

**PROFESSIONAL PEER REVIEW OF THE  
UNITAR EVALUATION FUNCTION  
Management Response**

30 October 2021

Geneva, Switzerland

<b>Name of programme/office/unit:</b>	Planning, Performance Monitoring, and Evaluation Unit (PPME)	
<b>Name of programme manager/director</b>	Brook Boyer	
<b>Name of project undertaking</b>	Evaluation function	
<b>Name of evaluation</b>	Professional peer review of the UNITAR evaluation function	
<b>Date:</b>	06.10.2021	

**SECTION I – Comments on Findings, Conclusions**

The review exercise proved to be informative, timely and overall very useful. The UNITAR evaluation function is small and has been maturing over the past decade. Engagement with the UNEG network has undeniably helped strengthen the function in terms of its independence, credibility and utility. The review has uncovered areas for further improvement and UNITAR, under the guidance of its Evaluation Advisory Board and the UNITAR governing body, the Board of Trustees, is committed to further strengthening the function and taking action on the review's set of recommendations. All eight recommendations are accepted, and action on several has already been initiated. UNITAR expresses its appreciation to UNEG for this opportunity and looks forward to continuing to engage with the network.

SECTION II - RECOMMENDATIONS		Management Response and Planned Action				
Recommendation		Accepted Partially Accepted Rejected	Planned action	Budget allocated (if necessary)	Status (planned, under implementation, implemented)	Update on status after 6 months (planned, under implementation, implemented)
1.	<p><b>Evaluation culture.</b> The Peer Review Panel recommends that UNITAR Senior Management (Executive Director and Heads of Divisions) continues to strengthen the evaluation culture in UNITAR (“walk the talk”), while ensuring that learning and accountability dimensions are well balanced through the evaluation products. Use evaluations more strategically with partners and donors and strengthen communication using adapted or new evaluation products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the “tone from the top” to foster use of evaluations as part of the broader RBM culture.</li> <li>Develop and strengthen learning opportunities between Divisions as part of existing senior level meetings and other organizational exchange opportunities inviting all staff.</li> <li>Use evaluations more strategically with partners and donors and strengthen communications</li> </ul>	Accepted	<p>Executive Director communicated to the college of Directors that the Evaluation Advisory Board met in late September 2021 and discussed the report of the peer review, and highlighted the importance of evaluation not only for accountability but also learning and informing decisions. The ED would also brief the Board of Trustees on the results of the peer review at the Sixty-Second Session of the Board.</p> <p>PPME Manager to regularly liaise with ED and Senior Management during Manager meetings on evaluation topics.</p>	n/a	<p>Under implementation</p> <p>Planned</p>	

	<p>using new evaluation products (see below).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a UNITAR evaluation focal point system identifying one person in each Division dedicated to evaluation led by the PPME unit.</li> <li>• Based on the experiences so far (workshop, good practice document, etc.) further discuss and decide how UNITAR plans to address “impact”.</li> </ul>		<p>PPME staff to highlight evaluation champions and good practices from programme units learning from past evaluations, both by documenting them and by organising internal learning events where different programmes present.</p> <p>PPME to continue including Project Management on all stages of the evaluation, when drafting the ToR (how can this be most useful for them, what they are interested to learn from the evaluation etc), throughout data collection and when presenting findings (co-creation of recommendations).</p> <p>PPME Manager to ask Managers to appoint focal points.</p> <p>PPME staff to continue with impact stories and good</p>		<p>Under implementation</p> <p>Planned</p> <p>Under implementation</p> <p>Planned</p>	
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			<p>practice document series on evaluating impact.</p> <p>PPME to send final evaluation reports directly to donors in collaboration with project management. Invite donors to be on reference groups.</p>		Planned	
		<b>Management Comments:</b>				
<b>Recommendation</b>		<b>Accepted Partially accepted Rejected</b>	<b>Planned action</b>	<b>Budget allocated (if necessary)</b>	<b>Status (planned, under implementation, implemented)</b>	<b>Update on status after 6 months (planned, under implementation, implemented)</b>
2.	<p><b>Evaluation Advisory Board (EAB)</b> The Peer Review Panel recommends that DSPP/PPME engages with the EAB to discuss organizational data and information needs. Also, review available data and findings from self-evaluations and independent evaluations exploring potential synergy effects. Analyze themes, topics, projects which were not yet evaluated or sufficiently evaluated and link them to the current Strategic Framework and identify future priorities.</p>	Partially accepted	<p>PPME to prepare list of evaluation themes and share with EAB.</p> <p>B. Boyer to include triggers of evaluation into draft Evaluation Policy.</p>	n/a	<p>Implemented</p> <p>Implemented</p>	
		<b>Management Comments:</b> First sentence was not clear; however, PPME has taken action to implement the other elements of the recommendation.				

