

Independent Thematic Evaluation
UNIDO's Global Forum Function



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

UNIDO EVALUATION GROUP

Independent Thematic Evaluation

UNIDO's

Global Forum Function



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Abbreviations and acronyms

3 ADI	Accelerated Agribusiness and Agro-industries Development Initiative
ACG	Advocacy and Communications Group
AfDB	African Development Bank
AfrPANet	Africa Investment Promotion Agency Network
AGR/AIT	Agro-industries Technology Unit
AU	African Union
BAT/BEP	Best available techniques/best environment practice
BRIC	Brazil, India, Russia, China
CAMI	Conference of African Ministers of Industry
CCA	Common country assessment
CE	Country evaluation
CND	Cluster and networking development
CFCs	Chlorofluorocarbons
COMPID	Combating Marginalization and Poverty Strategic Research Project
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
EAC	East African Community
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECDC/TCDC	Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries
EGM	Expert Group Meeting
Etrace	Egyptian Traceability Centre for Agro-Industrial Exports
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FO	Field Office
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GF	Global Forum
GLOBALGAP	Global Good Agricultural Practice
HCFCs	Hydrochlorofluorocarbons
ICAMT	International Centre for the Advancement of Technology
ICHET	International Centre for Hydro Energy Technology
ICM	International Centre for Materials Technology
ICS	International Centre for Science and High Technology
IC-SHP	International Centre for Small Hydropower
IDR	Industrial Development Report
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ISEC	International Centre for Promotion and Transfer of Solar Energy
ISO	International Standards Organization
ITC	International Technology Centre
ITPO	Investment and Technology Promotion Unit
LDC	Least developed country
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MP	Montreal Protocol
MPD	Montreal Protocol Branch
NAADI	Nigerian Agribusiness and Agro-Industry Development Initiative
NIP	National Implementation Plan
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
ODG	Office of the Director General
ODS	Ozone depleting substances
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPS	Organized private sector
PCB	Polychlorinated biphenyl

POPs	Persistent organic pollutants
PTC	Programme Development and Technical Cooperation Division
RBM	Results-based management
RENAPAP	Regional Network on Pesticides for India and the Pacific
RO	Regional office
SAGMA	Southern Africa Generic Medicines Association
SQA	Strategic Research, Quality Assurance and Advocacy Division
SQA/DPR	SQA Development Policy, Statistics and Research Branch
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
SMTQ	Standards, metrology, testing and quality
SON	Nigerian Standards Organization
SPS	Sanitary and phytosanitary measures
SPX	Subcontracting and Partnership Exchange
TBS	Tanzania Bureau of Standards
TC	Technical cooperation
TCB	Trade capacity-building
ToR	Terms of Reference
UCSSIC	UNIDO Centre for SOUTH-South Cooperation in China
UNCT	United Nations country team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UR	UNIDO Representative
WAITRO	World Association of Industrial and Technological Research Organisations

Glossary of evaluation related terms

Term	Definition
Conclusions	Conclusions point out the factors of success and failure of the evaluated intervention, with special attention paid to the intended and unintended results and impacts, and more generally to any other strength or weakness. A conclusion draws on data collection and analyses undertaken, through a transparent chain of arguments.
Effectiveness	The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
Efficiency	A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.
Impacts	Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.
Indicator	Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor.
Institutional development impact	The extent to which an intervention improves or weakens the ability of a country or region to make efficient, equitable, and sustainable use of its human, financial, and natural resources, for example through: a) better definition, stability, transparency, enforceability and predictability of institutional arrangements. Such impacts can include intended and unintended effects of an action.
Lessons learned	Generalizations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programs, or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact.
Logframe	Management tool used to improve the design of interventions, most often at the project level. It involves identifying strategic elements (inputs, outputs, outcomes, impact) and their causal relationships, indicators, and the assumptions or risks that may influence success and failure. It thus facilitates planning, execution and evaluation of a development intervention. Related term: results-based management.
Outcome	The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs. Related term: result, outputs, impacts, effect.
Outputs	The products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.
Recommendations	Proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality, or efficiency of a development intervention, at redesigning the objectives; and/or at the reallocation of resources. Recommendations should be linked to conclusions.

Relevance	<p>The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.</p> <p>Note: Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether the objectives of an intervention or its design are still appropriate given changed</p>
Results	<p>The output, outcome or impact (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a development intervention. Related terms: outcome, effect, impact.</p>
Sustainability	<p>The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.</p>

Executive summary

Introduction and background

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the performance of UNIDO in relation to its Global Forum function. The evaluation covered the various aspects of the function and in particular the performance at the field level. The assessment was guided by the following criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact and included a general assessment of the evaluability of the global forum functions. In addition the extent to which a gender perspective is being mainstreamed was gauged.

Most of the information and some of the conclusions stem from country evaluations, the thematic evaluation of UNIDO's Field Office Performance and the evaluation of the Global Forum Function of the SMTQ program. In addition a review was carried out of a sample of UNIDO policy and strategy documents. These sources were complemented by open-ended interviews with UNIDO staff and representatives of UNIDO member states.

There are some limitations to the evaluation tasks linked to the use of secondary data sources, a general scarcity of systematic information and a lack of clarity of central concepts. Hence the evaluation is mainly exploratory and formative in character and intended as a basis for further discussion.

The evaluation was carried out from September 2012 through February 2013 by an evaluation team consisting of Margareta de Goys, UNIDO Evaluation Group, Paul Hesp and Eva Lithman, international evaluation consultants.

What is the Global Forum Function?

Within UNIDO there is a realization that there has been "a historic lack of consistency in the terminology used to denote the GF-related mandate and work of UNIDO."¹ This has been a recurrent theme in many of the evaluations consulted. Therefore a review was undertaken of a selection of UNIDO documents in order to trace how UNIDO has defined and presented its mandate particularly as it relates to the Global Forum Function and Global Forum Activities.

A related challenge when assessing the achievements of UNIDO's Global Forum Function is a lack of clarity regarding this concept. It is used as a strategic category to characterize the purpose and role of UNIDO as a UN specialized agency but also as an operational category denoting certain services and types of activities. In addition it is used as an aspect of certain technical cooperation (TC) activities. The Global Forum Function is commonly split into three functional categories: convening, advisory and standard-setting (sometimes labelled normative), although there has been some variation in terminology over time.

The term Normative suffers from a similar ambiguity as it refers to an intrinsic and overarching function of UNIDO sometimes equated with the Global Forum and sometimes used as a subcategory for a certain line of work.

A definition of the Global Forum Function from 2000 characterizes the function as being mainly concerned with knowledge management. A similar reference to a knowledge function is found in the 2004 corporate strategy.

¹ Wilfried Luetkenhorst: Presentation at Informal Briefing of Member States September 3, 2012

In a speech in 2012 UNIDO's Director General used a different categorization and described UNIDO's work as consisting of four interlinked enablers: Convening, Standard-setting and compliance, Analytical and advisory services and Technical Cooperation.

However, it is still not obvious if and how the enablers are to be used as operational categories and how objectives are to be set, resources allocated and results measured. Moreover, the terms Global Forum Function and Global Forum activities continue to be used to a certain extent in UNIDO documents. The terms services and products are also frequently used, with no apparent distinction being made between services and activities.

Global Forum Activities – types and features

Acquiring a good overall picture of implemented or planned GF activities proved difficult for several reasons. There is little systematic information on GF activities, the coverage of GF activities in the country evaluations is uneven and the terminology employed is inconsistent.

The GF activities most frequently mentioned are convening activities such as national, regional or global meetings, conferences as well as networks. The SMTQ Evaluation identified GF activities as “networks, training partnerships, SMTQ specific research, publications, meetings, conferences, SMTQ benchmarking, best practice promotion, awareness raising (for UNIDO), planning and strategic development” with no bias towards a particular type of activity. UNIDO's convening function is also the basis for initiatives and platforms such as the Green Industry Platform (GIP). The GIP is a portal for partnerships, knowledge sharing and a mechanism for integrating findings from research and analytic work with advocacy and operative work in the form of technical assistance and capacity building. UNIDO is seen as having an important role as an “honest broker”, linking actors and transmitting ideas, knowledge and experiences.

With some exceptions UNIDO has no strategy or Terms of Reference (ToR) for GF work at the corporate, branch or individual level. The share of programmatic staff time devoted to GF work is estimated at 10 to 20 %. For FOs the share is about 50 % including work of a promotional character. GF is considered time consuming in comparison to TC work and the incentives to engage in GF work to be weaker compared to work with technical cooperation projects.

GF activities are carried out as projects or as non-projects, as free-standing activities or part of TC projects and are funded either through UNIDO's regular budget or donor contributions or a combination of both. There is a perceived bias towards technical cooperation. Donors and funding institutions are seen as contributing to the imbalance between GF and TC work although there is an apparent willingness by some donors to also contribute to “upstream” work. There is an articulated demand from recipient countries for UNIDO to enhance its policy advisory services.

Several interviewees and evaluations emphasize the interdependence between GF and technical cooperation activities. In fact there is no clear-cut dividing line as Global Forum Functions may be “embedded” in TC work as illustrated by the Green Industry Initiative that underlines the integration between knowledge generation through pilot projects and dissemination activities.

Assessments and evaluability

Generally there is lack of systematic results information related to GF activities. The scarcity of information makes it difficult to assess GF work according to the standard criteria relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact. In part this is due to weaknesses in results-based management and the lack of articulated intervention logics. Nevertheless the available

information point to GF activities generally being considered highly relevant in relation to country needs. In general efficiency is seen as high when GF activities are carried out by staff in addition to an already full work schedule or contracted out. As to effectiveness most activities appear to reach their immediate objectives. However, with some exceptions there is little systematic information on outcomes and impacts and the contribution of UNIDO's GF activities to developments in the longer term. Efforts have been made recently to track the visibility and media exposure of UNIDO and particular events, although more attention is paid to the visibility of the event itself than to the issues championed. Similarly there is little information on the extent of gender mainstreaming in GF activities.

Main conclusions and recommendations

A competitive and dynamic environment will force UNIDO to further profile itself as a specialized, knowledge-based, flexible organization capable of linking up with and maintaining productive partnerships with a variety of other actors. UNIDO is seen as being well placed to play a role to further sustainable industrial development by virtue of the convening and mobilizing power of the agency that is underpinned by the expertise of staff. The Green Industry Initiative is an illustration of how UNIDO can combine different strands of its work, integrating research and knowledge sharing with advocacy and TC activities. There is scope, and demand, for UNIDO to develop its role as an honest broker using its convening power and technical expertise to address pressing issues and disseminate information related to policies and technologies for industrial development that is socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. A strategic use of GF related work modalities such as communication activities, advocacy, knowledge sharing, benchmarking is a cost-effective way to broaden the coverage and enhance the impact of UNIDO's work.

UNIDO is also challenged to cater to the expectations, and needs, from a range of actors and stakeholders. In particular middle-income countries expect UNIDO to strengthen its contributions to policy advice.

The evaluation concludes that a lack of conceptual and terminological clarity and consistence is an obstacle to the strategic steering, management and monitoring not only of GF related activities with negative consequences for the overall effectiveness of the agency.

Incentives for staff are seen as being biased in favour of mobilizing funds for and implementing technical assistance projects which have a negative impact on the capacity to synthesize and disseminate experiences and other forms of knowledge, share best practices and to develop bench-marking tools. FOs can play a more important role as a broker and convening force catering to various local and regional needs and concerns.

Evaluability is low for many GF activities partly due to weaknesses in results-based management and strategic direction. There is scope to improve the planning framework as well as monitoring and evaluation frameworks for GF activities to generate more information on effectiveness. Defining objectives, expected output and outcomes and corresponding indicators on the basis of an articulated logic model would improve the monitoring and evaluation of GF activities.

