**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Mid-Term Evaluation of Ukraine Reforms Architecture 2.0**

**Background**

The Ukraine Reforms Architecture (URA) is a **comprehensive technical assistance programme deployed by the EBRD, in partnership with the European Union, to support critical reform processes in Ukraine**. It is financed from the Ukraine Stabilisation and Sustainable Growth Multi-Donor Account (MDA)[[1]](#footnote-1) managed by the EBRD.

URA was designed as a holistic mechanism for **stimulating systemic change in Ukraine’s public institutions** and **improving the business climate** in the country. URA fills the critical capacity gaps in Ukraine’s public institutions by supplying reform talent at all levels of government. Since 2016, more than 200 Ukrainian reformers have worked in the project’s various components and contributed to dozens of reform outcomes, strategies and policies.

URA’s operations rest on a number of cornerstone principles: providing support to committed reform champions, ensuring sustainability of reform capacity-building efforts through implementation of Public Administration Reform (PAR), drawing on Ukrainian reform talent and ensuring local ownership of the reform process, and offering demand-driven, results-oriented and flexible assistance in focal points of Ukraine’s public administration.

URA is composed of two mutually reinforcing components:

* The Reforms Delivery Office (RDO) placed in the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, coordinating and overseeing the reform processes across the Ukrainian administration
* Reform Support Teams (RSTs) currently embedded in nine Ministries and agencies to manage the implementation of sectoral reforms. RSTs are a group of Ukrainian experts, hired from outside the public administration, with the overall objective of facilitating implementation of key reforms and establishing a new generation of reform-oriented Ukrainian citizens motivated to enter public service in support of processes of change and modernisation of Ukraine’s government at all levels. They provide targeted, temporary expert support to assist Ministries and agencies in the design and implementation of priority sectoral reforms and restructuring of the Ministries themselves. RSTs are active at the Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Development of Economy, Trade and Agriculture, Ministry of Communities and Territories Development, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Ministry of Education and Science, State Agency of Automobile Roads (Ukravtodor), State Customs Service and State Customs Service.

The teams under these components have worked on a wide array of priority reform areas, among which are Public Finance Management, Tax and Customs, State-owned Banks and Improvement of International Financial Cooperation Process, Privatization and State-owned Enterprises, Business Climate Improvement, Public Administration Reform, E-governance and Anticorruption, Climate Policy, Water Resources and Waste Management, Energy Efficiency, Transport (Railway, Road, Maritime, Inland Waterways, Aviation), Construction Industry, Education (secondary and vocational), Social Security System and Land Reform.

URA 2.0 introduced several enhancements:

* Strengthened coordination and oversight through Joint Advisory Committees;
* Enhanced results-based monitoring and evaluation through a comprehensive M&E Framework;
* Reinforced sustainability mechanism through the Reformers Hub.
1. **Objectives of the Assignment**

The main objectives of this assignment are:

* Support the programme’s accountability function and serve as a vehicle for quality assurance of URA 2.0 interventions;
* Generate “lessons learnt” from the URA 2.0 operations to inform current and future programming across the host institutions;
* Assess and report on the outcomes achieved through the URA programme;
* Formulate recommendations for improving the programme design, theory of change, data collection and monitoring mechanisms, and implementation.

This assignment is expected to take place during the period of February–March. Submission of the preliminary report is foreseen for 15 March 2021. Submission of the final report is scheduled provisionally for 31 March 2021.

Findings and conclusions from this evaluation will be shared with MDA donors and other stakeholders.

1. **Scope of the Assignment**

The assignment will consist of a comprehensive review of the URA 2.0 programme portfolio and activities during the period of April 2020 - February 2021, draw “lessons learnt” and make recommendations for improvements. The evaluation will focus on the operational aspects of the programme, but their assessment will be done through the prism of the programme’s relevance, performance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. Specifically, evaluation will do the following:

* Provide an overall assessment of the results achieved through URA 2.0. support during April 2020 –February 2021, with particular focus on the design and implementation of key sectoral reforms and the improvement of capacity of host institutions in line with the Public Administration Reform, for which an in-depth assessment is required;
* Provide an analysis of whether the URA 2.0 enhancements improved the responsiveness of the programme to the needs of URA host institutions;
* Based on the analysis of results and enhancements present key findings, draw key “lessons learnt” and provide clear and forward-looking recommendations for adjustments to the URA 2.0 programme.
1. **Data Availability**

The evaluation will be based on the programme monitoring and evaluation (M&E) reports, quarterly RST/RDO progress reports, the 3-month assessment data and primary data collection (interviews/focus groups) in the field. Additionally, there is a pre-existing evaluation of the programme completed by the EBRD in 2019.

1. **Evaluation Questions**

Relevance

* Ascertain the relevance of the URA 2.0 support to national reform needs, goals and priorities, including linkages with the Public Administration Reform. This may include an analysis of alignment of the URA 2.0. priorities with those of the Government of Ukraine and assessment of the extent to which the URA intervention contributes to the progress in sectoral reforms and PAR, as well as the extent to which the URA intervention is consistent with the capacity development needs and priorities of the Ministries/Agencies.
* Assess how the URA 2.0 programme responded to major challenges to reform implementation.

Efficiency

* Review the cost-efficiency of the URA programme, with an analysis of the programme’s outcomes against its input costs; in particular, consider whether the interventions are economically worthwhile, given possible alternative benchmarks in Ukraine.
* Review the M&E Framework specifically looking at (a) adequacy of the indicators, (b) tracking and monitoring of results, and provide recommendations on improving the framework and indicators.

