-based policies implemented by the government of South Sudan.
2. National TVET institutions, teachers and trainers provide quality gender transformative and green TVET programmes.
3. Young women and men in South Sudan are empowered by improving their livelihood through access to climate change and labour market responsive TVET opportunities.

The project is implemented in close collaboration with the National TVET Ad Hoc Coordination Committee and under the overall supervision of a project advisory committee (PAC) chaired by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of General Education and Instruction. The Advisory Committee is the authority that approved the project implementation locations, reviews and endorses project interventions and work-plans, advocates and coordinates promotion of public-private partnerships,

develops evidence-based policy recommendations to improve TVET systems, including quality assurance, standards development, research and development on innovations, and skills development, among other roles in the project implementation. It participates in joint-monitoring field visits to collect feedback and provide necessary advice.

As the Organization does not have field presence in the project implementation locations and to develop capacity of partners, the Organization pursued collaboration with local organizations and state-level governments. These organizations were selected on competitive basis in line with the UNESCO's Implementing Partners Agreements (IPAs) policy and regulations. Four partners (listed on page 1) support implementation of the project at the state level and they are supported by State Technical Committees. Specifically, they were tasked to ensure in their respective locations that:

- a) TVET governance system and coordination mechanism are strengthened.
- b) Education and Labour Management Information System (ELMIS) that takes a public-private partnership model is established and strengthened.
- c) TVET centres are equipped to expand access to market responsive TVET opportunities for young women and young men.
- d) Capacity is built for implementation of the TVET Teacher Policy.
- e) Guidelines for greening TVET institutions are adopted and implemented.
- f) TVET instructors/teachers (existing and incoming) are trained in general TVET pedagogy, specific occupation skills, and cross-cutting themes (such as peace building and comprehensive sexuality education), and other (transversal) skills such as entrepreneurship, decision-making, innovation, and critical thinking.
- g) TVET stakeholders are equipped with curricula and teaching/learning materials.
- h) Capacity of private sectors/employers is strengthened to establish close coordination for implementation of labour-market responsive TVET.
- i) Recruitment of female TVET teachers/instructors is promoted.
- j) Profiling of selected cohort of young people in selected areas is conducted.
- k) Skills training integrating entrepreneurial and digital skills for self-employment, and other soft/life skills is provided.

3. Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this endline evaluation is to assess the achievements of the Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training project and the extent to which it has contributed to reducing unemployment and boosting livelihoods amongst young women and men.

4. Objectives of the Evaluation

- i. To assess the extent to which the project successfully addressed the issues identified during the project design stage as well as during the inception phase.
- ii. To assess the relevance of the project in addressing key drivers of unemployment and economic disenfranchisement of young men and women.
- iii. To ascertain the appropriateness of the project to enhancing access, demand, and quality of TVET as well as building consensus on the importance of TVET to national socio-economic transformation.

- iv. To assess the extent to which the project implementation processes and strategies were efficient – with particular emphasis on institutional arrangements as well as its management and operational systems and value for money.
- v. To assess the extent to which the achievements of the project may continue to be a catalyst for continuous improvement of livelihood of the immediate beneficiaries as well as addressing the needs of others the project could not reach out to during the implementation cycle.
- vi. To document good practices, innovations, lessons learned from the project and providing recommendations for future programming.

5. Scope of the Evaluation

This endline evaluation is designed to evaluate the Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training project. The evaluation will cover the entire implementation period, from the agreement signing (December 2021) to when the project will close (December 2024). The project implementation processes, and management will be evaluated involving consultation with the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project. Regarding results (intended or otherwise), the evaluation will focus exclusively on the achievements of the project in the three outcome areas paying full attention to the detailed description in the project results framework. The three outcome areas are described in the background (item 2 above).