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<p>3. <b>Evaluation Policy.</b> The Peer Review Panel recommends that DSPP/PPME develops a standalone Evaluation Policy, separated from the important and complementary monitoring dimension. Use the analysis already undertaken by the evaluation function and the finding of this Peer Review for this exercise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop separate monitoring and evaluation policies referencing each other.</li> <li>• Identify some criteria on the selection of evaluation themes and topics.</li> <li>• Include new and / or additional criteria for the selection of project evaluations apart from the financial threshold of programmes and projects of US\$ 1.5 million</li> <li>• Clarify terms such as "self-evaluations" and "decentralized evaluation".</li> <li>• Elaborate how self-evaluations and independent evaluations could complement each other.</li> <li>• Emphasize the utility of evaluations for UNITAR's Division and donors.</li> </ul>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>PPME to prepare separate Evaluation Policy, present to EAB, Management and BOT.</p> <p>PPME to prepare Monitoring and Results Policy.</p> <p>PPME to start with "quality assurance" of management responses.</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>Under implementation</p> <p>Planned</p>	<p><b>Management Comments:</b> draft evaluation and managing for results policies have been prepared and submitted to the Board of Trustees for consideration at the Sixty-Second Session. It is expected that the two distinct policy will be approved.</p>



	<p>training evaluation model (level 1 to 3 and level 4) into the new Evaluation Policy. Increase visibility of respective document(s) on website.</p>		<p>guidance documents into operational guidelines and improve visuals.</p> <p>PPME (K. Koke) to review past guidance documents and check for need for updates.</p> <p>PPME Manager to adjust mention of the model in draft Evaluation Policy.</p>		<p>Planned</p> <p>Implemented</p>	
		<p><b>Management Comments:</b></p>				

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5. <b>Evaluation Plan.</b> The Peer Review Panel recommends that DSPP/PPME prepares and publishes a two-year tentative "Evaluation Plan" on UNITAR's website for scheduled independent evaluations and a separate "Overview List" of independent evaluations already conducted.	Accepted	PPME (K. Koke) to check with CITSU on how to add Evaluation plan to website.	tbc	Planned	
<b>Management Comments:</b> List of past evaluations already available on the website. If not sufficient, EAB session 2, item 4 could be adapted as a good summary.					
Recommendation	Accepted Partially accepted Rejected	Planned action	Budget allocated (if necessary)	Status (planned, under implementation, implemented)	Update on status after 6 months (planned, under implementation, implemented)
6. <b>Evaluation Guidelines/Manual.</b> The Peer Review Panel recommends that based on the "Entry Conference Notes for Independent Evaluations of Projects", and other existing guidelines, DSPP/PPME prepares and publishes operational "Evaluation Guidelines/Manual" for independent evaluations, also including guidance for self- evaluations.	Accepted	<p>PPME (Joyce) to review operational guidelines from other UN Evaluation Offices.</p> <p>PPME (J. Mukoma and R. Gomez) to suggest first draft of operational guidelines, building on past documentation and good practice from other UN Evaluation Offices.</p> <p>PPME (K. Koke and B. Boyer) to review and add.</p>	n/a	<p>Under implementation</p> <p>Planned</p> <p>Planned</p>	

		<b>Management Comments:</b>				
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Accepted Partially accepted Rejected</b>	<b>Planned action</b>	<b>Budget allocated (if necessary)</b>	<b>Status (planned, under implementation, implemented)</b>	<b>Update on status after 6 months (planned, under implementation, implemented)</b>	
7.	<p><b>Evaluation Reports.</b> The Peer Review Panel recommends that DSPP/PPME further strengthens gender, human rights, and other cross-cutting issues in the evaluation reports. Also, adapt evaluation guidelines and templates and continue strengthening quality assurance with consultants on these matters.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>PPME (K. Koke) to develop a document package to be shared with consultants for all independent evaluations.</p> <p>PPME (B. Boyer) to review updated Quality Assurance checklist that includes more emphasis on gender and human rights.</p> <p>PPME Team, when developing new documents (e.g. operational guidelines) or updating existing documents, consistently incorporate GE and HR.</p>	n/a	Planned	
		<b>Management Comments:</b>				

8.	<p><b>Management Response.</b> The Peer Review Panel recommends that DSPP/PPME strengthens the management response process in the new Evaluation Policy. Also, follow-up more frequently on evaluation recommendations, invite respective divisions to report on the implementation status of evaluation recommendations in relevant management meetings periodically and inform the Evaluation Advisory Board on the status of implementation. Ensure that all management responses fully adhere to the format. Also, establish an electronic tool with automated reminders.</p>	Accepted	<p>PPME (B. Boyer and K. Koke) to adjust mentions of follow-up in the revised Policy.</p> <p>PPME (B. Boyer) to invite Management to report on implementation status.</p> <p>PPME (K. Koke) to check with Communications and IT Support how follow-up on implementation can be automated once 6 months and 1 year after issuance of report.</p>	na	<p>Implemented</p> <p>Planned</p> <p>Planned</p>	
		<b>Management Comments:</b>				