Guidance for bilateral projects

August 2018

HUOM: Tunnisteosiot alusta (pvm, laatija, kenelle laadittu jne) puuttuvat tästä versiosta.

Note: If the Programme requires a ’review’ to solve a specific problems rather than a comprehensive (mid-term) evaluation, the procedures and review questions can be simplified radically.

**Terms of Reference for an Evaluation**

[This format is a tool to support the drafting of the Terms of Reference for an evaluation. It is important start every evaluation process by clearly defining what are the priority issues to be evaluated. The format provides a comprehensive checklist of elements that may be relevant in an evaluation. This is a menu from which the appropriate issues corresponding to priorities are selected.]

1. **Background to the evaluation**
   1. **Programme context (policy, country, regional, global, thematic context)**

[Describe the broader context of the programme that will be evaluated. Set the bigger scene for the evaluation. Include development objectives of the partner country, incl. human rights and cross-cutting objectives, global development objectives and commitments that are relevant for the evaluation, Finland’s development policy, relevant sector, thematic and geographic priorities, including the cross-cutting objectives, and linkages to other relevant partners and interventions.]

* 1. **Description of the programme to be evaluated**

[Briefly describe the programme that will be evaluated. Include the programme objectives, implementation strategies, resources for implementation ( i.e. summarise the intervention logic). Include issues related to the promotion of human rights and gender equality, reduction of inequalities and promotion of climate sustainability. Describe the stakeholders and their roles, including both final beneficiaries and involved institutions.]

* 1. **Results of previous evaluations**

[Describe what is already known through previous evaluations. What value will this evaluation add? ]

1. **Rationale, purpose and objectives of the evaluation**

**[**Define the rationale and purpose, including why is the evaluation undertaken, why at this particular point of time, and for whom. Explain the use of the results: Who will use the results of the evaluation? In what decision making situation will the results be used? How will the results be used for learning and/or accountability functions?

Set priority objectives of the evaluation clarify what issues, analysis and recommendations the evaluation will focus on. Describe **2-3 priority issues** of the evaluation.]

1. **Scope of the evaluation**

[Define what time span does the evaluation cover, what stakeholder groups will be involved, what geographical area does the evaluation cover, what connections to other supporting sectors and themes does the evaluation address.

The most important thing is to clearly define what is excluded from the evaluation, and explain the reasons why.]

1. **Issues to be addressed and evaluation questions**

[The priority evaluation questions are presented by criteria. **A maximum of 12 evaluation question may be included.**  If some criteria are left out, explain the reasons for this. Other criteria may also be added if relevant for the evaluation. While the evaluation questions indicate the priority issues under each criteria, the evaluation team should not limit the evaluation to these questions only.

**Relevance** refers to the extent to which the objectives of the programme are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country priorities, global priorities and partners' and Finland's policies. This includes an evaluation of how the promotion of human rights and gender equality, reduction of inequalities and promotion of climate sustainability as defined by international and regional conventions, national policies and strategies have been integrated into programme design and implementation.

* [formulate priority evaluation questions]

**Impact** describes how the programme has succeeded in contributing to its wider, overall objective, i.e. impact for its final beneficiaries, including promotion of human rights and gender equality, reduction of inequalities and promotion of climate sustainability. The evaluation of impact covers intended and unintended, short- and long-term, positive and negative impacts. The evaluation will be made using the related indicators.

* [formulate priority evaluation questions]

**Effectiveness** describes if the results have furthered the achievement of the programme purpose (i.e. the immediate objective), or are expected to do so in the future. Evaluation of promotion of human rights and gender equality, reduction of inequalities and promotion of climate sustainability is integrated in the analysis. The evaluation will be made using the related indicators.

* [formulate priority evaluation questions]

**Efficiency** is defined by how well the various activities have transformed the available resources into the intended results in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness. Use of resources to promote human rights and gender equality, reduction of inequalities and promotion of climate sustainability is integrated in the analysis. Comparison should be made against what was planned. Furthermore, the management and administrative arrangements are analysed.