Although UNIDO may not be faced with a consistent demand for including a gender perspective in GF activities the organisation is nevertheless challenged to incorporate and report on this dimension as a standard feature of its work. The UN system is committed to promoting gender equality and the economic empowerment of women and this should also be reflected in all aspects and strands of UNIDO's work.

Recommendations

- There is a lack of consistency and clarity in the concepts and terms used to denote UNIDO's core functions. A working group should be established to propose a set of well-defined concepts to be used both strategically and operationally. The terminology should be aligned with the terms used in the UN system. Work carried out by UNEG in this area should be consulted.
- A strategy should be developed and adopted to strengthen the links and synergies between the different strands of UNIDO's work. The objective should be to further define and support UNIDO's role as a "knowledge based normative specialized UN agency" capable of acting as an "honest broker" offering high-quality services to a broad range of stakeholders. In particular the strategy should focus on how to support knowledge sharing, best practices and benchmarking, as well as how to enhance the policy advisory services of the agency. The strategy should also cover institutional issues, including the role of FOs and staff incentives for engaging in "upstream" work and how to integrate this aspect in country programming.
- UNIDO should develop strategic partnerships and common research agendas with external research institutions in order to complement in-house research capacities
- UNIDO should adopt an integrated planning framework for priority initiatives and programmes, such as the Green Industry Initiative. The planning framework should include technical cooperation as (pilot) projects, research, advocacy and knowledge sharing activities and enhance the inter-linkage and dynamics between the dimensions of UNIDO's mandate and the partnerships involved. The planning framework should be based on the principles of results-based management and spell out the intervention theories of each programme in order to enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of UNIDO's work.
- UNIDO should also strengthen results-based management and the evaluability of typical activities. A group should be established to develop formats for the planning, monitoring and evaluations of typical interventions such as Expert Group Meetings, conferences and publications. For recurrent activities a set of standard but variable objectives, logic models, outputs and outcomes and indicators should be developed, using past experience and evaluations where available.
- UNIDO should issue guidance for its convening function with the purpose of ensuring that conferences and other convening activities are relevant (in line with UNIDO strategic priorities), feed in learning from TC interventions (when appropriate), are visible and have a clear results orientation.
- Gender mainstreaming has not been reported as a regular feature of GF activities. The existing gender policy should be complemented with a strategy to make sure that UNIDO's work contributes to gender equality and the economic empowerment of women, including in research, knowledge products and knowledge sharing activities, policy advisory services, convening activities and standard-setting work. Planning frameworks and formats should spell out how to incorporate a gender perspective and experiences from successful interventions where available should be drawn upon.

1.

Introduction and background

1.1 Introduction

UNIDO is a UN specialized agency mandated to promote industrial development for poverty reduction, inclusive globalization and environmental sustainability. It provides policy advice, institutional capacity building and specialized technical support in three thematic priority areas, i.e. poverty reduction through productive activities, trade capacity building, and environment and energy, to 174 Member States.

The specialized agencies of the UN were established as focal points for intergovernmental deliberations and negotiations on common international issues in their respective areas. Member States designed them for the purpose of collecting and disseminating information linked to the setting of international standards and rules. Increasingly, they came to be seen as “centers of excellence”, initiating and organizing international research efforts and campaigns and providing technical assistance in the mandated area. As such, specialized agencies have been important sources of information and advice for developing countries. Specialized agencies provide an instrument for agreement on norms, standards and recommendations for the furthering of the common good that is playing a normative role. In the case of UNIDO these activities are also referred to as the Global Forum (GF) function.

The Terms of Reference, provided in Annex 1, of the evaluation refer to the following definition of GF Activities that was presented by UNIDO's Director General in a report to the Industrial Development Board (IDB) in 2000:

“Global forum activities are those which are initiated by UNIDO (or the United Nations system) to exchange and disseminate knowledge and information, as well as facilitate partnerships, producing an “output”, without a pre-identified client, which increases understanding of sustainable industrial development and solutions.”

Global forum activities are viewed as having *informative, advocative and normative functions* and to be concerned with knowledge management. Global Forum activities are listed as follows:

- Regional forums and conferences
- Working groups, including expert groups that tend to discuss topics of a more technical nature.
- Active participation in United Nations activities, such as global conferences
- Presentations at external meetings
- Publications, e.g. The World Industrial Development Report 2001
- Statistics and data collection. UNIDO is the United Nations depository of industrial statistics for developing countries and countries in transition.
- Promotion and adherence to conventions, norms and standards such as the Montreal Protocol, the ISO 9000 and ISO1400 series.
- Partnerships and networks including research agreements and partnerships with the private sector.”

This categorization was also included in the Terms of Reference for the country and thematic evaluations that are used as sources for this thematic evaluation.

The evaluation has been carried out from September 2012 to January 2013 by an evaluation team consisting of Margareta de Goys, UNIDO Evaluation Group, Paul Hesp and Eva Lithman, international evaluation consultants.

1.2 Purpose and scope

According to the Terms of Reference “The Thematic Global Function Evaluation aims at assessing the performance of UNIDO in relation to its Global Forum function. In particular, it would synthesize the findings, in relation to the GF function, coming out of the 2010/11 country evaluations and of the ones conducted in 2012.”

The evaluation would also look more holistically at how the GF can be assessed, taking a 2012 event as a starting point. It was to be forward looking in terms of identifying options on how to improve the reporting on GF results, in line with the quest of UNIDO management to foster results-based reporting.

The evaluation covered the various aspects of UNIDO’s Global Function, as defined above. It assessed the performance of the function at the field level and synthesized findings from country evaluations conducted from 2010 onwards. In addition, the evaluation drew on the findings of the evaluation of the global forum function of the SMTQ program (2011)².

The terms of reference defined the evaluation questions to be addressed.

- What are the main types and features of UNIDO’s Global Forum functions?
- What are the principal expected results?
- How are or could these results be defined, monitored or measured?
- Which are/could be Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)?
- Have GF-specific objectives been achieved?
- Are there or can intervention logics be developed for global forum functions? (Concrete examples should be provided in the evaluation report)
- What are the main findings from the global forum assessments in the 2010/11 country evaluations?
- Is there a need to rethink the functionality of the global forum?
- How could the global forum function play a greater role in the achievement of UNIDO’s strategic objectives?
- Is the organizational set-up and capacity conducive to GF activities?

The following criteria have guided the assessment of global forum activities and their evaluability: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact.

In addition the evaluation assessed the extent to which a gender perspective is being mainstreamed in activities that are considered part of UNIDO’s Global Forum Function.

²Independent Evaluation of UNIDO Global forum activities in the area of Standards, Metrology, Testing and Quality (2011)

1.3 Methodology and approach

Most of the information and some of the conclusions stem from country evaluations carried out in 2010 to 2012³⁴ and the thematic evaluation of UNIDO's Field Office performance in 2011⁵, the evaluation on *UNIDO Global Forum activities in the area of Standards, Metrology, Testing and Quality, 2011*, and the *Thematic and Independent Evaluation of the Strategic Research Project COMPID, 2009*.

Some of the country evaluations were also used as inputs to an evaluation of the performance of UNIDO's Field Offices. For the latter evaluation an internet survey targeting 50 UNIDO field offices⁶ was conducted. The survey included a question about the role of GF activities: 'what kind of activities has the FO carried out to enhance visibility and contribute to Global Forum activities during the last 3 years?' and responses to this question have been reflected in this report.

Two working documents were also used as inputs to the present report: a compilation of findings from Country Evaluations by M. de Goys and a draft report on the Global Forum Function by P. Hesp.

In addition a sample of UNIDO policy and strategy documents was reviewed. This material was complemented by interviews with managers and staff at UNIDO headquarters and a selection of representatives from Member States, met during the 40th IDB session. The interviews were carried out in September and November 2012 with complimentary interviews in January 2013, when preliminary findings were presented to UNIDO staff members.

The interviews were brief and used open-ended questions, guided by an interview checklist (see Annex 2 for a list of persons met). The following subjects were addressed as relevant:

- The definition of GF and GF activities;
- The relevance of GF in the areas where the branch (when appropriate) is active;
- The existence of a branch GF strategy (for staff of PTC technical branches);
- Perceptions of the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of GF activities; (The term result was also used in preference to outcomes and impacts, as these were hard to define in the case of GF);
- The relation between GF activities and technical cooperation;
- Suggestions for improving GF work, if deemed necessary.

1.4 Limitations

There are several inherent difficulties in this evaluation task. For one the Global Forum Function as a concept and as an operational category is open to different interpretations. Moreover the use of secondary information sources entails an additional uncertainty due to the scope for different and not necessarily compatible and consistent interpretations of concepts and data.

³ Cuba 2012, Vietnam, Tanzania, South Africa, Rwanda, Nigeria, Mozambique, Morocco, India, Burundi, People's Republic of China

⁴ The GF function in country evaluations has been summarized in two working documents by P. Hesp and M. de Goys respectively

⁵ Thematic Evaluation of Field Office Performance, 2012

⁶ The UNIDO field network encompasses 54 Field Offices comprising 10 Regional Offices, 20 Country Offices, 18 UNIDO Desks, 5 Focal Points and 1 Centre for Regional Cooperation.

It has also been found that in contrast to Technical Cooperation (TC), UNIDO does not always develop projects or define explicit objectives, targets and indicators for Global Forum (GF) activities, either at the project or at the aggregate UNIDO level (e.g. Programme and Budget). Also information on GF and in particular results information is scarce. This has seriously challenged the possibility to provide answers to some of the evaluation questions in the Terms of Reference. The challenges related to results based management and evaluation of some of the activities that are categorized as Global Forum will be discussed as part of the evaluability assessment.

1.5 Structure of the report

Due to the limitations and difficulties mentioned above this thematic evaluation report is mainly of an exploratory and formative character and conclusions and recommendations are tentative and intended as a basis for further discussion.

As the Global Forum has been given different interpretations in different contexts there is an initial review of selected sources on how GF has been defined, interpreted and used in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3 the types and features of GF activities are reviewed on the basis of mainly secondary data. Chapter 4 presents available assessments and discusses the evaluability of GF activities. In Chapter 5 the strands from the preceding chapters are brought together for some general conclusions and recommendations.

2.

What is the Global Forum Function?

2.1 Introduction

Within UNIDO there is a realization that there has been “a historic lack of consistency in the terminology used to denote the mandate and work of UNIDO.”⁷ This has been a recurrent theme in many of the evaluations consulted. Therefore a review was undertaken of a selection of UNIDO documents in order to trace how UNIDO has defined and presented its mandate and particularly as it relates to the Global Forum Function and Global Forum Activities.

2.2 Findings

The Constitution of UNIDO

The functions of UNIDO are listed in Article 2 of the constitution of the organization.⁸ Focusing on the industrial development of the developing countries the responsibilities, areas of work and work modalities of UNIDO are defined and listed at country, regional and global levels. The organization shall develop knowledge and approaches to industrial development in developing countries (subparagraph c, d and f) and serve as a “clearing-house” for all information on all aspects of industrial development (h), arrange training programmes and provide advice in close cooperation with other bodies of the United Nations (k). The term *forum* is only mentioned in subsection (f). UNIDO shall “Provide a forum and act as an instrument to serve the developing countries and the industrialized countries in their contacts, consultations and, at the request of the countries concerned, negotiations directed towards the industrialization of the developing countries;”

The Global Forum Function

The global forum function as a term has its origin in a 1995 event in New Delhi called “Global Forum on Industry: Perspectives for 2000 and beyond”. The term was subsequently used in the Business Plan on the Future Role and Functions of UNIDO adopted by the IDB on 27 June and endorsed by the GC on 4 December 1997. The Business plan outlined the integrated character of UNIDO’s work and emphasized policy advisory services.

