

Attachment to the template for Terms of Reference (ToR) for evaluations of Sida funded interventions



Checklist for the assessment of Terms of References

This checklist can be used as a tool when assessing the relevance and quality of a ToR

The Terms of Reference for an evaluation should outline the purpose, objectives, scope and questions of an evaluation, which are to be elaborated in a tender document by tenderers and/or in an inception report of the consultant which are awarded the contract. It contains a work plan and time schedule for the evaluation, the required competence and composition of the evaluation team, and the reports and other outputs that the evaluators should deliver under the contract. The Terms of Reference shall also include a setup for governance and management structures and quality control of the evaluation process. The writing of the Terms of Reference is to be a participatory process, where the intended users of the evaluation are to be actively involved. The importance of investing sufficient resources in the preparatory steps of the evaluation, and documenting the results in the Terms of Reference, cannot be overemphasised.

This checklist is based on paragraphs in OECD/DAC's Evaluation Quality standards. A reference to the number of the paragraph in the standards is provided in each heading where applicable.

Initial considerations

2.6 Systematically consider joint evaluation

To contribute to harmonisation, alignment and an efficient division of labour, one should always systematically consider the option of a joint evaluation, conducted collaboratively by more than one agency and/or partner country. Joint evaluations address both questions of common interest to all partners and specific questions of interest to individual partners.

1.5 Co-ordinate and align

To help improve co-ordination of development evaluation and strengthen country systems, the evaluation process shall take into account national and local evaluation plans, activities and policies.

Process considerations

<p>1.4 Adopt a partnership approach</p> <p>In order to increase ownership of development and build mutual accountability for results, a partnership approach to development evaluation is to be adopted. The concept of partnership connotes an inclusive process, involving different stakeholders such as government, parliament, civil society, intended beneficiaries and international partners. Potential partnerships are systematically considered early in the process to maximise opportunities for an active role and increase ownership of the evaluation process.</p>	
<p>Adopt a utilization focused approach</p> <p>All Sida financed evaluations and reviews are to be utilization focused. Therefore intended users should be identified and involved early on in the evaluation process. They should be able to contribute to evaluations design, including by identifying issues to be addressed and evaluation questions to be answered. The evaluation is to be designed, conducted and reported to meet the needs of the intended users.</p>	
<p>1.6 Contribute to capacity development</p> <p>The evaluation process shall contribute to strengthening the evaluation capacity of development partners by, for instance: improving evaluation knowledge and skills, strengthening evaluation management, stimulating demand for and use of evaluation findings, and supporting an environment of accountability and learning.</p>	
<p>1.7 Quality control</p> <p>Quality control is exercised throughout the evaluation process. Depending on the evaluation's scope and complexity, quality control is carried out through an internal and/or external mechanism, such as peer review, advisory panel, or reference group.</p>	

Purpose, objectives, object, scope and questions

<p>2.1 The rationale and purpose of the evaluation</p> <p>The rationale, purpose and intended use of the evaluation are to be stated clearly, addressing: why the evaluation is being undertaken at this point in time, why and for whom it is undertaken, and how the evaluation is to be used for learning and/or accountability functions. For example the evaluation's overall purpose may be to: contribute to improving a development policy, procedure or technique; consider the continuation or discontinuation of a project or programme; account for public expenditures and development results to stakeholders and taxpayers.</p>	
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<p>2.2 Specific objectives of the evaluation</p> <p>The specific objectives of the evaluation clarify what the evaluation aims to find out. For example to: ascertain results (output, outcome, impact) and assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability of a specific development intervention; provide findings, conclusions and recommendations with respect to a specific development intervention, strategy or policy in order to draw lessons for future design and implementation.</p>	
<p>2.3 The evaluation object</p> <p>The development intervention being evaluated (the evaluation object) is to be clearly defined in the Terms of Reference. A description of the intervention logic or theory could either be outlined in the Terms of Reference or part of the assignment for the evaluation inception report.</p>	
<p>2.3 The scope of the evaluation</p> <p>The evaluation scope defines the time period, funds spent, geographical area, target groups, organisational set-up, implementation arrangements, policy and institutional context and other dimensions to be covered by the evaluation. The scope should be outlined in the Terms of Reference, but could be further elaborated in the inception report.</p>	
<p>2.7 Evaluation questions</p> <p>The evaluation objectives are translated into relevant and specific evaluation questions. Evaluations questions are decided early on in the process and inform the development of the methodology. The evaluation questions also address cross-cutting issues, such as gender, environment and human rights.</p>	

Approach and methodology

<p>2.8 Selection and application of evaluation criteria</p> <p>The evaluation shall normally apply the agreed DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The application of these and any additional criteria, such as coverage, co-ordination and coherence, depends on the evaluation questions and the objectives of the evaluation. If a particular criterion is not applied and/or any additional criteria added, this is to be explained in the Terms of Reference.</p>	
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2.9 Select approach and methodology

The purpose, scope and evaluation questions determine the most appropriate approach and methodology for each evaluation. The methodology includes specification and justification of the design of the evaluation and the techniques for data collection and analysis. The selected methodology answers the evaluation questions using credible evidence. The Terms of Reference may include a suggested methodology, but it is recommended to leave the task of elaborating a suitable methodology to the tenderer, either in the tender itself or in the inception report

Resources and organisation

Time Plan

The time plan shall be realistic given the magnitude of the evaluation, the suggested evaluation approach and the intended use.

Budget frame

The budget and time allocated for the evaluation shall be adequate and realistic considering the evaluation assignment.

Evaluator competence

The competence and capacity of the evaluation team shall be clearly defined and appropriate to the evaluation assignment.

Organisation

The organisation of the evaluation, including the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders shall be clearly described.