

## **Request for Proposals**

### External Evaluation of The NDC Partnership 2018-2020 Work Program

Deadline for submission: Friday, 22 October 2021

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This request for proposals (RFP), outlines the terms of reference for the external evaluation of the **NDC Partnership 2018-2020 Work Program**. This includes an assessment of two special initiatives introduced during the course of Work Program implementation in response to emerging country needs: the **Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP)** and the **Economic Advisory Initiative (EAI)**.

The primary objective of this evaluation is to assess the extent to which results were achieved from 2018-2020 Work Program implementation (January 2018 - December 2020), CAEP implementation (July 2019-December 2021), and EAI implementation (June 2020-December 2021).

This evaluation, commissioned by the NDC Partnership, managed by its Support Unit, and administered by the World Resources Institute, is expected to start in **late November 2021 and conclude by 28 February 2022. The proposal deadline is 22 October 2021.** This evaluation will be a fixed price plus reimbursable type contract based on the deliverables outlined below.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

### **About the NDC Partnership**

Launched at COP 22 in Marrakesh in November 2016, the NDC Partnership is a coalition of countries, institutions, and non-state actors, working together to mobilize support and achieve ambitious climate goals while enhancing sustainable development. The Partnership's main role is to support country access to the technical assistance, knowledge, and financial support they have prioritized to implement their NDCs and make progress towards achieving 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development goals, turning goals into action. Collectively, Partnership members work to reinforce international political support and mobilize technical and financial resources for climate action, using knowledge and learning from climate successes to accelerate global transformation.

The NDC Partnership is guided by two Steering Committee Co-chairs from a developing country and a developed country, a twelve-member Steering Committee represented by developing and developed countries, and institutional partners, plus three ex officio members. NDC Partnership members play various mutually supporting roles, but the vast majority of implementing and development partners

(i.e., institutional and developed country members) support developing country members with technical and financial resources to accelerate NDC action. The NDC Partnership Support Unit serves as the Partnership's Secretariat and is hosted by the World Resources Institute in Washington, D.C. as well as by the UNFCCC in Bonn, Germany. Membership continues to expand rapidly, reaching a total of 195 members (115 countries, 44 institutions, and 36 associate members) as of October 2021.

The Partnership was founded on the idea that while significant international technical assistance, expertise, financing, and other resources for climate action exist, these were not being deployed effectively or in coordinated way, to maximize efforts towards achieving Paris Climate Agreement goals. Thus, the Partnership was established to facilitate collaboration and charged with providing fast, nimble, and catalytic support for accelerated climate action. A central role of the Partnership is to pair country mitigation and adaptation needs with relevant climate actors and available support. The NDC Partnership is a young initiative akin to a start-up, intended to innovate where there are opportunities and adapt to fast changing circumstances to meet goals.

While the NDC Partnership was formally announced in late 2016, the Partnership initiated its secretariat functions and operations in September 2017, and the Partnership's Steering Committee approved its [2018-2020 Work Program](#) and Monitoring & Evaluation Framework (MEF) in September 2018 and in May 2019, respectively.

## Global Context

There is even greater urgency to turn NDC plans into action in the coming five years. Based on the [UNFCCC's September 2021 NDC Synthesis Report](#) covering 86 NDC submissions received thus far<sup>1</sup>, GHG emissions will decrease by 12% in 2030 compared to 2010. But this is vastly insufficient to prevent a global temperature rise of 1.5 C degrees by the end of the century. According to the [August 2021 IPCC report](#), a 45% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2030 is needed to limit temperature rise to 1.5 C degrees, or at least a 25% reduction by 2030 to limit warming to 2C degrees. These assessments lay bare the massive 33% or 13% gap in emissions reduction needed to remain within 1.5 C or 2 C degrees respectively, by 2100. Meanwhile, global climate finance contributions remain starkly below the Paris Agreement pledge of USD 100 billion annually from developed countries. By [OECD's account](#), while climate financing for developing countries increased from USD 71.2 billion to USD 78.9 billion between 2017 and 2018,<sup>2</sup> there is a significant shortfall of over USD 20 billion in support to developing countries remains.

Looking ahead, the UNFCCC is set to complete a Global Stocktake (GST) of Paris Agreement implementation in 2023, assessing international progress towards achieving Paris Agreement goals. In addition, countries will also begin anew to prepare their 2025 NDC submissions to the UNFCCC in the coming years. While there is uncertainty around how COVID-19 will play out in countries and globally, it's clear that the countries as well as institutional partners will need to manage the current health and economic fallout from the pandemic, along with new challenges to climate action implementation.