At a 2000 meeting of the Industrial Development Board global forum activities were defined by the Director-General of UNIDO⁹ as follows:

Global forum activities are those which are initiated by UNIDO (or the United Nations system) to exchange and disseminate knowledge and information, as well as facilitate partnerships, producing an “output”, without a pre-identified client, which increases understanding of sustainable industrial development and solutions.

⁷ Wilfried Luetkenhorst: Presentation at Informal Briefing of Member States September 3, 2012

⁸ Constitution of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, adopted in Vienna on April 8, 1979.

⁹ Global Forum Activities, Report by the Director-General, IDB 2000, item 6 of the provisional agenda

Global forum activities are viewed as having *informative, advocative and normative functions* and to be concerned with knowledge management. Identified Global forum activities are as follows:

- Regional forums and conferences
- Working groups, including expert groups that tend to discuss topics of a more technical nature.
- Active participation in United Nations activities, such as global conferences
- Presentations at external meetings
- Publications, e.g. The World Industrial Development Report 2001
- Statistics and data collection. UNIDO is the United Nations depository of industrial statistics for developing countries and countries in transition.
- Conventions, norms and standards such as the Montreal Protocol and articulation of ISO 9000 and ISO 1400 series.
- Partnerships and networks including research agreements and partnerships with the private sector.”

UNIDO's Corporate Strategy in 2004 defined the dual function of GF as follows:

- “Generation and dissemination of knowledge about industrial development processes and associated issues;
- Initiating and conducting debates and discussions on industrial development issues and related matters in order to influence the development agenda in this area.

The two key functions are often referred to as 1) the generation of knowledge function and 2) the convening functions of GF.” (Cited in COMPID Evaluation report pp 10-11).

In his opening speech to the 36th session of the IDB UNIDO's Director-General characterized UNIDO's work as consisting of four mutually supportive pillars, a scheme that was reiterated to the IDB in 2010¹⁰:

- Technical Cooperation
- Convening services
- Normative role
- Advocacy/advisory services

A variation of the four pillars scheme as an overarching description of the work of UNIDO is the four interacting “enablers” that are “inherent and necessary attributes of a UN specialized agency”:

- Technical cooperation
- Analytical and policy advisory services
- Standard-setting and compliance
- Convening and partnership

In the scheme above “advocacy” has been replaced by “analytical”, and “normative services” by “standard-setting and compliance”.

The linkage between the four pillars and how they contribute to the mandate of UNIDO was in 2010 presented by UNIDO's Director-General as follows: “...our greatest successes came when technical cooperation was informed by research and policy advice, was linked to

¹⁰ UNIDO Director-General 2010 (IDB. 38, Opening Statement)

standard-setting and compliance, and was disseminated and expanded through our convening role.”¹¹

Programme documents

Although the Global Forum as an official conceptual and operational framework has been revised the “old” terms still linger in UNIDO documents.

The Review of MTPF 2008-2011 uses the term Global Forum mainly in the context of global and regional conferences and events. The terminology varies from global forum function, global forum role, global forum activities with no apparent difference in meaning.

In the review of the MTPF 2010-2013 the term Global Forum is mostly used in connection with global and regional conferences and the creation of platforms in connection with UNIDO's three priority areas.

There is also no reference to a Global Forum Function as such in the Programme and Budget document for 2012-2013. The terminology is not fully consistent but descriptions and references are made to advisory, advocacy, convening and normative activities, services and products. Reference is also made to UNIDO's global normative role.

“...a consolidation of resources for UNIDO's policy advisory, quality assurance and outreach functions”. “...and draws together UNIDO's previously dispersed activities in the provision of knowledge products and policy advice to Member States” ... “ manages donor relations and advocacy services.” ... “Programme D.1 covers strategic research and policy advisory services...” and “... UNIDO's advocacy and communication activities.” “... the major programme undertakes applied research and policy advice and collects industrial statistics and thus aims at further strengthening UNIDO's global normative role in sustainable industrial development.”¹²

Websites

UNIDO's official websites has provided similar but not identical presentations of UNIDO's mandate: “Our services are based on two core functions: as a global forum, we generate and disseminate industry-related knowledge; as a technical cooperation agency, we provide technical support and implement projects.” (UNIDO's main website, December 2012)

According to the website of UNIDO's regional office in South Africa the organisation is operating on two levels: on-the-ground practical technical assistance to countries in the region and “global forum participation and co-operation with other international organizations including other UN agencies as part of the “One UN” initiative, keeping countries in touch with global developments...”

According to UNIDO's regional office in Kenya “UNIDO's assistance is delivered through two core functions: a normative function as a Global Forum, and an operational function, providing Technical Cooperation.”¹³

According to the website of UNIDO's Regional Office in New Delhi, India, the organization is focused on technical cooperation services, partnership and the UN Millennium Development Goals.

¹¹ UNIDO Director-General 2012 (IDB 40, Opening Statement)

¹² UNIDO Programme and Budget 2012-13, IDB 39/13/Rev.1, p. 74

¹³ From the website of UNIDO's FO in Nairobi, Kenya

Management system

The new management system, the SAP, distinguishes between the following categories of global forum services:

1. Convening services – Global conferences, e.g. Ministerial Conferences for LDSs, Global and Regional Green Industry Conferences.
2. Normative services – Expert Group Meetings on various industrial development challenges, particularly with the aim of setting global standards
3. Analytical and advisory services – Industrial development reports, industrial statistics, national and regional industrial policy advice

2.3 Conclusions

A challenge when assessing the achievements of UNIDO's Global Forum Function is a lack of clarity regarding this concept. It is used as a strategic category to characterize the purpose and role of UNIDO as a UN specialized agency. However, Global Forum is also used as an operational category denoting certain services and types of activities that are not consistently defined. In addition it is used as an aspect of certain operational activities. The Global Forum Function is commonly split into three distinct functions such as convening, advisory and standard-setting (sometimes labelled normative) although over time the terminology has varied.

The term Normative suffers from a similar ambiguity as it refers to an intrinsic and overarching function of UNIDO sometimes equated with the Global Forum, sometimes as a subcategory of a certain line of work.

The definition of the Global Forum Function from 2000 characterizes the function as being mainly concerned with knowledge management. A similar reference to a knowledge function is found in the 2004 corporate strategy.

In 2012 UNIDO's Director General, in a speech, redefined the Global Forum Function as three categories of work: Convening, Standard-setting and compliance, and Analytical and advisory that along with Technical Cooperation 'were described as the four enablers of UNIDO's work.

Although this brings some clarity it is still not obvious if and how the enablers are to be used as operational categories, objectives to be set and results measured. The term Global Forum Function and Global Forum activities continue to be used to a certain extent in UNIDO documents. The terms services and products are also frequently used in UNIDO to describe the output level of activities. However there is no apparent distinction made between an activity and a service, they seem to be used interchangeably.

It is fair to conclude that the lack of conceptual and terminological clarity and consistence demonstrated above is likely to complicate the steering and monitoring processes of UNIDO at all levels.

However, terminology is an issue also for other UN agencies and UNIDO has contributed to the review and analysis of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in this regard. UNEG has suggested the following general definition to guide evaluation efforts:

“Normative work in the United Nations is the support to the development of norms and standards in conventions, declarations, regulatory frameworks, agreements, guidelines,

codes of practice and other standard setting instruments, at global, regional and national level. Normative work may also include support to the implementation of these instruments at the policy level, i.e. their integration into legislation, policies and development plans”.

Notwithstanding the lack of terminological clarity regarding the Global Forum Function the following chapters will present the findings from the desk studies and interviews according to the terminology used in the sources consulted.

3.

Global Forum Activities – types and features

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the different types of Global Forum activities as described in evaluations and interviews and explores the link between GF and technical cooperation. The management and financing of global forum activities is also discussed.

Acquiring a good overall picture of implemented or planned GF activities proved difficult for several reasons. In spite of the fact that the terms of reference for the country evaluations normally include a general definition of Global Forum activities the coverage and definition of GF categories show considerable variation in the evaluation reports. Evaluators had difficulties in accessing information about GF-related interventions and their results. There was found to be no structured or holistic reporting on GF activities, globally or at national level. Some evaluations also cite a lack of time and resources to cover this area. There is considerably more information in evaluations from countries where UNIDO has a regional field office. Furthermore, full information on implemented GF activities in a readily accessible format was usually not available and this was a challenge for many of the country evaluations. The most extensive overview for UNIDO as a whole was the Calendar of Major Global Forum Events in 2012 organized by and/or with UNIDO involvement detailing the title, date and venue.

3.2 Findings on types and features

“According to the FO Survey, the most widely-practiced activity of the FOs to contribute to GF activities is organizing, and/or participating in, various events such as workshops, seminars, conferences, presentations and round tables. Moreover, many engage in dialogues with the national government, private sector, donor community, think-tanks and/or partner agencies; some of them also provide policy advice at the national level and to local authorities. Some FO’s contribute to UNIDO’s advocacy function by sharing UNIDO’s publications like ‘Making it’ with national stakeholders and publishing UNIDO-related articles in the press.”¹⁴

The GF activities most frequently reported in the CEs are convening activities. The majority of the CE reports consulted contain some information related to national, regional or global meetings, conferences as well as networks. In particular the FO in Vietnam is reported to have organized a large number of meetings. Governments in countries with regional offices are reported to co-host global and regional meetings and conferences and there are many examples from South Africa, India and Nigeria, but also for Cuba.

The SMTQ Evaluation identified GF activities as “networks, training partnerships, SMTQ specific research, publications, meetings, conferences, SMTQ benchmarking, best practice

¹⁴ Thematic Evaluation of Field Office Performance, 2012

promotion, awareness raising (for UNIDO), planning and strategic development. No bias towards a particular activity or type could be discerned.”¹⁵

To *facilitate the participation* of country representatives in regional and global events is mentioned as a convening activity in several country evaluations. This is also the case when FO staff, notably the URs, participate in events convened by other organisations thereby contributing to the visibility of UNIDO.

That GF is viewed primarily as a convening activity is illustrated by the many references to conferences and events including *initiatives and platforms* for action such as The Green Industry Platform and the Accelerated Agribusiness and Agro-industries Development Initiative (3ADI). Equally referenced is the 2011 Vienna Energy Forum on the theme “Energy for All – Time for Action” and linked to the global initiative “Sustainable Energy for All”. These initiatives are characterized by combining a global convening activity with regional or national initiatives and by being underpinned by research or other types of analytical and/or normative work. The Global Food Safety Initiative is another example of a framework for GF activities and TC work that also involves industry.

Another example of how UNIDO carries out its convening, advocacy and networking function is through the various *centres and their respective network* promoted by UNIDO, such as the National Cleaner Production Centres (NCP) and the International Technology Centres (ITC). Also the meetings of the governing bodies of UNIDO, the General Conference (GC) and the Industrial Development Board (IDB) not least through side events, are seen as fulfilling the convening and information sharing functions of UNIDO.

Although the promotion of *South-South cooperation* is programmed as a crosscutting issue these activities appear to largely belong in the category of convening and networking activities. Examples include the UNIDO Centre for South-South Industrial Cooperation in China and the organising of the UN Global South-South Development Expo 2012 in Vienna.

In the country evaluations information on *normative services* came second. Activities related to conventions, standards and benchmarks tend to be closely linked to technical cooperation projects and the results of these are also generally more visible. Many interviewees mentioned the activities of UNIDO related to the Montreal Protocol and the Stockholm Convention as examples of normative work. The contribution that UNIDO made to initiate work that led to the establishment of a new standard on energy management, ISO 50001 was mentioned as another good example. Expert Group Meetings (EGMs) are also categorized as normative activities according to the new SAP system.

