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| **TOOL SUMMARY: EVALUATION ToR GUIDANCE[[1]](#footnote-1)** | |
| Purpose | The Evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR) is a planning document that ensures that all parties are clear about:   * Why are we doing the evaluation? * What will be evaluated? * How will it be evaluated? * How will the evaluation be managed? |
| Information Sources | 1. Initial M&E Plan 2. Detailed M&E Plan 3. Donor Requirements 4. Evaluation Questions Guidance 5. LWR Procurement Guidelines |
| Who | The Evaluation Manager ensures that the evaluation ToR is completed according to the criteria listed in this tool. Nevertheless, there should be input from all project stakeholders, in particular during the development of the Evaluation Questions. |
| When | * The ToR is only one step in preparing an evaluation. Before the evaluation starts the following actions must take place:   1. Develop the evaluation questions   2. Complete the Evaluation Use Matrix   3. Write the evaluation ToR   4. Advertise or share the ToR   5. Select the evaluator (if hiring a consultant, appropriate bidding and selection procedures need to be followed)   6. If hiring a consultant, negotiate and sign the contract   7. Finalize the ToR with the evaluator, including agreeing on the evaluation methodology and timeline   8. Finalize the evaluation work plan   This process can be lengthy, so it is important to work back from the anticipated evaluation start date and ensure sufficient time is allocated to complete all of these steps. The amount of time allocated will depend on the size of the project and the complexity of the evaluation. |
| Recommendations | * The ToR should, at minimum, cover the elements described in the following sections. Include more details if they are clear when the ToR is written. * Even if the evaluator is internal to the organization, a ToR is needed. * Assume the ToR is a draft until the evaluator is contracted. The methodology and tools, realistic timelines, and other details are best negotiated in person and the evaluator may need additional details beyond what is in the ToR to propose a high quality approach.   + For example, the ToR might suggest using questionnaires, field visits and interviews, but the evaluation team should be able to revise the approach in consultation with key stakeholders, particularly the intended users and those affected by evaluation results. * Contracting external evaluators should always follow all relevant LWR procurement policies. |
| Tips | * The ToR can be viewed as a key planning tool for the evaluation. Complete all sections of the ToR even if the full details, as outlined in this guidance, will not be required in the draft used for advertising the TOR. For example, the exact budget allocated for the evaluation may not be included in the advertised ToR, but the Evaluation Manager should nevertheless have created a detailed evaluation budget. * Begin writing the ToR as soon as possible. The process can be lengthy. |

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**TITLE OF EVALUATION/PROJECT**

**DATE**

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| 1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT |

The background section clarifies who is commissioning the evaluation and for what project. This description should be focused and concise (a maximum of one page) highlighting only those issues most pertinent to the evaluation. The key background and context descriptors that should be included are listed below:

* The name of the intervention (e.g., project name), purpose and objectives, including the duration of the intervention and its implementation status at the point the evaluation is taking place.
* A description of the scale/scope of the intervention, including the general types of intervention(s) and the size and description of the population each component is intended to serve, both directly and indirectly.
* The geographic context and boundaries, such as the village, districts, country.
* Key partners involved in the intervention, including the implementing agencies and partners, other key stakeholders.

More detailed background and context information (e.g., initial funding proposal, strategic plans, logic framework or theory of change, monitoring plans and indicators) can be included or referenced in annexes via links to the Internet or other means of communication.

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| 2. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND USE |

The purpose section is a brief description of why the evaluation is being conducted, who will use or act on the evaluation results and how they will use or act on the results. A clear statement of purpose provides the foundation for a well-designed evaluation.

* When developing this section, take into consideration justification for why the evaluation is needed at this time and how the evaluation fits within LWR’s evaluation strategies.
* The Evaluation Use Plan should be completed before work on this section of the ToR begins and a summary of the matrix should be included in this section.

\* See the Process Overview (Section 1, Point 4) for Evaluating the Project for more details on LWR’s evaluation strategies.

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| 3. EVALUATION SCOPE |

This section answers the following questions:

* What are the evaluation criteria (areas of evaluation) will the evaluation address?