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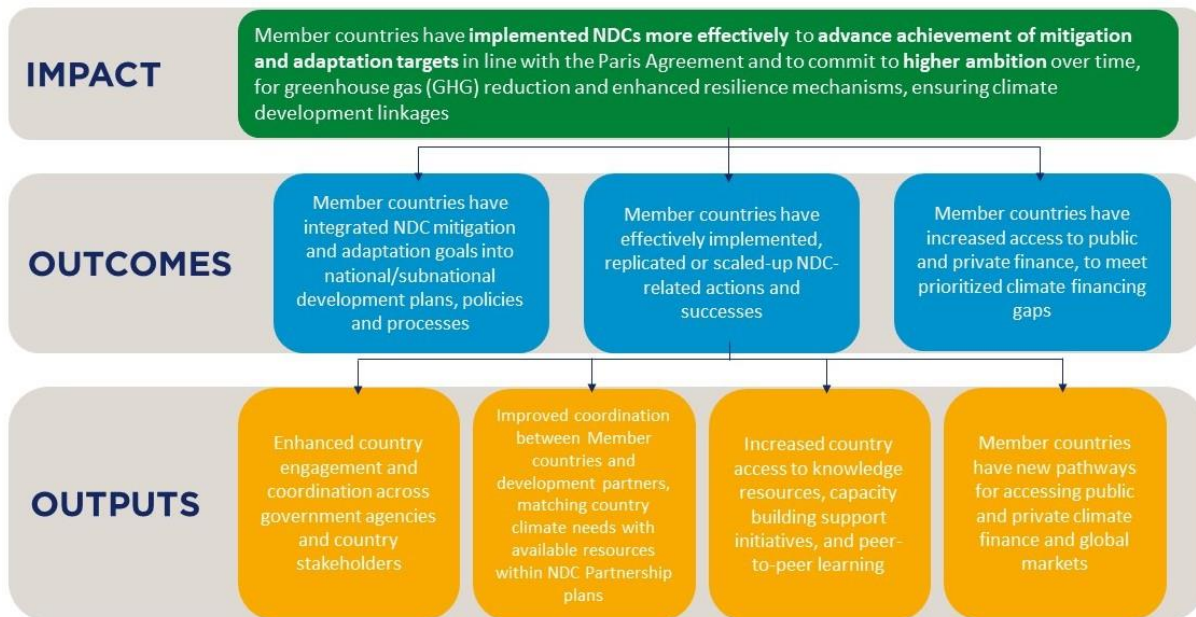
<sup>1</sup> Based on data available as of 30 July 2021 from 86 updated or new NDCs submitted by 113 Parties. These new or updated NDCs encompass about 59% of Parties to the Paris Agreement and account for about 49% of global GHG emissions.

<sup>2</sup> This includes public bilateral funds, public multilateral funds, export credits, and mobilized private funds.

Within this global context, the focus of this evaluation will be to identify ways in which the NDC Partnership can: build on its established achievements and comparative strengths (vis a vis mandate and of members); innovate and improve its effectiveness to catalyze climate action and meet Paris Agreement goals; and find pockets of opportunity to address country needs, while navigating current global challenges.

## The NDC Partnership’s Work Program for 2018-2020

The NDC Partnership [2018-2020 Work Program](#) and Monitoring & Evaluation Framework outline the Partnership’s theory of change and results framework for accelerating NDC implementation. Key results that the 2018-2020 Work Program sets out to achieve are illustrated in the graphic below and focus on assisting countries towards more effective NDC implementation to achieve mitigation and adaptation targets, and to enhance NDC ambition.



The Partnership works to achieve these results through four main workstreams: 1) country engagement to support country-level NDC coordination; 2) expanding access to NDC knowledge resources and learning; 3) facilitating access to finance for NDC implementation; and 4) cross-cutting activities related to membership outreach, governance, and communication.

Along with the Work Program and M&E Framework, there are four other significant governing documents. Between 2017-2018, the Partnership developed two formative documents: its [Country Engagement Strategy](#), and [Knowledge and Learning Strategy](#) which outline the strategies of two major Partnership workstreams. The Partnership also introduced its [Gender Strategy](#) in September 2019, which identifies ways to support countries in developing gender-responsive climate action. In addition, the Partnership initiated its [Youth Engagement Plan](#) (YEP) in November 2020, proposing key actions for meaningful youth engagement in global and local NDC Action. Gender and youth-related indicators were integrated within the Work Program’s M&E Framework.