Policy advice as such was hardly mentioned in the CEs with the exception for Vietnam where UNIDO's co-operation programme with Vietnam is described as policy driven. However, this type of work is possibly mis- or underreported. Technical assistance and other activities related to conventions and standard-setting such as SMTQ, the Montreal Protocol and the Stockholm Convention constitute policy advice in a very concrete sense

Publications and other knowledge products are other important elements of the Global Forum Function of UNIDO. Many interviewees not least from Member States expressed considerable interest in UNIDO upgrading the knowledge and analytical base of its work. The Competitive Analysis Programme was mentioned as an example where analytical work forms the basis for TC and policy advice to governments and industry.

Some core *publications* were also named as good examples of GF activities:

¹⁵ UNIDO Global Forum Activities in SMTQ, 2011, p. x

- *The International Yearbook of Industrial Statistics*, the *World Manufacturing Quarterly*, the statistical databases issued by the Statistics Unit is part of UNIDO's core mandate.
- *The Industrial Development Report (IDR)* is a flagship publication. While the 2009 IDR report was drafted by outside researchers, in 2011 the report was written by a multidivisional team of UNIDO staff. This is also the case for the 2013 IDR that will build on experiences, views and knowledge from UNIDO's work.

Interviewees mentioned many other publications. One example is the applied research on structural change in industry, which has among other things resulted in a series of publications such as *Mapping Global Value Chains: Intermediate Goods Trade and Structural Change in the World Economy* (2010). The research has met with great interest among major players in development such as the World Bank and UNCTAD, and academia. The magazine *Making it* was also mentioned and the series *Policy Briefs* which is a recent addition.

UNIDO Institute for Capacity Development was created in 2011 as a portal to increase the visibility and coverage of UNIDO's capacity building and knowledge sharing activities and has been favourably received.

Another example of a UNIDO "brokerage" activity is the Industrial Knowledge Bank in Latin America and the Caribbean, conceived as a clearing-house for knowledge exchange. To this can be added The Industrial Subcontracting and Partnership Exchange links, SPX, that has been a UNIDO tool for 25 years.

A similar product is the resource guide for trade capacity-building that contains information on the services provided by different actors. The third version of this inventory will be web-based. The guide was initiated as an ancillary service.

3.3 Management of Global Forum activities

UNIDO has no overall strategy, action plan or Terms of Reference (ToR) for GF work at either corporate, branch or individual level. GF activities are mentioned in UNIDO budget documents such as the Programme and Budget 2012-2013. For component programmes a standard reference is made to the contribution of UNIDO to expected policy and institutional outcomes at country-level. Objectives and a general description are included for Programme Component D.1. which includes Policy Advisory Services and strategic research. Some thematic areas and units are reported to have adopted a systematic approach, notably within the TCB and MPB and the Advocacy and Communications Unit. However few other references were made to explicit GF strategies or systematic approaches to GF work. A lack of a strategic approach to GF work was also found in FO evaluations.

The share of HQ staff time devoted to GF work is estimated at 10 to 20 %. GF is considered as being time consuming in comparison to TC work and the incentives to engage in GF work to be weaker compared to work with technical cooperation projects. The FO evaluation found that over 60 % of staff time was reported as linked to GF activities, including activities of a more promotional character.

Some interviewees characterized much GF work as being ad hoc and spontaneous in nature and suggested that UNIDO would benefit from a more strategic and planned approach including in country and regional programming. The SMTQ identified the following motivating factors for GF activities: internally identified as strategic, driven by field experiences from

technical cooperation, by staff to fill knowledge gaps, or by a standards institution that view UNIDO as an honest broker. Donor agendas did not figure prominently as a driving force for GF activities.

GF activities may be carried out as TC projects or as non-projects and funded either by UNIDO's regular budget or through specific donor (TC) contributions or a combination of both. The SMTQ evaluation found that GF projects are usually rather small and short term and that "a minority of GF activities are project based, while most of these activities are conducted ad hoc without an explicit planning basis."

Comparisons were made with other organizations that are perceived as being more structured and focused in its GF role. On a positive note UNIDO is seen as unbureaucratic and flexible.

Representatives of member states commented on a general need to focus the GF activities of UNIDO and for a more systematic approach, similar opinions were voiced by UNIDO staff who thought that GF activities should be rationed and concentrated for greater impact. UNIDO's mandate and role as a specialized technical agency is seen by some interviewees as a reason to generally increase the focus of the organisation on GF activities.

Global Forum and the organisation of UNIDO

Global forum activities are only to a limited extent the exclusive domain and responsibility of particular units or individuals at UNIDO, "everyone is involved in all four pillars" as explained by one interviewee. As an example research activities and analytical work are undertaken by various branches, and not confined to the Research Branch. Research findings promoted by UNIDO are equally generated by external partnering research institutions. Similarly policy advice may form part of technical cooperation projects or other activities that are carried out by the substantive branches and by field offices. There appears to be no overall coordination of strategic and policy advice. Communication activities and the issuance of publications and guiding materials are undertaken by many entities although the Advocacy and Communication unit has a formal responsibility in the area.

As mentioned above, FO staff devote a considerable amount of their time to GF related activities. The following factors have been pivotal for attaining results through GF activities according to the FO evaluation:

- strong partnerships and close relationships with counterparts,
- established links with other UN agencies,
- leadership and commitment from the UR, adequate staff resources in the FO supplemented with high level HQ expertise,
- a concerted programmatic response at country and regional levels.

Several CEs comment on the important role of the UR for the visibility of UNIDO in the country. In contrast to the FO evaluation some CEs note that a lack of resources at the smaller FO prevents the offices from initiating and engaging in GF work.

The Nigeria CE found that there seemed "to be room for and scope to reinforce the global forum function of the Regional Office and not least in areas of green industry, including cleaner production and energy efficiency, CSR and anti corruption."

The FO evaluation concludes that by mobilizing its current FO structure UNIDO is well positioned to concert the two main roles of its mandate.

3.4 Findings regarding the Global Forum Functions and Technical Cooperation

Several interviewees and evaluations emphasize the interdependence and two-way link between GF and technical cooperation activities. Experiences from technical cooperation are and should be used to create a body of knowledge and knowledge products may, in their turn, feed into technical cooperation projects. While the UNIDO approach to GF and TC clearly indicates the complementarities of the two, the country evaluations do not clearly reflect this. There are, however, other examples of this dynamic.

In MPB, GF and TC are closely interlinked to ensure that both activities feed into each other; achievements are evaluated and used in formulating annual business plans. GF activities (events and publications) under MP and the Stockholm Convention increase local awareness and knowledge of the issues in member countries, and in meetings with external experts UNIDO is made aware of new developments with regard to substitutes for ozone-depleting substances (ODS). Both help to ensure that TC projects succeed in phasing out ODS and Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).

As the line and distinction between TC and GF activities is not clear-cut, sometimes global forum function is “embedded” in TC work. This is illustrated by the central document on the Green Industry Initiative “to ensure high levels of visibility for the pilot programmes, a very strong global forum function will be woven into them.... the results of the pilots will be given as wide an exposure as possible. Part of this global forum function will be a dynamic platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience...”

The Vietnam CE pointed out that “Due to the rather policy driven structure of UNIDO’s project portfolio in Viet Nam, which also includes elements of policy benchmarking and international expertise, the dichotomy between “Technical assistance” and “Global Forum” is less pronounced than in many other countries. International meetings and study tours have been integrated in many projects (POPs, CSR; SME clusters). Several Government interlocutors of the evaluation mission mentioned the high profile and international experience of the UNIDO Representatives in Viet Nam and their capability to provide international value added to the internal policy debate”.

From the South Africa CE: “The Energy Efficiency project has a key component that aims at introducing ISO 50001 – a global standard for energy management systems. As UNIDO has been involved in the development of this standard in cooperation with the International Organization for Standardizations (ISO), the promotion of the application of this standard and transformation into national standards represents an important linkage between TC and GF.”

The CE of Mozambique “identifies a programming lacuna by not combining “downstream” and “upstream” activities. The Field Office evaluation concludes that the “... optimal balance between the two core functions (TC and GF) is still being defined. Promoting global policies, priorities and norms definitely has a legitimate role to play even in a decentralized system, but having global Programmes determining budget lines and actions, seems to work against a country focused holistic programme approach, where programming takes place in a national/regional context. And ... the TC and GF roles and their synergies and connectivity to Field, HQ and other networks, are not always clear or fully thought through.”

The CE for India points to the link between cluster and networking TC projects and policy influence in the state of Orissa. Also the evaluation of UNIDO Cluster and Networking Development Initiatives describes the link between TC and GF work: “UNIDO has been implementing technical cooperation projects focused on cluster and network development (CND) since the mid-1990s. ... elements of the programme include activities aimed at

generating and disseminating knowledge beyond the country level.” ... “by building sustainable linkages both among SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) and between SMEs, large(r) scale enterprises and support institutions.”

The UNIDO approach in this area typically consists of two main elements:

1. TC in CND initiatives that generates pilot projects in the client countries
2. Upscaling CND efforts through institutional capacity-building and policy advice with a view to fostering the dissemination of CND policies on the regional or national scales

However, TC projects are considered less visible but make it easier to demonstrate results. For GF it is the reverse. The value attached to GF work varied across branches, with some of the technical branches logically having a strong focus on TC. But all interviewees confirmed that GF activities were an essential part of UNIDO’s work, and that ideally GF and TC activities should feed into each other, creating a virtuous circle. Some felt that the inherent continuity between GF and TC work made it difficult to assess what the value of one versus the other was, whether at the level of the project, the branch or the organization.

Donors play an important role in determining the balance between GF work and TC. Some interviewees were of the opinion that the importance given to TC implementation and funds mobilization has a negative effect in terms of allocating human or financial resources to GF interventions in addition to complicating strategic planning.

In particular representatives of some member states expressed concern over a perceived dominance of TC work over advisory services and opportunities for policy makers to exchange experiences, UNIDO could be the “OECD of the South”, as formulated by one member country representative.

3.5 Conclusions

As noted above it has not been feasible to give a complete view of the different types of GF activities mainly for a general lack of systematic information. There is substantial variation in scope and detail in the treatment of GF activities in CEs, which is likely to reflect both the relative importance of various types of GF activities in the countries under review and the information available. It may also reflect different understandings of the significance of the GF concept and associated activities. The difference in the coverage of convening, normative and analytical and advisory services may reflect the actual situation or a difference in visibility of the respective services – large conferences, for example, are more visible than a brochure.

As suggested by the FO evaluation GF activities may also be underreported, possibly for weak reporting routines or for GF activities not being set up as projects and having clearly articulated results.

Ambiguities in the terminology in current use complicate the efficient and effective use of UNIDO’s institutional, financial and human resources.

GF activities and technical cooperation do not constitute two distinct categories of work as supported by findings. On the contrary a strong link between operative work, advocacy and knowledge use and generation is a prerequisite for UNIDO to effectively fulfil its mandate as a specialized UN agency. The challenge for UNIDO is to develop planning and management tools and processes that support this.

Using a terminology that brings out the purpose and character of a particular activity, such as (pilot) technical assistance and capacity development, knowledge generation and sharing or convening would bring more clarity also to programming. It would strengthen the strategic combination and integration of different types of activities for maximum impact in a given area of work.

The role and responsibilities at UNIDO HQ and field offices with respect to convening, knowledge generation and dissemination such as policy advice is unclear. It is likely that a clearer, and possibly enhanced, role of FOs for GF would increase efficiency and impact as well as the inclusion of GF aspects in country programming. The partnership dimension of UNIDO's work is evident in many ways. The CEs bring forth the potential in stronger partnerships with interested countries, in some cases coinciding with countries where UNIDO has a regional office.

Lack of time and resources have been cited as reasons for not engaging more in GF activities. The importance given to the formulation and management of technical cooperation projects has a negative effect on the room for and incentives to work with knowledge generation and sharing. As for resource use it is not transparent how funding sources, including the regular funds, are used to support the different work modalities. There are indications that donors are interested in funding research and analytical work as well as knowledge sharing, benchmarking and networking activities.