6. Evaluation Questions and criteria

This section of the terms of reference details the criteria for the evaluation and the specific questions, which will be answered in the project evaluation. The evaluation criteria require assessing among others, the following:

- a) Relevance of project design
- b) Coherence
- c) Effectiveness
- d) Efficiency of planning and implementation
- e) Impact
- f) Project sustainability

6.1. Relevance of project design

In this criterion, the appropriateness and relevance of the project design will be assessed. Among others, the following questions will be addressed:

- a) To what extent did the project respond to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries (young women and men and the wider community)?
- b) To what extent did the objectives of the project align with national commitments and obligations as contained, for example, in the Revised National Development Strategy, as well as donor interest (reflected in the strategy for Sweden’s development cooperation with South Sudan 2018–2022)?
- c) To what extent did the objectives of the project align with international commitments, such as the SDG 2030 Agenda and UNESCO’s strategy for support to member states (TVET) Strategy 2022-2029, among other relevant instruments and plans?
- d) To what extent were the project stakeholders involved in the design, planning and monitoring

of the project?

6.2. Coherence

For this criterion, the following questions should be answered:

- a) Does the project build on, or do synergies exist with other UNESCO or partners' interventions?
- b) To what extent was the project filling gaps (adding value) that other actors' interventions in the same areas could not address?

6.3. Effectiveness

Here, the key achievements of the project against its set goals and objectives in relation to its planned outcomes will be assessed. Questions for this criterion include, but not limited to the following:

- a) Were the target beneficiaries reached as planned?
- b) What were the major factors enabling and/or hindering the achievement of the project's desired outcomes?
- c) To what extent did the TVET skills taught to the young women and young men across the seven states covered by the project provide them with positive coping mechanisms resulting in disapproval of violence as a means of resolving issues?
- d) To what extent were all relevant community members involved in and meaningfully participated in the project implementation?
- e) To what extent did the project contribute to strengthening a sense of personal responsibility for reducing carbon print in the community?
- f) To what extent did the project contribute to improvement of quality of TVET teaching?

6.4. Efficiency of Planning and Implementation

This will measure the extent to which resources were used economically to deliver the project against the project plans. Question to assess efficiency in planning and implementation of project could include the following:

- a) What proportion of the project activities in the workplan have been delivered?
- b) Were the project funds spent in line with the action plan?
- c) Was monitoring data collected as planned, stored, and used to inform future of the project?
- d) To what extent did the project adapt to changing external conditions to ensure the project outcomes were achieved?

In addition, consider other programme management factors important for delivery of the project, such as:

- i. How appropriate were project strategies in the implementation of the project?
- ii. Were there any capacity gaps (possibly in the project team, other internal functions such as HR or Finance, or implementing partner organisations as appropriate)?
- iii. To what extent were working relationships with partners, stakeholders (including the National TVET Ad Hoc Committee, the Project Advisory Committee, the TVET line ministries at national and state levels), and donors well managed?

6.5. Pathways towards Impact

The evaluation is expected to document the extent to which the project has contributed to a long-term positive effect(s) on young women and young men in the target states and to the overall

governance of TVET in South Sudan. Attention should be put to significant change(s) which could be observed - positive or negative, intended or unintended because of the project, for instance:

- a) To what extent did the project contribute to those changes, considering also other contributing factors?
- b) What unplanned negative impacts did the intervention trigger (if any) and to what extent did the project team take timely measures to mitigate these?
- c) To what extent did the inclusion of gender transformative approaches and issues lead to better quality results (outcome and impact)?

6.6. Project sustainability

The evaluation should focus on assessing the possibility and evidence of continuation of the impact or outcomes of the project beyond the project life span, that is, whether there are further benefits to the beneficiaries after the project implementation period, whether the outcomes of the project can benefit others whom the project did not directly target. Specifically, the following questions may be asked:

- a) Are structures, resources, and processes in place to ensure that the benefits generated by the project are continued after the project is phased out?
- b) Do the partners (local NGOs and government departments) benefiting from the intervention have adequate capacities (technical, financial, and managerial) for ensuring that the benefits are retained in the long term, and are they committed to do so?
- c) To what extent have target groups, and possibly other relevant interest groups and stakeholders, been involved in discussions about sustainability?