Effectiveness and Sustainability of Results

* Provide an examination of the effectiveness and sustainability of the URA 2.0 programme, by (a) ascertaining progress in the achievement of outcomes in the thematic areas of the URA intervention; (b) analysing areas for potential improvements; (c) assessing URA 2.0 contribution to key reform achievements (outcomes) in terms of key outputs.
* Provide an in-depth analysis of the current stage of programme implementation, assessing the anticipated progress in achieving the intended outcomes. Identify and analyse the main factors influencing results. This may include looking at how URA 2.0 leverages its resources, strategically positions itself and establishes partnerships with other TA projects.
* Assess the contribution of the URA 2.0 to the capacity development of the host institutions in line with the intended results, including the consideration of anticipated and unanticipated, positive and negative effects.
* Analyse to what extent the identified changes can be attributed to the URA intervention.
* Assess whether the results produced by the URA intervention could be maintained after the cessation of external support.

“Lessons Learnt”

* Identify key “lessons learnt” in the main focus areas and overall programme implementation, that can be leveraged for strengthening the URA 2.0 design and operations, and improving the programme performance, effectiveness and sustainability in the future. Present key success cases and challenges (including unintended outcomes) as “learning points”.
1. **Methodology**

A variety of methodological approaches and techniques may be utilised, including *desk reviews, stakeholder interviews, case studies, and site visits*. The Evaluator will review progress reports, monitoring and evaluation reports and the existing assessment documents to build a good understanding of the URA programme within the wider context of reform processes taking place in Ukraine. Stakeholder consultations are to be scheduled as needed. The Evaluator will meet with the URA 2.0. team, the implementing teams (RST/RDO), the EBRD and EU representatives. The team will visit project sites as required.

The Evaluator may select 3 to 5 case studies of beneficiaries with an outstanding/unsatisfactory track record in the implementation of reform priorities, to examine in greater depth the role of the URA programme in the capacity building of the host institutions and the effectiveness of the reform process.

1. **Deliverables**

The Evaluator will be expected to provide the following deliverables:

* A comprehensive Action Plan, detailing the overall approach
* A Preliminary Report by the Evaluator;
* A comprehensive Final Report on the URA 2.0 programme evaluation;
* Annexes with detailed empirical and evaluative evidence;
* A visualisation product (graph) showing the rating on programme’s progress and achievement of results.

The final evaluation report shall be composed of:

* Executive Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations;
* Background, including an analysis of the political and economic context of Ukraine;
* Section on Programme Relevance;
* Section on Programme Performance (Effectiveness and Sustainability);
* “Lessons Learnt”;
* Conclusions and Recommendations;
* Annexes (statistics, stakeholders consulted, documentation reviewed).

Towards the end of the Assignment, the Evaluator will discuss preliminary findings and recommendations with the EBRD URA team. The Evaluator will use the feedback provided to finalise the report. The Evaluator is responsible for submitting the final report to the EBRD URA Team no later than two weeks after presenting preliminary findings.

1. **Management of the Evaluation**

URA 2.0 will create an Evaluation Steering Committee (SC) which will include representatives of the EBRD URA Team and EBRD management. The role of the SC is to advise and provide feedback throughout the evaluation (draft report, final report).

1. **Qualifications of the Evaluator**

The Evaluator shall be independent and impartial (not affiliated with the URA programme or any donors and stakeholders).

He or she should have competence in project/programme evaluation and substantial experience completing similar assignments in the context of international development projects.

In particular, the Evaluator should demonstrate the following:

Essential Skills:

* Postgraduate degree in economics, international development, public policy, project management or a related field;
* Extensive experience in the area of programme evaluation, particularly relating to national reforms, institutional capacity building and development;
* Strong knowledge of the relevant methodological approaches and experience in applying qualitative and quantitative research and evaluation methods;
* Understanding of reform processes including in the areas of economic development, good governance, public administration and political economy of transition economies;
* In country or regional experience will be considered an advantage;
* Excellent written and verbal skills in English, knowledge of Ukrainian will be considered an advantage;
* Knowledge of the role of the EBRD and its operations in Ukraine is desirable.

1. **Assignment Timeline**

The expected start of the assignment is 15 February 2021. Deadline for the submission of the preliminary report is 15 March 2021. The final report should be submitted provisionally on 31 March 2021.

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| **Activity** | w 1 | w2 | w3 | w4 | w5 | w6 | w7 |
| Start of the Evaluation and initial Evaluation Steering Committee meeting | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Submission of the Action Plan | X |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Desk review | X | X |  |  |  |  |  |
| Data gathering and analysis |  |  | X | X | X |  |  |
| Meetings of programme staff and evaluator |  |  |  |  | X | X | X |
| Submission of the Preliminary Report |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| Feedback of the Evaluation Steering Committee  |  |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| Submission of the Final Report |  |  |  |  |  |  | X |

w = week

1. **Submission Rules and Assessment Criteria**

Expressions of interest should be submitted to the EBRD URA team at *kurnyshy@ebrd.com* in English no later than 5 February 2021. Research work should be planned for the period running from 15 February to 31 March 2021.

The Expression of Interest should be comprised of:

1. A detailed technical and financial proposal (up to 2 pages)
2. Candidate’s CV including references and their contact details
3. Example of a recently completed evaluation report (sanitized copies will be accepted).

Selection criteria (the criteria used to assess the relevance of candidates include):

* Understanding of and reflection on the Terms of Reference, tasks and deliverables;
* Quality of the methodological approach;
* Qualifications and previous experience of the Evaluator;
* Remuneration.
* Knowledge of Ukrainian/Russian is desirable, but not compulsory
1. Contributors to the MDA are Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union, the largest donor. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)