Standard criteria for framing or selecting evaluation questions are explained in the OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria. The ALNAP Evaluating Humanitarian Action Using the OECD-DAC Criteria provides additional guidance on how to use the criteria when developing and implementing an evaluation. The OECD-DAC criteria include:

1. Relevancy
2. Connectedness
3. Coherence
4. Coverage
5. Efficiency
6. Effectiveness
7. Impact

Some other criteria exist. Not all criteria have to be addressed and only those that will help the evaluation users make decisions and learn lessons should be included.

* What aspects of the intervention are to be covered by the evaluation? This can include the time frame, implementation phase, geographic area, and target groups to be considered, and as applicable, which projects (outputs) are to be included.

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| 4. EVALUATION QUESTIONS |

This section proposes the questions that, when answered, will give intended users of the evaluation the information they seek in order to make decisions, take action or add to knowledge. Evaluation questions specify what aspects of each evaluation criteria (normally the OECD-DAC crieteria) will be explored. For example, “effectiveness” questions might include:

* To what extent were the stated outcomes or outputs achieved?
* What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended outcomes?
* What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the project’s partnership strategy?
* How well did management systems (finance, human resources, procurement, etc.) operate to support the project?

Evaluation questions should be based on what the stakeholders and evaluation users want to know; it is more effective to focus on particular questions than try to evaluate every aspect of a project. Key stakeholders should be consulted and contribute to the questions. Evaluation questions can be consolidated in the Evaluation Matrix described in Section 12: Annexes.

\* For more guidance and tools on developing evaluation questions please see LWR Evaluation Questions Guidance

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| 5. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY |

The ToR may suggest an overall approach and method for conducting the evaluation, as well as data sources and tools that will likely yield the most reliable and valid answers to the evaluation questions within the limits of resources. However, final decisions about the specific design and methods for the evaluation should emerge from consultations among the country team, partners, the evaluators, and other key stakeholders.

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| 6. EVALUATION DELIVERABLES |

This section describes the key deliverables, or tangible products, the evaluation team will be accountable for producing. At the minimum, these deliverables should include:

* **Evaluation plan (inception plan, inception report):** The plan should be prepared by the evaluators before going into the full-fledged data collection exercise. It should detail the evaluators’ understanding of what is being evaluated and why, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by way of: proposed methods, proposed sources of data, sampling methodology, and data collection procedures. The evaluation plan should include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables, designating a team member with the lead responsibility for each item. The evaluation plan should be reviewed and amended, if necessarily, with the evaluation manager and other stakeholders to ensure that they share the same understanding about the evaluation and clarify any misunderstanding at the outset.
* **Draft evaluation report:** The country office, partner and other key stakeholders in the evaluation should review the draft evaluation report to ensure that it follows the terms of reference, addresses all of the evaluation questions, and follows any agreed upon format. Ensure in the timeline that there is sufficient time to develop and discuss feedback to the evaluators; this is the change to correct any omissions and the evaluators may have to collect more data.
* **Final evaluation report:** See the Evaluation Report Template for guidance on the content and length of the report. If there are several formats required, for instance a summary report or a Power Point presentation with detailed notes in addition to the complete report, the various versions should be noted.
* **Other knowledge products or facilitation of knowledge sharing events**: Specify if the evaluators are to organize and facilitate a workshop with stakeholders to develop an action plan from the evaluation findings, conduct a verbal presentation to stakeholders, or any other means to share evaluation results.

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| 7. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS |

This section defines the roles, key responsibilities and lines of authority of all parties involved in the evaluation process. The section should describe the specific roles and responsibilities including the evaluator’s (detailing the role of each member of the team, if there is more than one evaluator), the evaluation manager, and other decision makers related to the evaluation process. This section can also include any logistical arrangements that LWR or the partner will provide, including transportation, scheduling meetings and focus group discussions, and accommodation.

* Implementation arrangements are intended to clarify expectations, eliminate ambiguities, and facilitate an efficient and effective evaluation process.