The SMTQ evaluation emphasized the brokerage role of UNIDO. In a situation with many stakeholders and interested parties and where UNIDO is profiling itself the experiences and in house knowledge products is but a part, albeit important, of the technical basis for UNIDO. The ability of UNIDO to partner with other UN organisations, research institutions and donors as well as to initiate and support networks and platforms is a prerequisite for successful work. One aspect of UNIDO is thus an ability to act as an honest broker, creating linkages and facilitating the flow of information and experiences, including on best practices.

The FO evaluation concludes: "... for any organization to be successful in its GF-role under the specialized agency mandate, it needs action on the ground to pilot innovations, substantiate research and establish credibility and authority. Subsequently, it positions the agency to combine the generally "downstream" TC implementation with the normative/standard-setting "GF" role directed "upstream" towards policy makers, to feed into national policies and strategies. "

4.

Achievements and evaluability

4.1 Available information

The present chapter will illustrate and comment on the results information and assessments as captured in the sources used. In addition the chapter will discuss issues related to the evaluability of different types of global forum activities.

The country evaluations on the whole do not provide much in terms of systematic assessment either of a particular global forum activity or of a category of GF activities. In many cases this is simply due to information being scarce. The CE for India found that “the evaluability of the GF activities was low due to the absence of articulated results, intervention logics or indicators of success and that it was not possible to apply the standard evaluation criteria.” Mostly results are described in general terms, either as concrete outputs or as subsequent actions or activities. Similar observations were made by the SMTQ evaluation.

4.2 Results-based management

The evaluations consulted demonstrate difficulties to assess the extent to which GF activities contribute to development objectives or other stated objectives. Most assessments of GF work are of a qualitative nature and many are based on anecdotal evidence and perceptions. One cited reason is that results-based management is not always applied to GF activities. Specific objectives are hence not defined beyond activities and outputs, such as a report or a meeting and expected outcomes and impacts are not specified. There is little mention of intervention logics that lay out how the specific activities, services or products are expected to contribute to an end objective and the desired impact. At the same time it is acknowledged that it is more complicated to apply a results-based management approach to activities of an exploratory and innovative character.

There is also not much by way of a structured follow-up of activities with different stakeholders. This is a finding that holds both with respect to global initiatives, programs and particular activities such as events and meetings. Although the absence of a results framework does not preclude an evaluation of a particular intervention it certainly makes the evaluation task more complicated and more expensive. The CE for India cited above and the CE for South Africa illustrate the points made.

“Effectiveness is generally measured in terms of achievements of objectives. The fact that GF objectives are frequently not clearly defined represents a fundamental barrier to evaluability of GF. Moreover, contributions to socio-economic and environmental impacts are likely not to be discernable or measurable, as the nature of GF is to raise awareness and generate knowledge about new trends and developments (innovative character).” (CE for South Africa)

The SMTQ Evaluation concludes that where there is a logical framework outputs can be documented and assessed but that methodologically it is difficult to measure outcomes of GF activities. “... the Trade Capacity Building Resource Guide 2009 has an impressive output,

but whether any TCB coordination has resulted is impossible to tell because a) there was no baseline and b) no provision for evaluation was included in the Guide.”

When a GF activity is conducted as a project and/or funded by donors an explicit results framework as well as monitoring, reporting and evaluation arrangements are more likely to be found. One example is activities related to the Montreal Protocol where the funder positions strict rules for follow-up and a yearly evaluation along 17 performance indicators. The SMTQ evaluation found that although those GF activities that were managed as projects had a logical framework albeit with varying formats but that indicators, where available, were usually not quantified and time-bound.

Some interviewees acknowledged that it is difficult to assess long-term effects of global forum activities with the added remark that donors are less interested in funding costs related to monitoring and evaluation. The opposite view was also expressed, including by representatives of donor countries that donors and funding agencies do press for results-based management being applied and are willing to fund evaluations.

The SAP management system that is being introduced is expected to generally improve results-based management at UNIDO, GF activities included.

Results-based management at field level

The evaluation of UNIDO's field offices found that: “The two areas, TC and GF, are not combined in a results-based and country-specific framework. Implementation of GF activities is limited or not systematically reported on and actual results are difficult to assess. One reason is that successful activities are not necessarily accompanied by a project or budget or have a results dimension.” Several CEs also comment on the ad hoc nature of many GF activities.

In some country evaluations the limited amount of information on GF activities reflects a lack of systematic monitoring and reporting. The problem is seen as linked to generally low reporting standards; UNIDO's limited resources and slow progress with regard to results-based management in general.

According to the FO evaluation, though a majority of the FOs have developed a Results-based Management Work Plan, these have not been implemented or consistently used as management tool and hold limited influence on how the FO addresses GF work. Moreover the usefulness of the general RBM work plans is considered as marginal. Outcome 4 in the standard RBM framework reads as follows: “Promoting Global Forum activities with direct link to UNIDO priorities and to the potential increase of UNIDO portfolio in the region and worldwide”. There is a clear promotional character to this item, but neither this aspect nor the aspect of promoting GF activities have been reported on.

The EC for China concluded: “The Results-Based Management (RBM) Work plan with the five outcomes has not been a very useful tool for proper RO performance reporting. The main reason is that obviously nobody is reading the reports at HQ, as there are not follow-up actions on the reports.”

4.3 Results information

The content of results information in the CEs generally precluded the use of more precise evaluation criteria like outcome, effectiveness, impact or sustainability. In the absence of more concrete information, unspecific descriptions of results (“the workshop was considered a success by participants”) were retained.

Interviewees and CEs provide examples of highly visible events and publications though usually without a clear assessment of what they actually achieved or led to. General assessments are made, “other events took place and are seen as productive”, the meeting was “considered a success”, the “evaluation of the workshop, by participants, was very positive”.

“The Agro-Industry Forum in New Delhi, 2007, was a highly visible co-organized event that achieved its immediate objectives. Although there were no follow-up activities in India events were organized in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In Africa the Abuja event in Nigeria paved the way for collaboration between the African Development Bank and a new programmatic framework – 3ADI – the African Agribusiness and Agri-industries Development Initiative.”

In some cases tangible outputs are reported such as the adoption of a declaration, an action plan or an interactive virtual platform. In the case of events, requests for follow-up activities and the improvement or expansion of TC interventions (new know-how, new clients) were presented as indicators of success. Visibility is considered an important criterion of success. Larger events are gauged by media coverage and broadcasting, frequency on social media and Google search.

“Generally, the Organized Private Sector (OPS) platform gets praise from stakeholders and is considered as very useful” (CE Nigeria) but the CE equally noted that it is “difficult to assess what the improved public/private dialogues concretely resulted in and there is a need for targets and increased results-orientation also for this modality.”

“...UNIDO was relatively successful with its assistance to policy development but less so in building capacity for policy alignment and policy implementation, which are subjects of concern in Viet Nam.”

Feedback mechanisms

In addition to measuring visibility UNIDO employs various mechanisms for getting feedback on its GF activities. However no general process, practice or format has been developed. In connection with conferences, meetings and other events participants may be asked to give feedback in a questionnaire or some similar tool. This is an established practice with the UNIDO Arab Programme.

The International Yearbook of Industrial Statistics, the World Manufacturing Quarterly, the statistical databases issued by the Statistics Unit, along with the on-line data portal is considered to receive world-wide positive response, with concomitant requests for TC to improve business statistics and strengthen capacities for data analysis and statistical surveys.

Contributions

Many programs, initiatives and activities are carried out under broad partnerships with national, regional and international actors. To attribute particular outcomes to any particular

organisation such as UNIDO is a challenge. The following except from the CE for South Africa illustrates this point:

“However, it can be safely assumed, that GF in general is expected to contribute to more or less concrete a) institutional and b) policy outcomes. Such outcomes can be observed in South Africa in several cases. The Johannesburg declaration of the African Ministers of Energy, the introduction of international energy management standards in South Africa and the active participation of the Durban municipality in international climate partnerships are all examples of effects to which UNIDO has contributed. These examples also show that the contributions of UNIDO’s GF activities were strongest in the “environment and energy” thematic area. “

4.4 Assessments

The following evaluation criteria were to guide the evaluation of the Global Forum Function: relevance, efficiency and effectiveness. In addition the evaluation would assess the extent to which a gender perspective and considerations have been integrated or mainstreamed, in GF activities. The scarcity of information has already been mentioned making the assessments in relation to each criterion below highly indicative.

On Relevance

To assess the relevance of the objectives of a category or of a particular GF activity is not as clear-cut as may first appear. Relevance may be established in relation to a broad range of criteria such as country needs and contribution to specific development objectives. The relevance of a particular activity can also be judged by participants or beneficiaries and in relation to their motivations and interests. In other cases relevance is viewed in relation to donors or UNIDO’s mandate and priorities or global trends, concerns or commitments.

The SMTQ evaluation comments on and confirms the relevance of SMTQ activities in relation to the Millennium Development Goals, to donors, to standard bodies, to UNIDO, to firms, to Governments, to Aid for Trade and for the target groups.

Some further examples on relevance:

- According to the SMTQ evaluation, stakeholders considered most GF activities to be highly relevant: networking was often found to be more relevant than the content of workshops. SMTQ institutions and SMTQ related organizations appreciate UNIDO’s GF activities and find them highly relevant for their work but do not always understand the relationship between a specific GF activity and the overall development objectives of TCB
- GF activities were considered by most interviewees as essential to get access to new know-how and to position UNIDO in the development community. They help to explore new areas of work and generate high-level interest and funds, which again enables UNIDO to fulfil its mandate.
- The relevance of GF is seen as closely linked to TC.
- According to some staff members, UNIDO should focus first and foremost on TC, as it is a TC agency. Others feel that in line with its specialized agency mandate UNIDO should focus first and foremost on GF.
- A link to global initiatives, agreements and declarations was seen as a factor to increase relevance and impact.
- The relevance of UNIDO’s publications is high, both in terms of raising the organization’s visibility and disseminating information about industrial development

issues. Publications and the public website can only remain relevant if they are regularly updated and fulfil the information needs of a clearly targeted audience.

The relevance of GF activities for national development was not discussed consistently in the country evaluations, however many CEs confirm the relevance of GF activities to the country context, often as assessed by government representatives. In general terms GF activities related to the Montreal Protocol and the Stockholm Convention are seen as very relevant for countries that have subscribed to these normative frameworks. Equally conferences on agro-processing is likely to be relevant to countries where a large share of the population make their living from the agricultural sector. UNIDO's Green Industry Initiative was also considered highly useful and relevant by some CEs. These are just some examples.

On Efficiency

Efficiency is about the relation between inputs and outputs and how economically resources of various kinds are converted to results. It is about cost effectiveness and the efficient use and management of resources. As with relevance the efficiency criterion can be interpreted and used in different ways. It could be about how UNIDO allocates its resources in relation to the objectives of the agency, how UNIDO manages to mobilize the resources and engagement of partners or the amount of resources needed to produce a particular output, for example a conference.

Some CEs conclude that the field offices make efficient use of the limited resources available. At the same time a lack of time and resources is cited as a reason for not engaging more in GF activities and not doing so in a systematic way. The EC for Cuba reports that GF activities are viewed as spontaneous in nature and notes that "a lack of planning and monitoring limits the possibilities for establishing a closer and more productive cooperation with the government of Cuba in the field of GF."

UNIDO's major donors and funders consider UNIDO an efficient implementer of TC projects also when the projects have GF aspects. According to the SMTQ evaluation donors are pleased with the way that GF projects are managed but would like to see completion reports.