During 2018-2020 Work Program implementation, the Partnership introduced two special initiatives in response to new challenges and emerging country needs. Countries needed support to prepare enhanced and more ambitious new or updated NDC submissions to UNFCCC in 2020-2021 and requested ad hoc support to ensure that economic COVID-19 recovery packages were climate-compatible. Thus, in July 2019, the Partnership launched its [Climate Action Enhancement Package](#) (CAEP) initiative, opening up a new channel for country support, and designed to deliver targeted, fast-tracked technical support to enhance the quality and ambition of NDCs, and effectiveness of NDC implementation.<sup>3</sup> In June 2020, the Partnership initiated its [Economic Advisory Initiative](#) (EAI) to support climate-resilient economic recovery responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, offering to embed technical economic advisors into government finance and planning ministries as they prepared green recovery packages. The CAEP and EAI initiatives have contributed to the overall objectives of the Work Program which the Work Program evaluation should consider. However, CAEP and EAI will also be assessed independently as ad hoc initiatives; these two more narrowly focused assessments will fall within the scope of this evaluation.

A Mid-Term Review of the 2018-2020 Work Program was conducted in 2019 and can provide a benchmark on progress at the Work Program's midpoint, for reference.

## Contributions from bilateral donors

Australia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom have supported the work of the Support Unit of the NDC Partnership with grant funding for the 2018-2020 period. In addition, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom contributed directly to the Partnership's Technical Assistance Fund (TAF), enabling the Partnership to deepen technical assistance to countries as they updated their 2020 NDCs and prepared to fast-track implementation. The NDC Partnership Support Unit provides narrative and financial reports to bilateral donors through regular donor reporting processes that are coordinated and administered by the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the UNFCCC.

## 3. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, AND SCOPE

### Purpose

The purpose of this external final evaluation is to document key achievements, lessons, and challenges coming out of 2018-2020 Work Program implementation and recommend strategic actions to improve the effective delivery of the current 2021-2025 Work Program. This will include a formal review of the 2018-2020 Work Program, and dedicated reviews of two special initiatives (CAEP and EAI) which sprang from emerging country needs during Work Program implementation.

Specifically, evaluation recommendations, lessons and insights will be used to inform strategic decision-making on:

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<sup>3</sup> For additional CAEP information see:

[https://ndcpartnership.org/sites/default/files/NDC\\_Partnerhip\\_CAEP\\_Implementation\\_Note\\_FINAL.pdf](https://ndcpartnership.org/sites/default/files/NDC_Partnerhip_CAEP_Implementation_Note_FINAL.pdf)

- **Improving programmatic and operational aspects of 2021-2025 Work Program implementation** facilitated by the Support Unit, for consideration by the Management Team of the Support Unit and the Co-Chairs of the NDC Partnership, and for Steering Committee consideration during its Spring 2022 Work Program review.

## Objectives and Scope

The key objectives of this evaluation are to:

- Provide a **high-level assessment of the NDC Partnership's 2018-2020 Work Program theory of change and contributions to impact level results**, as relevant. **(5%)**
- Assess the extent to which the **2018-2020 Work Program achieved stated outcome and output results** as defined in its M&E Framework (between January 2018 and December 2020), and **capture the achievements, added value, lessons, insights, and challenges** from the implementation. **(70%)**

This includes:

- **An assessment of cross-cutting areas of climate finance, gender-responsive climate action, and youth engagement**, considering the goals and objectives in the Partnership's Gender Strategy, Youth Engagement Plan, and climate finance goals per the Work Program (between January 2018 and December 2020).
  - **A dedicated assessment of the Partnership's CAEP initiative** (from July 2019 through December 2021). This assessment will look specifically at the extent to which CAEP support led to: 1) more effective NDC implementation by countries to achieve mitigation and adaptation targets; and 2) enhanced 2020/2021 NDC submissions (as defined in CAEP documents).
  - **A dedicated assessment of the Partnership's Economic Advisory Initiative** (from June 2020 through December 2021). This assessment will examine the extent to which this initiative has precipitated: 1) economic planning that incorporates climate-compatible growth in COVID-19 economic recovery responses and recovery plan alignment with country NDCs; and 2) increased climate finance through the identification of climate financing projects, the development of resource mobilization strategies, and the establishment of related financial instruments.
  - An assessment of the extent to which **Mid-Term Review findings and recommendations** were taken up, as relevant.
- Assess the **performance of the NDC Partnership and its operational processes in implementing program activities**, including a review of the different roles played by the Support Unit and members (developed countries, developing countries, institutional members, and associate members). **(10%)**
  - **Propose recommendations to inform 2021-2025 Work Program implementation (15%)**, particularly on:
    - Harnessing the strengths of members



- Deploying in-country support at speed and scale (including, accelerating access to climate finance, supporting major emerging economies, facilitating inclusive whole-of-society approaches, supporting NDC enhancement)
- Turning knowledge and learning into action.