6.7. Lessons learned

What lessons can be drawn and documented that can inform similar projects and approaches in the years to come?

7. Methodology

The evaluation should employ a mixed methodology in the data collection: both qualitative and quantitative methods and approaches of data collection should be used. These may include some of the following methods:

- i. Documentary (desk) review of project documents including reports (monthly, quarterly, annual, baseline, end-of-project, and possible mission and any other relevant ones such as inception, conflict analysis, and the sub-sector review and end of project report) from UNESCO. Others worth consulting include the GESP, R-NDS, and the UNSDCF 2023-2025.
- ii. Key informant interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders (as appropriate).
- iii. Observations of youth income generating activities supported with start-up kits, and facilities improved with support of the project. Other methods and evaluation approaches that the evaluator(s) may propose.

In line with UNESCO's Evaluation Policy, the evaluation will have to comply with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation, UNEG Guidelines for Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations and UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, ensuring its independence and impartiality. The Evaluation should be conducted in line

with rigorous quality standards, including use of multiple data sources to support findings. The evaluation team will also have to ensure that ethical, human rights and gender equality principles are duly integrated at all stages of the evaluation process.

8. Management of the evaluation

Evaluation manager

The endline evaluation will be managed by the Head of Education Unit of the UNESCO Juba Office with the support from the project team. The lead evaluator will report to the Head of the Education Unit copying project team members to be designated by the Head of the Education Unit. As appropriate and necessary, the UNESCO IOS Evaluation Office will be enlisted to provide technical support to the project team, especially to ensure quality assurance.

Evaluation team

The evaluation will be conducted by an independent external evaluation team. The external evaluation team will be expected to develop a detailed evaluation methodology including the data collection tools, to conduct data collection and analysis, as well as to conduct fieldwork and to prepare, edit and quality assure the draft and final reports in English.

Evaluation Reference Group

A reference group will be established to accompany the evaluation process and provide feedback and quality assurance on the evaluation methodology, the Inception Report and (Draft) Evaluation Report. The National TVET Ad Hoc Coordination Committee or its sub-committee for monitoring and evaluation including the project advisory committee supported by the M&E officers of the project implementing partners will serve as the evaluation reference group (ERG). A representative of UNESCO's IOS Evaluation Office will also sit on this ERG. This reference group will guide and inform the evaluation process. It shall meet periodically (virtually) during the evaluation, as necessary.

The ERG will ensure that the evaluation addresses the questions which needed to be answered for the purpose of this project, quality assurance of the reports but also help access documents/information, recommend potential interviewees, etc. The findings in the draft report are also shared with them for validation and to ensure ownership of the evaluation process.

Logistics

The evaluation team will commonly be responsible for their own logistics: office space, administrative and secretarial support, telecommunications, printing of documentation, travel arrangements, etc. The evaluation team will also be responsible for administering and disseminating all methodological tools such as surveys. UNESCO will provide access to all relevant documentation and contact details of all relevant stakeholders and distribution lists. It will also facilitate access to UNESCO stakeholders, partners and networks as relevant.

9. Profile and composition of the skills of the Evaluation firm (company)

For this evaluation, UNESCO is seeking a highly reputable firm with a highly experienced team. The team should comprise of at least two members. Note that alternative and larger team compositions will also be considered.

Mandatory qualifications

The applicant(s) should possess the following mandatory qualifications and experience. Not meeting these mandatory criteria will disqualify a proposal.

The firm /legal entity (applies only if the applicant is a company):

- It must have been registered as a company for at least three years.
- It must have at least three previous contracts/references.

The consultant(s):

Lead evaluator

- No previous involvement in the implementation of the activities under review.
- A postgraduate qualification in monitoring and evaluation, political science, social sciences, economics, publication administration, or any field related to the topic of evaluation.
- No less than 10 years of international experience in project evaluation is required.
- Professional experience in designing and conducting evaluations for international or regional/multilateral organizations.
- Knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methodologies.
- Track records of having conducted at least 3 previous evaluations in the field of education.
- Excellent communication and drafting skills in English.

