WRITING TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

This checklist is a tool for evaluation managers and evaluation focal points to guide the inclusion of critical elements and the subsequent writing of the Terms of Reference (TOR) for independent project evaluations. Additional guidance on gathering information for the drafting of the TOR is available in Guidance Note 6 The Evaluation Manager: Role and Function. See that document for other available guidance on selecting data collection methodologies and evaluation design in general.

May 2015

1. KEY FACTS TO BE INCLUDED

- Title of project being evaluated
- Project TC Code
- Administrative Unit in the ILO responsible for administrating the project
- Technical Unit(s) in the ILO responsible for backstopping the project
- Type of evaluation (e.g. independent, internal)
- Timing of evaluation (e.g. midterm, final)

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Brief description of the history and current status of the intervention, including duration, location, budget, partners, donors and implementation phase.
- Summary of the intervention’s rationale, internal logic and strategy approach.
- Brief description of how the intervention fits into strategic frameworks and how it links to the work of other partners at the country/regional level.
- Brief account of the intervention’s management set-up.
- Brief account of the intervention’s development, including major milestones.
- When appropriate, brief outline of economic, political, social, cultural, and/or historical context of the country/region, and how this may have influenced the intervention.
A brief overview of the political, economic and social environment within which the evaluation will be taking place.

Reference to any previous evaluations and reviews.

3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

- Clear statement of why the evaluation is being conducted and justification for its timing.
- Identification of the expected outcomes of the evaluation.
- Identification of the primary and secondary users of the evaluation (key users and target audiences; clients and main audience).
- Brief statement of how the evaluation will be used.

Ensure that issues and inputs from stakeholders / tripartite constituents are being adequately covered in the objectives of the evaluation. See Guidance Note 7: Stakeholder participation for further information on this.

4. EVALUATION SCOPE

- Specify the timeframe of the evaluation, as well as its geographical coverage, and/or thematic coverage, and target groups to be considered.
- Specify if any aspects of the intervention will not be covered in the evaluation.
- Specify that the evaluation will integrate gender equality as a cross-cutting concern throughout its methodology and all deliverables, including the final report.
- When applicable, specify particular issues that the evaluation should focus on.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

The evaluator may adapt the evaluation criteria and questions, but any fundamental changes should be agreed between the evaluation manager and the evaluator, and reflected in the inception report.

Reference the evaluation criteria against which the intervention will be assessed (e.g. relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and/or sustainability).

REV. May 2015
Reference to any additional criteria related to the particular type of evaluation being undertaken, or specific to ILO’s mandate (e.g. cross-cutting issues of poverty, labour standards, and social dialogue, participation of stakeholders / tripartite constituents).

Specific reference to cross-cutting gender issues, addressing:

- **Relevance**: How the intervention’s design and implementation contributed (or not) toward the ILO goal of gender equality, international and regional gender equality conventions, and national gender policies and strategies;
- **Effectiveness**: Extent to which intervention results were defined, monitored and achieved (or not), and their contribution (or not) toward gender equality;
- **Efficiency**: Analyze intervention benefits and related costs of integrating gender equality (or not);
- **Sustainability**: Extent to which intervention has advanced strategic gender-related needs; and
- **Impact**: Intervention’s long-term effects on more equitable gender relations or reinforcement/exacerbation of existing inequalities.

List main evaluation questions related to the objectives of the evaluation and the evaluation criteria.

Suggested analytical framework with sub-questions, adding further detail to the objectives.

6. METHODOLOGY

Planning the methodology to be used in the course of the evaluation and including it in the TOR ensures transparency and helps to plan the budget. The evaluator may adapt the methodology, but any fundamental changes should be agreed between the evaluation manager and the evaluator, and reflected in the inception report.

Identification of information needs and possible sources of information, based on an assessment of evaluability.

Description of the suggested methodological approach and design for the evaluation.

Specify that the methodology should include multiple methods, with analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Specify that data gathering instruments and methods used should disaggregate by sex.
Specify that evaluation methodology and subsequent analysis explicitly addresses gender.

Identification of linkages between data sources, data collection methods and analysis methods.

Clear statement of the limitations of the chosen evaluation methods.

Identification of conditions and capacities needed to support data collection, analysis and communication.

Plan for data analysis.

Plan for critical reflection processes and for quality communication and reporting of evaluation outcomes (e.g. stakeholder workshop, debriefing of project manager, etc.).

Description of the involvement of key stakeholders in the implementation of the evaluation, including in the finalization of the report.

### 7. MAIN DELIVERABLES

In order for evaluations to be useful, they should deliver important information to key decision-making processes. The timing of deliverables should therefore consider the timing of crucial decision-making events of the main clients of the evaluation.

Specify the main outputs of the evaluation, including:

- Deliverable 1. Inception report
- Deliverable 2. Draft evaluation report
- Deliverable 3. Stakeholder workshop
- Deliverable 4. Final evaluation report with executive summary
- others

Statement that the quality of the report will be assessed against the EVAL Checklists 4, 5 & 6.

Specify the language and format, structure and length of the deliverables.

### 8. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND WORK PLAN

Description of the key stages of the evaluation process and an indicative time frame, including milestones / deadlines.

Specify the reporting lines: identify the evaluation manager, and when there is an evaluation team, the evaluation team leader and reporting lines within the team.

Specify the desired competencies of evaluators and the preferred composition of the evaluation team (e.g. international/local, gender balance, participation of ILO or donor representative, etc.).
☐ Description of the roles and responsibilities for evaluation team members, evaluation stakeholders and partners.
☐ Specify the support needed from the ILO at headquarters, regional, sub-regional and country-levels for implementing the evaluation.

9. LEGAL AND ETHICAL MATTERS

☐ Specific statement that the evaluation will comply with UN Norms and Standards.
☐ The TOR is accompanied by the code of conduct for carrying out the evaluations.
☐ Specific statement that UNEG ethical guidelines will be followed.
☐ For independent evaluations, it is important that the consultant does not have any links to project management, or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation.

10. DOCUMENTS TO ATTACH TO THE TOR

Ensure that any relevant documents have been attached, e.g., a copy of Checklist 5: Preparing the evaluation report, Guidance Note 4 Integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation of projects, and UNEG documents.¹

¹ See suggestions for evaluation managers on the drafting and transmitting of the TORs in Guidance Note. 6: The Evaluation Manager: Duties and Responsibilities – Role and Function, page 6.