The external evaluation team will assess NDC Partnership programming according to the elements outlined under the key objectives listed above, evaluated against the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, and sustainability.<sup>4</sup> (The evaluation team will outline key questions of inquiry against these OECD-DAC criteria for the 2018-2020 Work Program, cross-cutting issues, and the two special initiatives, CAEP and EAI.) Evaluation recommendations will focus on how to improve future Work Program implementation, as well as highlight strategic priority areas for the 2021-2025 Work Program period, particularly as the Partnership shifts from start-up mode to a more mature entity.

Any evaluation of the Work Program and special initiatives will need to be considered in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (declared by WHO on 11 March 2020). This includes considerations related to constraints posed by the pandemic and other global events, as well as the Partnership's ability to adjust strategies and operations in response to shifting conditions and needs.

## 4. DELIVERABLES

The main deliverables of this evaluation include:

- **Inception Note:** setting out a proposed evaluation methodology and a work plan for the conducting the evaluation. This will include the articulation of key questions framed around the OECD-DAC criteria mentioned above, approaches to measuring progress and learning, approaches to assessing implementation, and methods for data collection and analysis.
- **Final Evaluation Report:** highlighting 2018-2020 Work Program progress and achievements, NDC Partnership strengths and weaknesses, key challenges and lessons, and recommendations for improving each component listed under the objectives above. The report will include an executive summary, with annexes reflecting detailed information and analysis. The evaluation team will provide the NDC Partnership with a draft evaluation report for review and comment before submitting the final report. However, the evaluation team will have ultimate prerogative on the content of the final report.
- **Final Reports on the dedicated CAEP assessment, and the dedicated Economic Advisory Initiative assessment:** detailing the progress and key achievements, the strengths and weaknesses of each initiative, key challenges, lessons, and recommendations for future initiatives.
- **Presentation of evaluation findings:** including a PowerPoint presentation summarizing key findings, recommendations, and conclusions, along with the delivery of a presentation on the evaluation findings, recommendations, and conclusions to the NDC Partnership Support Unit, and another presentation to Steering Committee Co-Chairs.

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<sup>4</sup> For more information on OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, see <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

## 5. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation team will be responsible for designing the evaluation to achieve the objectives set out in section 3, collecting data and analyzing information obtained. This will be elaborated in an inception note that outlines the specific plans for the evaluation, which will be approved by the NDC Partnership, with input from the Steering Committee Co-Chairs.

The evaluation methodology will include these main components:

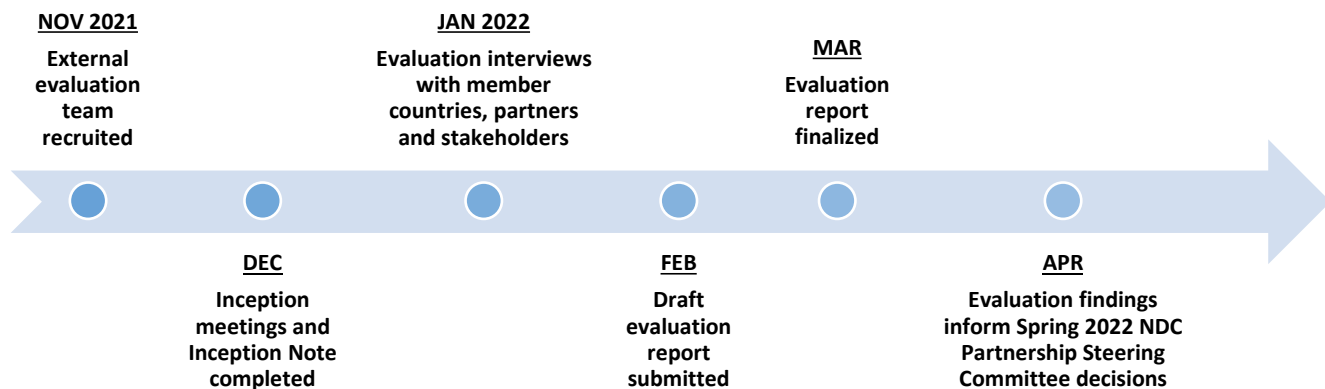
- **A desk review** of key governing documents of the NDC Partnership, various progress reports (e.g., various progress reports prepared for Steering Committee meetings, donor reports, Partnership in Action reports), and work program monitoring data and information, inter alia.
- **Informant interviews** with the NDC Partnership Steering Committee Co-Chairs, Management Team of the Support Unit, Regional Managers, as well as a sample of developed country members, developing country members, institutional members, and associate members (at least five in each category and with balanced geographical country representation).
- **Field visits and virtual meetings** for in-depth discussions with four to five countries where the NDC Partnership has significant in-country engagement.