Desirable qualifications:

Additionally, it is desirable for one or more team members to have the following qualifications and characteristics:

- Familiarity with the United Nations system and other international organizations.
- Examples of work demonstrating understanding and application of UN mandates in Gender Equality and/or of gender-sensitive approaches in evaluation.
- Track record of having undertaken evaluations of training projects with cross-cutting themes.
- Knowledge of education and training sector, gender, peace building, and climate change awareness and adaptation (greening TVET strategies).
- Knowledge of South Sudan context.

Preference will be given to evaluation teams that are gender-balanced and diverse in terms of geographic and cultural backgrounds. Qualifications will be verified based on the CVs provided to UNESCO. Additionally, references, internet links, or electronic copies of two recently completed evaluation reports must be provided.

10. Outputs and Deliverables

The following deliverables will be expected from the evaluator(s):

- Inception report detailing the requirements of the evaluation and refining the methodology of the project evaluation (with data collection tools attached as annexes). Prior to the submission of the final inception report, a draft inception report should be discussed with the ERG.
- Draft detailed report of the project evaluation (reflecting answers to all the key evaluation questions across the entire evaluation criteria).

- Presentation (slides) for the findings of the evaluation report.
- Final evaluation report (both hard copy and soft copy). The final report should not exceed 50 pages, excluding the annexes. Annexes should at least include the Terms of Reference, list of interviewees, data collection instruments, key documents consulted.

11. Evaluation schedule

This assignment is expected to be completed in 90 days (inclusive of weekends and any public holidays).

The detailed description of the evaluation schedule is as follows.

SN	Task	Timeline	Remark(s)
1	Draft inception report	Mid-October	
2	Inception workshop	Mid-October	
3	Final inception report	25 October 2024	
4	Travel to field sites and data collection	Late October - November	UNESCO to support with introduction to stakeholders and relevant authorities.
5	Data analysis and report writing (1 st draft)	Early December	Evaluation team to work remotely (not in UNESCO offices).
6	Draft evaluation report	15 December 2024	
7	Validation workshop: Meeting the ERG to present the results of the evaluation	Mid-December 2024	UNESCO to arrange and decide on the number and categories of stakeholders and the mode of the meeting.
8	Incorporating the comments from the project team and stakeholders into the final report	Late December	Lead evaluator and the evaluation team may remotely seek clarifications from the project team.
9	Final evaluation report	31 December 2024	To be submitted in both electronic (pdf) and printed form.

12. Budget

The evaluator is expected to draw a detailed budget of the evaluation providing details on professional consultant fees, accommodation, taxes (including work permit especially for international consultants), subsistence among others. A critical factor in evaluating the financial proposal will be the extent to which the budget reflects the market realities in South Sudan (avoiding under and over estimation).

13. Application Procedure

Applications should be sent by email to Proposals.Juba-ED@unesco.org. Requests for further inquiries should be directed to tr.pant@unesco.org and sy.sanya@unesco.org. Please, note that these two contacts are only for inquiries. Do NOT copy them when sending your proposal. Applications received later than **midnight (12:00 AM Juba time) 4th October 2024** will not be considered for assessment.

14. Relevant Evaluation Resources

UNEG (2020). *UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation*. New York City: United Nations Evaluation Group. Retrieved 14 June 2021 from: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866>

UNEG (2010). *UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports*. New York City: United Nations Evaluation Group. Retrieved 29 May 2020 from: <http://uneval.org/document/detail/60714>

UNEG (2014). *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations*. New York City: United Nations Evaluation Group. Retrieved 29 May 2020 from: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2107>

UNEG (2017). *Norms and Standards for Evaluation*. New York City: United Nations Evaluation Group. Retrieved 29 May 2020 from: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/27>

UNESCO (2023). *UNESCO Evaluation Manual*. Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved 12 June 2023 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000383948>

UNESCO (2022). *UNESCO Evaluation Policy*. Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved 12 June 2023 from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381664.locale=en>

Relevant resources on the project to be provided after selection of the firm.