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| 8. EVALUATION TIMEFRAME |

This section lists and describes all tasks and deliverables for which evaluators or the evaluation team will be responsible and accountable, as well as those involving the commissioning office, indicating for each the due date or time-frame (e.g., work plan, agreements, briefings, draft report, final report), as well as who is responsible for its completion. At a minimum, the time breakdown for the following activities should be included:

* Desk review or document review
* Briefings of evaluators
* Finalizing the evaluation design and methods and preparing the detailed inception report
* Visits to the field, interviews, and questionnaires
* Preparing the draft report
* Stakeholder meeting and review of the draft report
* Incorporating comments and finalizing the evaluation report

In addition, this section should also state the number of working days to be given to each member of the evaluation team and the period during which they will be engaged in the evaluation process (e.g., 30 working days over a period of three months).

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| 9. EVALUATOR QUALIFICATIONS AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES |

If engaging an evaluator internal to one’s organization, this section may be omitted. The qualifications section details the specific skills, competencies and characteristics needed in the evaluator or evaluation team specific to the evaluation. It can also include, but not required, the expected structure and composition of the evaluation team, including roles and responsibilities of team members.

* The ToR should be explicit about the evaluators’ independence from any organizations that have been involved in designing, executing or advising any aspect of the intervention that is the subject of the evaluation (note: if using an evaluator who is internal to one’s organization, that person should not have been involved in the project, though may generally be familiar with it).

The section also should specify the type of evidence (resumes, work samples, references) that will be expected to support claims of knowledge, skills and experience. All relevant LWR procurement guidelines should be followed.

It is useful to define the selection criteria in this section. The selection criteria will help prospective evaluators focus their proposals and will also help the Evaluation Team in selecting the most competitive proposal. The criterion normally includes the proposal’s cost, its methodology, the strength of the evaluator’s qualifications, and the evaluator’s experience with the chosen methodology and program sector. The criterion can be weighted based on the project’s priorities for the evaluation. The table below is an example that can be used by the project team to select the evaluator **(it should not be included in the ToR)**.

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| **Evaluator Name** | **Financial Proposal (1-3)** | **Methodology**  **(1-3)** | **Qualifications**  **(1-2)** | **Experience**  **(1-2)** | **Total Points** | **Observations** |
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| 10. BUDGET |

This section should indicate total amount and other resources available for the evaluation (consultant fees, travel, subsistence allowance, etc.) This is not a detailed budget but should provide information sufficient for evaluators to propose an evaluation design that is feasible within the limits of available time and resources. This section is sometimes not included when advertising the ToR to solicit proposals, but is critical to define prior to engaging an evaluator.

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| 11. ANNEXES |

Annexes can be used to provide additional detail about evaluation background and requirements to facilitate the work of evaluators. These are not included in the version of the ToR used to solicit evaluator bids but are important documents the evaluation manager needs to compile for the evaluators. Some examples include:

1. **Key stakeholders and partners —** A list of key stakeholders and other individuals who should be consulted, together with an indication of their affiliation and relevance for the evaluation and their contact information. This annex can also suggest sites to be visited.
2. **Documents to be consulted —** A list of important documents and other information sources that the evaluators should read at the outset of the evaluation and before finalizing the evaluation design and the inception report. This should be limited to the critical information that the evaluation team needs. Data sources and documents may include:

* Relevant strategy documents
* Project proposal
* Monitoring plans and indicators
* Monitoring reports and associated data

1. **Required format for the Evaluation Plan** – this can include an e**valuation matrix** (see Table 1). It is a useful tool for summarizing and visually presenting the evaluation design and methodology for discussions with stakeholders. It details evaluation questions that the evaluation will answer, data sources, data collection, analysis tools or methods appropriate for each data source, and the standard or measure by which each question will be evaluated.

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| Table 1: Sample – Evaluation Matrix | | | | | |
| **Evaluation criteria** | **Key questions** | **Specific sub questions** | **Data Sources** | **Data Collection Methods and Tools** | **Methods for data analysis** |
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1. **Required format for the evaluation report—** specify the sections to be included, the page limits, and any required annexes.

1. The content of this ToR template borrowed heavily from: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2009. *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results*. New York, NY. (P. 194-200) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)