* [formulate priority evaluation questions]

**Aid effectiveness (Effectiveness of aid management and delivery)** refers to how the programme has implemented the commitments to promote ownership, alignment, harmonisation, management for development results and mutual accountability.

* [formulate priority evaluation questions]

**Sustainability** refers to the likely continuation of programme achievements when external support comes to an end. This includes an analysis on the likely continuation of achievements in human rights and gender equality, reduction of inequalities and climate sustainability. Evaluation of phasing out plans is part of this sustainability analysis.

* [formulate priority evaluation questions]

**Coherence** refers to issued beyond development cooperation focusing on contradictions or mutual reinforcement with other policies to achieve the development objectives.

* [formulate priority evaluation questions]

**Possible additional evaluation questions**

[Any other issue that should be covered in the evaluation]

1. **Methodology**

[The detailed evaluation methodology will be left to the evaluators to propose, but general guidelines can be included in the ToR on data collection and analysis. Indicate that it is expected that multiple methods are used, both quantitative and qualitative. Validation of results must be done through multiple sources. The section on methodology may include indications on materials to be analysed during the desk study phase, the data collection tools that will be used, how data analysis will be conducted and recorded, ensuring that all data is disaggregated by gender, age group and other relevant categories.]

1. **The evaluation process and time schedule**

[Describe the evaluation process outlining its phases, their sequencing and approximate duration, and where the work will be done e.g. kick-off meeting, inception and desk study phase, inception meeting, interviews and field missions, including presentation of results in the field, reporting and presentation of the evaluation results. Key milestones in the process should be described, but a detailed work plan will be left to the evaluators to propose.

A follow-up work option may be included for the team leader to support the integration of results in work planning based on a management decision on the recommendations.]

1. **Reporting**

[The reports and outputs produced in each phase of the evaluation are specified in this section. The evaluation team may be requested to submit the following deliverables:

* Inception report
* Presentation on the field findings
* Draft final report
* Final report
* Presentation on the evaluation findings

Each deliverable is subjected to specific approval. The evaluation team is able to move to the next phase only after receiving a written statement of acceptance by the MFA. The reporting schedule is included in the contract.]

1. **Quality assurance**

[Include a request to the tenderer to propose and implement a quality assurance system for the evaluation. The proposal must specify the quality assurance process, methodology and tools.]

1. **Expertise required**

[The composition or the size of the team is not predetermined but it is expected to contain both international and national experts. One person shall be nominated as the Team Leader. The evaluation team shall ensure solid experience and knowledge in the following fields:

* Programme evaluations and planning in the relevant sector.
* Relevant sectors in developing countries, preferably in specific region or country;
* Other experience and knowledge relevant to the evaluation.
* Integrating cross cutting objectives in project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation: Promotion of human rights and gender equality, reduction of inequalities, climate sustainability.
* Quality assurance of evaluation in accordance to the quality assurance approach proposed in the tender.

Consider including a Junior Expert in the team.]

1. **Budget**

The total available budget for this evaluation is [x] euro, excluding VAT, which cannot be exceeded.

1. **Mandate**

The evaluation team is entitled and expected to discuss matters relevant to this evaluation with pertinent persons and organizations. However, it is not authorized to make any commitments on the behalf of the Government of Finland.

**Annexes 1:** Link to the MFA evaluation manual

<https://um.fi/documents/35732/48132/evaluation_manual>

**Annex 2: Outline of an evaluation report**

The quality criteria of an evaluation report have been defined by the OECD/DAC and the EU (see table 11 of the manual). The main components of an evaluation report are outlined below. The outline is not compulsory, but intended as a guideline in defining the appropriate table of contents for a specific evaluation. It is recommended that based on this general outline, the evaluators propose a report outline e.g. in their Inception Report.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

* Providing an overview of the report, highlighting the main findings, conclusions, recommendations and any overall lessons.
* Includes a summary table presenting main findings, conclusions and recommendations and their logical links

Relevance: findings – conclusions – recommendations

Impact: findings – conclusions – recommendations

Effectiveness: findings – conclusions – recommendations

Efficiency: findings – conclusions – recommendations

Sustainability: findings – conclusions – recommendations

Etc.