GF work is often carried out in addition to the normal workload of staff members in PTC. This has a negative effect on the motivation for staff to initiate and engage in GF activities as part of their portfolio. Efficiency is seen to suffer when staff is allocated tasks that they do not usually perform such as organising events.

Where GF activities are managed as projects and sub-contracted to consultants with strict budgets and timeframes efficiency is considered high. This was contrasted with non-project GF activities where expected outputs may be less clearly stated and that are managed with a less rigid budget constraint.

Other areas were mentioned where efficiency could be improved:

- Cooperation across UNIDO's branches could be improved. The areas mention in particular were publications, research and other forms of analytic work and products as well as the organisation of events. Generally improved information flows and clearer division of labour are thought to increase efficiency in addition to improved targeting of knowledge products.
- Activities under the Challenge Fund to capitalize on in-house knowledge through joint PTC-SQA strategic research activities are seen as not optimally used to align GF activities to TC needs.
- Are events cost-effective? There are different perceptions on this. Events can be a cost-effective way to promote high-level networking and obtaining new insights in

technology and economic development. However to some interviewees it is not always clear how the use of resources related to UNIDO's participation in large international events will benefit the organization's work on industrial development. The SMTQ evaluation found that Expert Group Meetings (EGMs) usually did not have inbuilt evaluations and that stakeholders had complained that they were too much like conferences. Although there is no standard format the evaluation concluded that it would be useful with a tool-kit of methods for EGMs.

- Similarly the SMTQ concluded that the number of training and knowledge tools although excellent could be followed up with a consistent training programme. There is scope to enhance the dissemination of experiences through academic channels by an additional marginal investment.

On Effectiveness and Impact

Development effectiveness is defined as the extent to which a development intervention has reached its objectives. There are many examples of activities that have reached low level objectives but the sources used for this evaluation generally have little to say about higher level results such as outcome and impacts of GF activities.

However, it is generally understood that stand-alone activities are less effective and that one way to increase the impact of UNIDO's work is by scaling up actions through co-operation within UNIDO or with external partners such as industry associations. It has also been suggested that the dissemination of publications in more languages than English would enhance their impact. Active participation in UNCT and contribution to joint CCA's and UNDAF as well as a dynamic relationship with partner countries is expected to contribute to the effectiveness of UNIDO's work.

It has been suggested that effectiveness would be enhanced by a more consistent use of an RBM approach and better linkage between TC and GF. Some CEs recommend that future country programmes should include a section on GF activities with defined objectives, outcomes and indicators and a corresponding M&E plan.

Gender mainstreaming

Country evaluations do not provide much information regarding the inclusion of a gender perspective in GF activities. In spite of UNIDO having a gender policy since 2009 and some technical support is available for staff gender aspects are reported to be generally absent in available documentation on GF. Interviewees have expressed an expectation that the Green Industry Initiative will include social equity aspects in addition to issues of resource use and clean technology. Some donors promote and expect UNIDO to incorporate a gender and equity perspective in its work. At the same time this may not be a concern for partner countries. An illustration of this dilemma is furnished by the CE for China that reports that the Theme Group meeting on gender issues related to climate change was not a big success, mainly because the issue was not seen as relevant to stakeholders.

4.5 Conclusions

There is a general lack of systematic information regarding the results of global forum activities. Although there are many positive assessments regarding the relevance of GF activities such as conferences, expert meetings, networks and knowledge products there is much less information on efficiency, effectiveness and impacts. This appears to be linked both to a general weakness in results-based management and limitations in time and resources, and incentives for staff to engage in GF activities.

The evaluations consulted reflect a shortage of easily available information on objectives, baseline data, logic frameworks as well as information derived from monitoring and evaluation. Also when logical frameworks exist the concepts and terminology vary to an extent that makes it difficult to aggregate the information at hand.

As a consequence the evaluability of much GF activity is low, although GF activities that are externally funded can be expected to do better in this regard. The new management system, SAP, can be expected to improve the situation. However, it is likely that additional support will be needed, such as generic terms of reference for typical activities such as centres, networks, workshops, and expert meetings, publications along with a set of standardized but variable objectives, indicators and feedback mechanisms. There is scope to improve the effectiveness of publications work through sharper targeting and improved dissemination including translating to other languages as well as clarity at the outcome level – what is the expected contribution of a particular publication?

To incorporate a gender dimension in GF activities is a challenge for UNIDO. The agency has to reconcile expectations from funders and its own gender policy with uncertain demand from other actors and partner countries. At the same time UNIDO is bound by the overall UN commitment to advance gender equality and the economic empowerment of women.

The expectations on UNIDO when it comes to efficiency and the contributions of the agency to development effectiveness are similar to those for the UN development system. Thus the results from the UN quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) will also influence the way that UNIDO carries out its mandate including results-based strategic planning and management.

5. Main conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Main conclusions

This evaluation of the Global Forum Function of UNIDO has encountered much interest from representatives of Member States as well as UNIDO staff. The issues covered by the evaluation concern important dimensions of the organisation's mandate as a UN specialized agency, focusing on industrial development. There is a general view that UNIDO has to review the balance between being a competent and appreciated implementer of projects and being a specialized agency providing information, advice and fora for discussion. Although many member states wish for UNIDO to enhance its analytical and advisory services there is also demand for UNIDO to provide technical assistance and capacity development, this demand coming from funding agencies, donor and recipient countries. UNIDO is thus challenged to cater to a diverse set of agendas, stakeholders and countries.

A competitive environment forces UNIDO to profile itself as a specialized, knowledge based, flexible and agile organization capable of entering into and maintaining productive partnerships with a variety of actors. In addition to on-going partnerships there seems to be an untapped potential to engage more closely with middle-income countries. This could also further strengthen South-South cooperation. Field offices could play an even more important role brokering information about best practices.

UNIDO has to respond to the global development agenda including demands for efficiency and development effectiveness and coherence, co-ordination and collaboration both within and beyond the UN system. UNIDO is well placed by virtue of its mandate and competitive advantage as a specialized UN agency for industrial development but this also requires of the agency to maintain and develop its technical expertise.

The work of UNIDO has often been described as consisting of two core elements, technical cooperation and so called global forum activities mainly concerned with generating and disseminating technical knowledge. The evaluation has shown that in reality there is a complex and multi-stranded relation between the two categories and no clear-cut dividing line. A technical cooperation project may be a GF activity and vice versa. Pilot projects generate knowledge and inputs to policies that support the replication of successful approaches. This has been the case with cluster and networking development initiatives. Another example is how the branches working with the Montreal Protocol and Stockholm Convention has accumulated experiences from technical cooperation projects that have made UNIDO an important repository of technical knowhow. The conceptualization of the Green Industry Initiative offers a holistic vision where all UNIDO instruments, including the convening power of the agency are used and where technical assistance projects and GF functions reinforce each other.

In addition the Green Industry Platform illustrates how UNIDO can develop as a broker and a facilitator. This could be called the partnership dimension of UNIDO's work. UNIDO is linking up to other specialized organisations to mobilize funds and intellectual input. UNIDO is well positioned to act as a facilitator also in a local and regional context through its field offices. Joined-up work modalities and knowledge sharing is a prerequisite for development impact. Being a small UN agency UNIDO has to carefully prioritize its actions and engagements for

better impact. It also has to safeguard and develop the technical competencies of the agency.

UNIDO has categorized its work in different ways over the years resulting in a certain conceptual confusion. The definition of Global Forum activities that was introduced by the UNIDO's Director General in 2000 has been widely used although a different categorization was introduced in 2010 and slightly modified in 2012. The latter scheme does not use the term Global Forum and defines four so-called enablers as the constituent elements of UNIDO's work: Technical cooperation and capacity building, Advice/advocacy, Convening and Standard-setting/ compliance services.

The diffuseness of concepts and categorization of activities are seen as an obstacle to developing the priorities and programmes of UNIDO both at HQ and at Field Offices.

As indicated above there is a potential to strengthen UNIDO's role as a technical agency and the efficiency and effectiveness of its work by integrating project execution with normative work and knowledge sharing activities. Although a lack of funding for non TC activities have been cited as a reason for not engaging in more knowledge sharing this view has been contradicted by examples of important donors willing to contribute to the consolidation and dissemination of experiences and knowhow.

There appears to be a general lack of strategy and planning, using RBM principles, for global forum activities as part of thematic and programmatic priorities.

A complicating factor for this evaluation has been a scarcity of relevant and information and solid assessments. Evaluation teams reported that in many cases they could not find information on objectives, logic frames, indicators and outcomes for particular activities. This may be related both to the state of results-based management at UNIDO but also to particular difficulties to apply RBM to certain activities such as advisory and advocacy work. In many areas the results chains are complex and non-linear and developments influenced by a wide range of factors and constraints.

Although positive results are reported for many UNIDO GF activities they are generally related to particular outputs such as conferences, meetings and publications. Efficiency is often commented as being high although the basis for these assessments is not always clear. GF can be a cost-effective working modality, with a high outreach compared to single technical cooperation projects. There are few assessments related to development effectiveness. It is a challenge for UNIDO to include the gender dimension in its work also in circumstances where there is no explicit demand.

Evaluability is generally low for lack of a clear planning framework, defined objectives, logic models and indicators as well as monitoring information. In particular this is the case where activities are not managed as projects.

Table 1. Tentative scheme for UNIDO's functions and activities

UNIDO as a UN honest broker	UNIDO as a specialized technical agency	UNIDO as a competent manager
<i>Convening</i>	<i>Knowledge sharing</i>	<i>Implementing</i>
Conferences Networks Centres Partnerships Platforms	Expert meetings Policy advice Training Statistics Research/Analysis Benchmarking, best practice Publications	Projects including capacity building and pilots

5.2 Recommendations

- There is a lack of consistency and clarity in the concepts and terms used to denote UNIDO's core functions. A working group should be established to propose a set of well-defined concepts to be used both strategically and operationally. The terminology should be aligned with the terms used in the UN system. Work carried out by UNEG in this area should be consulted.
- A strategy should be developed and adopted to strengthen the links and synergies between the different strands of UNIDO's work. The objective should be to further define and support UNIDO's role as a "knowledge based normative specialized UN agency" capable of acting as an "honest broker" offering high-quality services to a broad range of stakeholders. In particular the strategy should focus on how to support knowledge sharing, best practices and benchmarking, as well as how to enhance the policy advisory services of the agency. The strategy should also cover institutional issues, including the role of FOs and staff incentives for engaging in "upstream" work and how to integrate this aspect in country programming.
- UNIDO should develop strategic partnerships and common research agendas with external research institutions in order to complement in-house research capacities
- UNIDO should adopt an integrated planning framework for priority initiatives and programmes, such as the Green Industry Initiative. The planning framework should include technical cooperation as (pilot) projects, research, advocacy and knowledge sharing activities and enhance the inter-linkage and dynamics between the dimensions of UNIDO's mandate and the partnerships involved. The planning framework should be based on the principles of results-based management and spell out the intervention theories of each programme in order to enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of UNIDO's work.
- UNIDO should also strengthen results-based management and the evaluability of typical activities. A group should be established to develop formats for the planning, monitoring and evaluations of typical interventions such as Expert Group Meetings, conferences and publications. For recurrent activities a set of standard but variable objectives, logic models, outputs and outcomes and indicators should be developed, using past experience and evaluations where available.
- UNIDO should issue guidance for its convening function with the purpose of ensuring that conferences and other convening activities are relevant (in line with UNIDO

strategic priorities), feed in learning from TC interventions (when appropriate), are visible and have a clear results orientation.

- Gender mainstreaming has not been reported as a regular feature of GF activities. The existing gender policy should be complemented with a strategy to make sure that UNIDO's work contributes to gender equality and the economic empowerment of women, including in research, knowledge products and knowledge sharing activities, policy advisory services, convening activities and standard-setting work. Planning frameworks and formats should spell out how to incorporate a gender perspective and experiences from successful interventions where available should be drawn upon.



UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE THEMATIC EVALUATION OF UNIDO's GLOBAL FORUM FUNCTION

XP/GLO/12/018 – ID 120245

Introduction

UNIDO is a UN specialized agency mandated to promote industrial development for poverty reduction, inclusive globalization and environmental sustainability. It provides policy advice, institutional capacity building and specialized technical support in three thematic priority areas, i.e. poverty reduction through productive activities, trade capacity building, and environment and energy, to 173 member states.

The specialised agencies of the UN were established as focal points for intergovernmental deliberations and negotiations on common international issues in their respective areas. Member States designed them for the purpose of collecting and disseminating information linked to the setting of international standards and rules. Increasingly, they came to be seen as “centres of excellence”, initiating and organizing international research efforts and campaigns and providing technical assistance in their mandated area. As such, specialized agencies have been important sources of information and advice for developing countries. This has often been referred to as the normative function that is, providing an instrument for agreement on norms, standards and recommendations for the furthering of the common good. In the case of UNIDO, it is also referred to as the Global Forum function.

UNIDO performs dual roles of providing technical cooperation services and global forum functions. The global forum function is performed both as distinct activities and as part of technical cooperation. Often, however, the dividing line is not clear-cut since the global forum function can be an integrated part and guide technical cooperation and vice versa. As such the two functions reinforce each other.

Whereas the Technical cooperation mandate is well-defined and presented in the Programme and Budget and the Medium Term Programme Framework and in various programme and project documents aligned to these frameworks and often have distinct objectives and accompanying indicators, the global forum function is more vague and often not defined in strategy, guidance or policy documents. Moreover, often there are no articulated objectives beyond the output level, or specific resources directly allocated to it.

Furthermore, and related to the above mentioned absence of results frameworks for GF, there is usually no monitoring of these activities with a resulting low level of information on results.

It is however realized that sustainable industrial solutions must be tackled in a holistic manner and that advocacy, research and knowledge management and dissemination must be integrated parts of UNIDO's work and the organization devotes considerable resources to these areas.

In order to learn more about the implementation of the global forum function and accompanying results, an assessment of contributions to UNIDO's global Forum Function was included in the country evaluations conducted in 2011/12.

Global forum function definition

A report by the Director-General on Global Forum Activities to the Twenty-third session of the IDB (IDB.23/9) provides the following definition;

Global forum functions are those which are initiated by UNIDO (or the United Nations system) to exchange and disseminate knowledge and information, as well as facilitate partnerships, producing an output "without a pre-identified client, which increases understanding of sustainable industrial development and solutions"

According to the same document global forum activities are all concerned with knowledge enhancement and are numerous and heterogeneous in nature. They include;

- *Regional forums and conferences* – often high level
- *Working groups* – such as expert group meetings or sub sector panel discussions, often discussing topics of a technical nature
- *Active participation in United Nations activities* – for instance high-level meetings and conferences
- *Presentations at external meetings* – such as making presentations or organizing a side-event at Rio+20
- *Publications* – the Industrial Development Report and the International Yearbook of Industrial Statistics belong to this category
- *Statistics and data collection* - UNIDO is the UN depository of industrial statistics for developing countries and countries in transition
- *Conventions, norms and standards* – promotion of the Montreal Protocol or ISO 9000 or 14000 are examples of these.
- *Partnerships and networks including research agreements* – UNIDO is networking with many institutions which contribute to the knowledge needs of the organization

Moreover, with the introduction of SAP, the following definitions of global function type services have been provided;

1. Convening services - Global conferences, e.g. Ministerial Conference for LDCs, Global and Regional Green Industry Conferences
2. Normative services - Expert Group Meetings on various industrial development challenges, particularly with the aim of setting global standards
3. Analytical and advisory services - Industrial development reports, industrial statistics, national and regional industrial policy advice

In line with the above, global forum interventions can be described as having informative, advocacy and normative functions.

Purpose of the evaluation

The Thematic Global Function Evaluation aims at assessing the performance of UNIDO in relation to its Global Forum function. In particular, it will synthesize the findings, in relation to the GF function, coming out of the 2010/11 country evaluations and of the ones conducted in 2012.

The evaluation will also look more holistically at how the GF can be assessed, taking a 2012 event as a starting point. As such, it will serve the purpose of learning and be forward-looking. The evaluation is intended to be useful to managers and staff at UNIDO as well as to external stakeholders and governing bodies.

Evaluation scope and focus

The evaluation will cover the various aspects of UNIDO's Global Function, as defined above. It will in particular assess the performance of the function at the field level and synthesis findings from country evaluations conducted, starting in 2010. In addition, the evaluation will draw on the findings of the evaluation of the global forum function of the SMTQ programme (2011)¹⁶.

The evaluation will also assess evaluability of global functions performed at the global level, with 40th session of the IDB as a starting point. It will be forward looking in terms of identifying options on how improve the reporting on GF results, in line with the quest of UNIDO management to foster results-based reporting.

Evaluation criteria

The thematic evaluation will use four main evaluation criteria; relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact.

Relevance will be assessed in relation to the needs and priorities of the member countries but also in a wider perspective of "preventing global bads" and in reference to policy statements coming out of UN and other international conferences and UN and UNIDO mission statements. It will also assess global forum activities in relation to UNIDO policy and strategy documents; thus in relation to UNIDO's strategic agenda.

Efficiency will assess to what extent the organization is suitable to take on global forum functions that is whereas the resources at its disposal are efficient in performing various GF functions. How economically are inputs transferred into outputs?

Effectiveness will assess achievement of results, in line with the above. This can be in relation to producing an output (report or meeting) or, at a higher level, increased understanding of sustainable industrial development and solutions and accompanying actions (policy development and implementation).

Impact; it is not envisaged that impact will be measurable but the evaluation will look at progress towards impact, in terms of impact on the environment or on poverty.

Evaluation issues

The evaluation will cover but not be limited to the following issues;

- What are the main types and features of UNIDO Global Forum functions
- What are the principal expected results
- How are or could these results be defined, monitored or measured
- Which are/could be Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Have GF-specific objectives been achieved?

¹⁶Independent Evaluation of UNIDO Global forum activities in the area of Standards, metrology, Testing and Quality (2011)

- Are there or can intervention logics be developed for global forum functions? (concrete examples should be provided in the evaluation report)
- What are the main findings from the global forum assessments in the 2010/11 country evaluations?
- Is there a need to rethink the functionality of the global forum?
- How could the global forum function play a greater role in the achievement of UNIDO's strategic objectives?
- Is the organizational set-up and capacity conducive to GF activities?

Evaluation approach and methodology

The evaluation exercise will encompass review of relevant internal and external documents, interviews with UNIDO staff, a survey targeting UNIDO staff members (sample to be defined in inception report) representatives of Permanent Missions and counterpart ministries, a meta evaluation of GF chapters in country evaluations reports (2010-2012)), analyses of GF related responses in a survey of UNIDO Field Offices, conducted in 2011 and a case study of global forum functions in relation to the 40th session of the Industrial Development Board (IDB).

A first step will be to map various activities and outputs of the global forum function and to identify related objectives, .i.e. what was the intended outcomes or impact of the meeting, report etc. There will also be a mapping of the target group (s). The evaluation will also assess to what extent results of GF interventions are monitored and reported upon.

The assessment of the effectiveness of the global forum function will go beyond outputs and assess to what extent the outputs, (meeting, report, video) have been used to promote a strategic agenda and induce change and if the change can be traced. to what extent the outputs, (meeting, report, video)

In addition it will be reviewed to what extent gender mainstreaming or gender equality issues have been taken into account.

The assessment matrix will be prepared and, attached as Annex A, developed in the inception report. The inception report should follow the ODG/EVA template for inception reports, found in Annex A.

UNIDO country evaluations will be used and possibly further fine-tuned. The different steps are described in more detail below;

Meta evaluation of GF-related findings from 2010/11 Country Evaluations

Global Forum (GF) activities have been assessed in country evaluations conducted in 2010/11 and more specifically GF activities that have been initiated by UNIDO (or the United Nations system) to exchange and disseminate knowledge and information, as well as facilitate partnerships. Many of these interventions intended to produce an "output", but without a pre-identified client, with the purpose of increasing the understanding of sustainable industrial development issues. The assessment of global forum activities included:

- UNIDO GF activities nurturing national knowledge and dialogue globally and with regard to industrial development and ,

- activities at the national level, including TC projects, contributing to UNIDO GF activities and products

The framework provided in Annex A will be used for the assessments. As part of the thematic evaluation a meta evaluation will be conducted of the GF chapters in the country evaluation and findings synthesized in the thematic evaluation report.

UNIDO Staff Field Office survey

In order to develop a deeper understanding of global forum activities implemented, outputs produced and results thereof, GF aspects were included in a staff survey will be Field Office Survey, conducted of PTC staff, at HQ and in the field and RSF staff.2011. The sample related responses will defined in the inception be analyzed and findings presented in a separate chapter of the report.

UNIDO Global Forum Activities in SMTQ

The evaluation report on UNIDO global Forum activities in SMTQ, issued in 2011 will serve as an input to the evaluation.

Assessment of global forum functions implemented in the 40th session of the IDB (November 2012)

One UNIDO global forum event/output will be reviewed in more detail, following a case study approach. The event/output will be selected during the inception phase.

Time schedule and deliverables/outputs

The evaluation will be conducted in the second half of 2012. The final draft evaluation report should be issued in December 2012, at the latest.

Evaluation outputs include inception report, interview guidelines, survey instrument, assessment frameworks, a draft report and a final report.

The evaluation report will be written in English. The draft report will be circulated within UNIDO for technical validation and comments. Comments will be taken into consideration in preparing the final version of the report.

Evaluation team composition

The evaluation requires in-depth knowledge of evaluation, UNIDO and of UNIDO's global forum functions. The main competencies required for the evaluation are:

- Evaluation
- Results based management
- Technical competence in areas of UNIDO's mandate
- Ability to address relevant cross-cutting thematic issues, including gender
- Report drafting skills
- Communication skills
- Good interpersonal skills

The evaluation shall be carried out by three international consultants. There should be an adequate balance of women and men. Job Descriptions for individual team members figure in Annex B.

The UNIDO Evaluation Group will manage the evaluation and be responsible for the quality control of the evaluation process and of the report. All UNIDO evaluations are subject to quality assessments by the UNIDO Evaluation Group. The quality of the evaluation report will be assessed and rated against the criteria set forth in the Checklist on evaluation report quality, attached as Annex C.

ANNEX A: Framework for assessment of global forum activities

		GF contributions to national experience		National experience contributing to GF	
		Indicators	Means of verification	Indicators	Means of verification
Regional forums and conferences		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed learning effects of participants GF contents (e.g. standards) included in national policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview participants of such conferences from the country (incl. IDB, GA, etc.) National policy documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TC projects in country provided evidence for papers presented 	
Working/expert groups		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed learning effects of participants Expert group outputs used for national policies/programmes, including TC projects¹⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews of experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experts from country participate TC projects in country provided evidence for work groups 	
Active participation in United Nations activities		Not so relevant for country level effects; difficult to link with country concerns (would need a list of major events to be used as checklist)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of country case studies used at such meetings 	<p>Rather difficult to trace, but if a significant contribution is claimed by UNIDO or country:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Random interviews of selected participants to rate importance
Presentations at external meetings		Not so relevant for country level effects; difficult to link with country concerns (would need a list of major events to be used as checklist)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of country case studies used at such meetings 	<p>Rather difficult to trace, but if a significant contribution is claimed by UNIDO or country:</p> <p>Random interviews of selected participants to rate importance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADR references to
Publications		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand for publications in country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNIDO data on publication sales to the country 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National cases are referred to in ADR and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADR references to

¹⁷ An example for this is the expert groups arranged in the POPs field for non-combustion technologies, which later were used in several TC projects.