The evaluation team is encouraged to visit two to three countries and interview a total of four to five countries. However, with uncertainty surrounding business-related travel due to COVID-19, it is anticipated that a portion of the review will be conducted virtually. There may also be some limited in-person interaction at the NDC Partnership's secretariat offices in Washington, DC and Bonn, Germany. This may change as COVID-19 circumstances unfold.

The NDC Partnership will establish a team to support the evaluation process; provide information on the Partnership's systems, strategies, and outcomes; and identify partners and other stakeholders familiar with the Partnership's work that the evaluation team can contact.

## 6. TIMING

Key evaluation points are outlined below. The evaluation is anticipated to begin in late November 2021, with informant interviews with members and other stakeholders taking place between January and February 2022. A final evaluation report will be submitted by early March 2022 prior to the NDC Partnership's 2022 Spring Steering Committee meeting.



## 7. BUDGET

The NDC Partnership will consider proposals up to USD 125,000 inclusive of labor and qualifying expenses.

- Best pricing in the initial proposals, with pricing valid for 120 days.
- A proposed budget breakdown of costs. Allowable costs include consultant salaries, project related supplies, research expenses, communication expenses, and travel expenses.

## 8. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

The NDC Partnership invites proposals for the execution of this external evaluation by a team of external consultants, for submission **by 5:00 pm (EST) on Friday, 22 October 2021**. Top candidates will be interviewed between 25-29 October and a final determination will be made by 5 November. The evaluation is expected to start on 22 November 2021.

### Requirements

The evaluation team and proposals will be assessed against the below criteria. The Team Leader should have at least 5 years of experience in (a) and (b).

- Experience conducting independent assessments of the performance of international non-profit organizations, international organizations both in their programmatic work and their support functions; Experience in evaluations related to climate change or coordination is a substantial asset;
- Significant international or country experience related to the management, development, coordination implementation of climate change and sustainable development programs;
- Demonstrated experience in using robust, mixed methods to evaluate complex, international programs;
- Familiarity with the countries where the NDC Partnership works ([See our website for countries where the NDC Partnership is actively engaged](#)); and



- e. Demonstrated experience and expertise in key areas of focus for the NDC Partnership (NDC enhancement, climate finance, gender mainstreaming, youth engagement, whole of society approaches, mainstreaming climate action into plans and budgets).

## Proposal content

Prospective consultants should submit:

- a. Management, key personnel and staffing plan. This should also include a statement of interest describing the proposed team, the CVs of team members and how they will be assigned to the implementation of tasks described in the proposed methodology and according to the requirements mentioned above.
- b. One example of a similar assessment, along with two references from a previous assessment.
- c. A brief narrative proposal for delivering the scope of work (up to five pages), including the proposed methodology and work plan, key questions to help guide the work on each of the major elements of the evaluation; and
- d. A proposed budget with breakdown of costs.

## Submission deadline

All proposals must be sent by **5:00 pm (EST) on Friday, 22 October 2021**, in electronic format to:

Whitney Pierson

Operations Manager

NDC Partnership Support Unit

E-mail: [whitneypierson@ndcpartnership.org](mailto:whitneypierson@ndcpartnership.org), with a copy to [lisa.bow@ndcpartnership.org](mailto:lisa.bow@ndcpartnership.org)

## Selection process

A shortlist of potential consultants will be identified by the NDC Partnership Support Unit staff employed by WRI and will be based on the strength of the consultant or team, the quality of the proposal, and the cost of the services. These services will be procured by the World Resources Institute. Work is expected to begin in late November 2021.