**INTRODUCTION**

* Evaluation’s rationale, purpose and objectives, scope and main evaluation questions

**DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT AND THE EVALUATED PROJECT/PROGRAMME**

* Description of the broader context and its influence on the performance of the project/programme.
* Introduction of the intervention being evaluated: objectives including the cross-cutting objectives, implementation strategies, resources for implementation.
* Introduction of the stakeholders and their roles, including both final beneficiaries and involved institutions

**KEY FINDINGS**

* Empirical data, facts, evidence relevant to the indicators of the evaluation questions.
* Overall progress in the implementation.
* Findings by evaluation criteria / issue (e.g. Relevance, Impact, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability)

**CONCLUSIONS**

* The evaluators’ assessment of the performance of the project/programme based on the findings in relation to the set evaluation criteria, performance standards or policy issues (e.g. Relevance, Impact, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability)

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

* Proposed improvements, changes, action to remedy problems in performance or to capitalise on strengths. Recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions. There should be a clear indication of
  + to whom is the recommendation directed (MFA, partner institutions, consultant providing support services, etc.)
  + who is responsible for implementing the recommendation, and
  + when the recommendation should be implemented..

**NOTE:**  Findings, conclusions and recommendations are summarized in a table in the Executive Summary of the evaluation report.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

* Are there any general conclusions that are likely to have the potential for wider application and use?

**ANNEXES**

* the ToR
* description of the evaluation methodology used
* limitations of the study
* lists of information sources e.g. people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.
* quality assurance statement produced by the quality assurance mechanism used
* 1-2 page evaluation brief for communicating the evaluation results, including
  + the key message of the evaluation,
  + who has benefitted and what are the most important positive results,
  + any unexpected impacts,
  + key recommendations and lessons learned.

**Annex 3: Evaluation report quality checklist (OECD/DAC and EU standards)**

**Executive summary**

* contains a clear and representative executive summary of the report
* summarises the main findings, conclusions, recommendations in a summary table
* presents overall lessons learned

**NOTE**: The executive summary is the part of the evaluation report that will be read most often. That is why its high quality is very important!

**Context**

* describes the context of the development programme
* assesses the influence of the context on programme performance

**Intervention logic**

* describes and assesses the intervention logic (e.g. in the form of a logical framework) or theory
* describes and assesses the underlying assumptions and factors affecting the success of the programme
* takes into account the evolution of the programme

**Sources of information**

* describes the sources of information (documents, interviews, other) used so that the adequacy of the information can be assessed,
* explains the selection of case studies or any samples,
* cross-validates the information sources
* critically assesses the validity and reliability of the data

**Methodology**

* annexed to the report explains and justifies the evaluation methodology and its application, including techniques used for data collection and analysis
* explains limitations and shortcomings, risks and potential biases associated with the evaluation method

**Analysis**

* presents clear analysis covering findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons separately and with a clear logical distinction between them.
* makes explicit the assumptions that underlie the analysis.

**Answers to ToR evaluation questions**

* answers all the questions detailed in the TOR for the evaluation
* covers the requested period of time, and the target groups and socio-geographical areas linked to the programme
* if not, justifications are given

**Limitations**

* explains any limitations in process, methodology or data, and discusses validity and reliability
* indicates any obstruction of a free and open evaluation process which may have influenced the findings
* explains any discrepancies between the planned and actual implementation and products of the evaluation

**Differences of opinion**

* acknowledges unresolved differences of opinion within the evaluation team

**Stakeholders' comments**

* reflects stakeholders’ comments on the report and acknowledges any substantive disagreements