GF contributions to national experience		National experience contributing to GF	
Indicators	Means of verification	Indicators	Means of verification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of publications by local counterparts (e.g. manuals, tool boxes) Use of UNIDO statistics for national policy making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (compared to average) Interviews with project partners and other relevant institutions Interviews with ministry of industry and similar institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> other flagship publications 	country
Statistics and data collection			Not relevant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Norms and standards promoted by UNIDO are used in TC projects (e.g. COMFAR for feasibility studies; CP methods, PSD tool box; (this might require a list of such norms and standards that need to be checked) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of TC projects Interviews with project partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNIDO facilitates participation of country institutions in international standard setting (e.g. in MEA like Stockholm¹⁸) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with project managers and counterpart staff
Conventions, norms and standards			
Partnerships and networks including research agreements	Does not seem to be relevant		Does not seem to be relevant

¹⁸ The Stockholm convention has several technical committees. E.g. one of them decides on standard “emission factors” that are permissible under the convention for different industrial activities. The committees usually have representatives from different countries. A UNIDO POPs TC project could facilitate the inclusion of experts into such committees as a result of the experience gained in UNIDO projects.

Job Description

Thematic Evaluation of UNIDO's Global Forum Function

Post title:	International Evaluation Consultant
Duration:	1 month
Date required:	1 August 2012
Duty station:	UNIDO HQ, Vienna
Duties:	The Consultant will write a meta evaluation report, using the Global Forum (GF) chapters of 2010/11/12 country evaluations as inputs. Additionally, he/she will do a mapping of Global Forum activities planned or conducted by UNIDO during the last three years.

Duties	Duration	Outputs
Review of background documents and ToR of GF thematic evaluation	1 day	Review matrix
Review of country evaluations, extracting information for GF meta evaluation report and drafting of meta evaluation report	10 days	Meta evaluation report which will constitute a chapter of GF thematic evaluation report
Mapping of UNIDO GF activities planned or implemented during the last few years. This will be done through review of relevant UNIDO document, analyzing the Field Office survey responses and interviews with UNIDO staff members. Findings of the evaluation of the global forum function of the SMTQ programme (2011) will also be considered. Specific emphasis will be put on identifying intended outcomes and impact of GF interventions.	8 days	Chapter for GF thematic evaluation including table showing implemented or planned GF activities per type, function, branches and units and accompanying analytical text
Circulation of chapters for review and comments, incorporation of comments and finalization of the two chapters	2 days	
Total	21 days	

Qualifications:

- Advanced university degree in management and/or economics or other development related field;
- Extensive experience in evaluation and in developing evaluation manuals and methodology;
- Preferably, knowledge of UNIDO activities and experience in working with GF-related activities

Language:

- English

Background information:

- ToR of Global Forum Thematic Evaluation
- 2010/11/12 UNIDO Country Evaluation reports
- Evaluation of UNIDO Activities in the area of Standards, Metrology, Testing and Quality (SMTQ)
- FO Evaluation survey responses
- UNEG documents on evaluation of normative work

Impartiality:

According to UNIDO Rules, the Consultant must not have been involved in the preparation, implementation or supervision of Global Forum activities reviewed

Job Description

Thematic Evaluation of UNIDO's Global Forum Function

Post title: Senior Evaluation Consultant

Duration: 22 working days over period 15/11 to 21/12/2012

Date required: 15 November 2012

Duty station: UNIDO HQ and home based

Duties:

The Consultant will be responsible for drafting the evaluation report on UNIDO's Global Forum function using inputs from other team members. The evaluation is carried out in accordance with the approach paper developed for the evaluation and in cooperation with the UNIDO Evaluation Group (ODG/EVA). In particular, he/she will be expected to:

Duties	Duration	Location	Outputs
Review background documents, ToR of Global Forum thematic evaluation, FO survey, UNEG material on normative work and draft chapters.	2 days	home based	Revised review matrix Interview guidelines
Conduct interviews with UNIDO managers, Representatives of Permanent Missions and counterpart ministries. Developing a case study around a side event of the 40th session of the Industrial Development Board.	5 days	Vienna, HQ	Information and data collected for draft report
Analysis of collected information and drafting of chapters of the evaluation report including conclusions and recommendations and executive summary.	10 days	home based	Draft chapters, conclusions and recommendations and executive summary
Presentation of draft findings at UNIDO HQ and discussions with UNIDO managers on conclusions and recommendations.	2 days	Vienna, HQ	Reformulated conclusions and recommendations to feed into the Thematic GF report
Finalization of draft report for circulation within UNIDO	2 days	home based	Draft report
Incorporation of comments received.	1 days	home based	Final report
Total	22 days		

Qualifications:

- Advanced university degree in management and/or economics or other development related field;
- Extensive experience in strategic evaluations
- Knowledge of current aid modalities, including global forum and normative aspects
- Knowledge of the UN system desirable.
- Excellent analytical and drafting skills

Language:

- English

Background information:

- ToR of Global Forum Thematic Evaluation
- 2010/11/12 UNIDO Country Evaluation reports
- Evaluation of UNIDO Activities in the area of Standards, Metrology, Testing and Quality (SMTQ)
- FO Evaluation survey responses
- UNEG documents on evaluation of normative work
- Draft chapters prepared by team members
- UNEG Guidance on evaluation of normative work

Impartiality:

According to UNIDO Rules, the Consultant must not have been involved in the preparation, implementation or supervision of Global Forum activities reviewed

ANNEX C: Checklist on evaluation report quality

Checklist on evaluation report quality:

Independent Terminal Evaluation of the UNIDO Project

“Title.....”

(Project Number:)

Evaluation team leader:

Quality review done by:

Date:

<i>Report quality criteria</i>	<i>UNIDO Evaluation Group Assessment notes</i>	<i>Rating</i>
Report Structure and quality of writing		
The report is written in clear language, correct grammar and use of evaluation terminology. The report is logically structured with clarity and coherence. It contains a concise executive summary and all other necessary elements as per TOR.		
Evaluation objective, scope and methodology		
The evaluation objective is explained and the scope defined. The methods employed are explained and appropriate for answering the evaluation questions. The evaluation report gives a complete description of stakeholder’s consultation process in the evaluation. The report describes the data sources and collection methods and their limitations. The evaluation report was delivered in a timely manner so that the evaluation objective (e.g. important deadlines for presentations) was not affected.		
Evaluation object		
The logic model and/or the expected results chain (inputs, outputs and outcomes) of the object is clearly described. The key social, political, economic, demographic, and institutional factors that have a direct bearing on the object are described. The key stakeholders involved in the object implementation, including the implementing agency(s) and partners, other key stakeholders and their roles are described. The report identifies the implementation status of the object, including its phase of implementation and any significant changes (e.g. plans, strategies, logical frameworks) that have occurred over time and explains the implications of those changes for the evaluation.		

Findings and conclusions		
<p>The report is consistent and the evidence is complete (covering all aspects defined in the TOR) and convincing. The report presents an assessment of relevant outcomes and achievement of project objectives.</p> <p>The report presents an assessment of relevant external factors (assumptions, risks, impact drivers) and how they influenced the evaluation object and the achievement of results.</p> <p>The report presents a sound assessment of sustainability of outcomes or it explains why this is not (yet) possible.</p> <p>The report analyses the budget and actual project costs. Findings respond directly to the evaluation criteria and questions detailed in the scope and objectives section of the report and are based on evidence derived from data collection and analysis methods described in the methodology section of the report.</p> <p>Reasons for accomplishments and failures, especially continuing constraints, are identified as much as possible. Conclusions are well substantiated by the evidence presented and are logically connected to evaluation findings. Relevant cross-cutting issues, such as gender, human rights, and environment are appropriately covered.</p>		
Recommendations and lessons learned		
<p>The lessons and recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions presented in the report.</p> <p>The recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?').</p> <p>Recommendations are implementable and take resource implications into account.</p> <p>Lessons are readily applicable in other contexts and suggest prescriptive action.</p>		

Rating system for quality of evaluation reports

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1, and unable to assess = 0.

Annex B: Persons interviewed

UNIDO Headquarter	
Augusto Alcorta	SQA/DPR
Michele Clara	SQA/DPR
Bashir Conde	PTC/BPR/AFR
Mohamed Lamine Dhaoui	PTC/BIT
Johannes Dobinger	ODG/EVA
Michail Evstafiev	SQA/ACG
Lalith Goonatilake	TCB/OD
Fatou Haidara	ODG/PMO
Victor Hinojosa Barragan	PTC/BPR/LAC
Sei Hiskawa	PTC/BRP/ASP
Sam Hobohm	ODG/OSC
Anders Isaksen	PTC/BIT/ITU
Steffen Kaeser	PTC/TCB/CIU
Kazuki Kitaoka	SQA/OMD
Heinz Leuenberger	PTCEMB/OD
Claudia Linke Heep	PTC/OMD
Peter Loewe	ODG/EVA
Olga Memedovic	PTC/BRP/EUR
Sergio Miranda da Cruz	PTC/BRM
Azza Morssy	PTC/BRP/ARAB
Gerardo Pattaconi	PTC/BIT/CBL
Marina Ploutakhina	PTC/ECC/IEE

Sidi Menad Si Ahmed	PTC/MPB/OD
Philippe Scholtes	PTC/AGR
Nilgün Tas	PTC/BIT/CUP
Shyam Upadhyaya	SQA/DPR/STA
Wilfried Luetkenhorst	SQA/OMD
Representatives of UNIDO Member States	
Ana Teresa Dengo Benavides, Ambassador	Costa Rica
Alberto Groff, Councillor	Switzerland
Yukiko Harimoto, First Secretary	Japan
Marcin Korolec, Minister of the Environment	Poland
Dominika Krois, Councillor	EU
Kristian Odegaard, Minister Councillor	Norway
Felipe Flores Pinto, First-Secretary	Brazil
Niklas Ström, Councillor	Sweden

Annex C: Bibliography

UNIDO country evaluations:

Évaluation indépendante Burundi - Évaluation-pays des activités de l'ONUDI en République du Burundi, 2010

Independent UNIDO Country Evaluation - People's Republic of China, 2011

Independent Evaluation Report – Country evaluation India, 2011

Rapport d'évaluation indépendante Maroc – Évaluation-pays, 2011

Independent Evaluation Report Mozambique - Country Evaluation, 2011

Independent UNIDO Country Evaluation – Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2012

Independent UNIDO Country Evaluation – Rwanda, 2011

Independent Evaluation Report South Africa - Country Evaluation, 2011

Independent UNIDO Country Evaluation – United Republic of Tanzania, 2010

Independent Country Evaluation -UNIDO activities in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, 2012

Evaluación independiente de la ONUDI. Evaluación de país. CUBA. April 2012

Other evaluations:

Thematic Evaluation of Field Office Performance, 2012, Draft report

Independent Thematic Evaluation - UNIDO Cluster and Networking Development Initiatives, 2010

Independent Thematic Evaluation - ITPO Network, 2010

Independent Evaluation Report - UNIDO Global Forum Activities in SMTQ

UNIDO Global Forum activities in the area of Standards, Metrology, Testing and Quality, 2011

Thematic Evaluation of UNIDO's International Technology Centres, 2011

UNIDO, Process Evaluation – UNIDO's Field Mobility Policy, 2010

UNIDO, Independent Evaluation Strategic Research Project COMPID – Combating Marginalization and Poverty through Industrial Development (COMPID), 2009

Other documents:

Norad, Norway's Trade Related Assistance through Multilateral Organizations: A Synthesis Study, Oslo 2011

UNEG, Handbook for Conducting Evaluations of Normative Work in the UN System, Annotated Outline (draft), 2012



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