Reviewer's report

Title: A Framework for Assessing the Impact of the United Nations Fellowship Programmes

Version: 1 Date: 14 July 2009

Reviewer: Ali A sadeghi Hassan Abadi

Reviewer's report:

• Major compulsory revisions:
  None

• Minor essential revisions:
  1-Page 5 under "Recognising the constraints" it should be : Key methodological constraints... and the word Methodological should be omitted from (a). This is in accordance with the categories presented in the beginning of page 13 under 'Conclusion'.
  2-It should be clear that the discussion under “The contribution analysis approach “ starting in page 7 is still the continuation of the previous paragraph or not. If not the preceding discussion is not complete and is mainly referring to “fidelity of program”.
  3- Page 11 the title in the middle of the page : impact evaluation should be added to the end of the title.

• Discretionary revisions:
  1-The constraints are very well identified, classified and presented but we need more practical ways of tackling them
  2-The stakeholders vary among different organizations and in some cases the most influential of them are either inaccessible or reluctant to cooperate. This should be considered as a major constraint as it is mentioned in page 14 that the success of the task depends on their cooperation.
  3- The table of indicators, methods and assumptions presented in the Annex includes a very comprehensive and useful list of these items as related to the six stages of the fellowship pathway to be evaluated. It can be used as a very helpful guide for monitoring and evaluation of each one of the six stages. The main point is to know the probability of each assumption (when it has a positive impact) and what practical measures should be taken to overcome the difficulties.
  4- It is good to see that the authors have agreed with the recommendation of 17th SFO Meeting as presented in the box on page 15 when it says: “...the Meeting...adopts this specific modality...as the platform for future implementation and evaluation...”. It should be emphasized that the model is a very helpful one in monitoring and provides a framework for an overall evaluation than focusing on “impact assessment".
**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'