

Checklist: Quality of Terms of Reference for an Evaluation

Headings of the ToR	Checklist:
1. Background to the evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• what is the programme to be evaluated, and in what context• what information on the priority evaluation issues is already available through previous evaluations
2. Rationale, purpose and priority objectives of the evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• why is the evaluation conducted, what will the results be used for• why now, what decision making will the results feed in• who needs the results, who uses them• what are the priority issues of the evaluation• when the results are needed
3. Scope of the evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• what will be included and what excluded from the scope of the evaluation
4. Issues to be addressed and evaluation questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• what we want to know, what is the focus of the evaluation• include a manageable number of evaluation questions (max 12 evaluation questions)• define what evaluation criteria (relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, aid effectiveness and coherence) are applied• integrate human rights and cross-cutting objectives in the evaluation issues and questions• leave room to raise emerging issues during evaluation
5. Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• give adequate methodological guidance, both for data collection and analysis, for qualitative and quantitative data that is adequately disaggregated• encourage to use alternative sources of data for baseline, indicators etc. if necessary• leave responsibility for further elaboration of the methodology to the evaluators

6. The evaluation process and time schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define the main phases of the evaluation • ensure a balance between the time allocated for the evaluation and the issues and questions to be addressed • allocate adequate time to facilitate integration of human rights and cross-cutting objectives in the evaluation • put adequate emphasis on inception phase and desk study before field work • allocate adequate time for field work • leave responsibility for defining the details of the work plan to the evaluators • clearly indicate the requested meetings with the evaluation team and budget (time, money) for them
7. Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what reports are expected, and in what format • require an inception report • include debriefing in the field before the evaluators leave the country • indicate maximum length of the final report text (30-50 pages) • plan for involvement of the evaluation team in disseminating the evaluation results
8. Quality assurance mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • request to propose and implement a quality assurance system for the evaluation
9. Expertise required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expertise of the team leader and the team • expertise in evaluation • balance in sector/theme/country/regional expertise • expertise in human rights and cross-cutting objectives • adequate human resources to cover all evaluation issues/questions
10. Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adequate funding allocated to the evaluation taking into consideration the programme context (e.g. country size and geography, volume and complexity of the programme activities) • adequate resources to cover all evaluation issues/questions
11. Mandate	<p>“The evaluation team is entitled and expected to discuss matters relevant to this evaluation with pertinent persons and organisations. However, it is not authorised to make any commitments on behalf of the Government of Finland.”</p>
Annexes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to evaluation manual