

## Evaluation of the Paris Declaration Phase 2

### Management of the Country Evaluations

Each evaluation should be managed in-country, led by a National Evaluation Coordinator appointed by the government. The National Coordinator may wish to “team-up” with a development partner’s Evaluation Department to facilitate the evaluation and assure funding and possibly other support. Whether such an arrangement is made or not, the National Evaluation Coordinator should be supported by a National Reference Group comprising relevant national stakeholders and development partners.

The **National Evaluation Coordinator**, appointed by the Government, is responsible for managing all aspects of the Country Evaluation process including, most importantly:

1. Setting up and scheduling and convening meetings of the in-country National Reference Group, expected to include major stakeholders from governments, donors, civil society and possibly academia;
2. Developing final ToRs for the Country Evaluation in consultation with the National Reference Group; incorporating the common evaluation matrix for Country Evaluations and (if required) a module with country-specific evaluation questions;
3. Contracting of the consultants for the Country Evaluation (with selection where possible by the National Reference Group);
4. Assuring that the evaluation is of acceptable quality in reference to the chosen national, regional and/or international (DAC) standards and drawing on the pro-active and responsive services of the Core Evaluation Team and the Evaluation Secretariat.
5. Act as in-country focal point for contact to the Evaluation’s overall Management and Reference groups for the evaluation.
6. Bi-monthly reporting to the Evaluation Secretariat on the progress of the evaluation in a common simple format.

This management role will require significant inputs of ‘dedicated management time’ over the whole evaluation process, with concentrated effort anticipated during the start-up period, inception, first draft report and final reporting milestones.

The **National Reference Group** should include major stakeholders from government, donors, civil society and possibly academia. The purpose of this group is to ensure stakeholders’ participation and buy-in to the evaluation process and results and to assure the independence of the evaluation.

The National Reference Group has the following important functions:

1. Endorsing the design of the country evaluation that comprises a common set of evaluation questions applicable to all country level evaluations and where desired a module with supplementary, country-specific evaluation questions.
2. Oversee the recruitment of the members of country evaluation teams, consistent with the selection criteria and national procurement or tender rules
3. Serving as a resource and to provide advice and feedback to the National Coordinator and Team
4. Helping to ensure the independence, integrity and quality of the evaluation;

5. Reviewing and commenting on (but not approving) the draft products of the respective country study

The National Reference Group should also have an important role to play in accessing information; exerting quality control; linking to government and engaging civil society; facilitating the necessary wider consultation; and encouraging the use and usefulness of the evaluations findings.

Each Country Evaluation is expected to develop and implement a 'Communication Plan' through which stakeholders for the evaluation within the country will be kept informed and engaged. A variety of channels and activities should be used and opportunities maximized to link to key points in national strategic and decision-making cycles and with key events in the international dialogue on aid effectiveness and MDG trends over the coming two years to build policy engagement with the study and ensure its timely contribution to the debates.

These roles will require a Group with sufficient representation from among key stakeholders, good credibility and access together with the necessary measure of independence. The tasks will imply the need for a series of dedicated inputs of time from the individual members of the National Reference Group.

### **Selection of independent evaluation teams**

The success of an evaluation depends on the composition of the evaluation team and the competence and personal abilities of the team members. This applies in particular to the team leader who should be the one concerned with the overall perspective, able to organize and co-ordinate the work of the team members, assess the quality and relevance of their contributions, assure the timely delivery of reports, and the handling of comments and act as a spokesperson for the team.

Members of the evaluation team should represent relevant professional areas, and reflect gender balance. A separate guidance note on evaluation team qualifications and procurement is attached as annex A.

To safeguard impartiality, members of the evaluation team should not have been personally involved in the activities to be evaluated; as well, companies/organisations conducting evaluations should not have been involved in the preparation or implementation of those activities. In the case of the Paris Declaration this may be a difficult requirement to meet for national experts/companies. It is therefore recommended to combine national with regional or international experts.

### **Financing Country Evaluations**

Procurement of country evaluation teams should follow national rules and regulations.

The Indicative budget for a country evaluation is € 80.000 or \$ 120.000. Concurrent with developing the country specific Terms of Reference an eye should be kept on cost implications.

Funding for the country evaluations may be obtained from different sources:

1. Countries may finance the country evaluation from own sources or raise funds from donors in country. This is the preferred option as already existing systems can be used.
2. Country evaluations may be financed from the Core Fund held by the PDE Secretariat at DIIS. Individual funding agreements will be negotiated between DIIS and the country:

3. Several donors have pledged direct funding for one or more country evaluations. In these cases funding arrangements will be negotiated between the donor and the country.

### **Quality Assurance and Control**

Ultimately, the National Evaluation Coordinator is responsible for assuring that the evaluation is of acceptable quality before submitting the evaluation report to the Core Team. (The evaluation report should adequately address the information needs of the commissioning body and other stakeholders. It should answer all questions included in the Terms of Reference.) The quality should be assessed against national, regional or international Evaluation Quality Standards (e.g. the DAC Standards). Preference should be given to national standards where they exist.

Each evaluation team should establish internal quality assurance and control systems. The Team Leader [or contracted institution for whom the TL works] is accountable for the organization and co-ordination of the work of the Evaluation Team (and through this ensuring the quality and relevance of team member contributions) and assuring the delivery of emerging findings, conclusions and recommendations, as well as a comprehensive final report which meets evaluation standards, within the contracted timeframe/ specifications.

The National Reference Group has an important role to play in supporting the National Evaluation Coordinator by assessing the draft inception and final reports for validity and reliability of information, clarity of analysis (that conclusions are substantiated by findings, which are consistent with data collected and that recommendations and lessons learnt follow from the conclusions) and any disagreements among the members of the evaluation team or between the evaluation team and relevant partners that are significant to conclusions and recommendations are reflected in the report, either in the form of comments in the text, footnotes or as a special section.

Quality assurance and control should not be mixed up with acceptance of the conclusions of the evaluation. **The evaluation team has the final responsibility for the contents of the report.**

The Core Evaluation Team will work both pro-actively and responsively to engage with and support the Country Evaluations. In addition to important arrangements for indirect support, face to face opportunities will be utilized to help lay solid foundations and clear directions for Country Evaluations to follow, support continuing adherence to evaluation standards, provide guidance if/ where evaluation teams run into problems, and facilitate sharing and learning among country teams. The Core Team will provide and document its quality review feedback to the Country Teams and Reference Groups, as well as the Secretariat and Management Group.

## **ANNEX A**

### **Guidance Note: Contracting Country Evaluation Teams (Draft v2.0)**

This Guidance is in response to requests from Regional Workshops for a more detailed brief on the specification, selection and contracting of the Country Evaluation Team. It reflects the anticipated scope of work to be undertaken by a Country Evaluation Team as given in the (draft) Generic ToR and discussed at the Regional Workshops. In this way it is illustrative of the requirements of a Country Evaluation Team. It offers a basis for a National Reference Group to discuss and finalise the selection criteria for the Evaluation Team and for the National Evaluation Coordinator to expedite the procurement and contracting process.

This illustrative Team specification has been prepared on the basis of a set of key requirements/ parameters for conducting country evaluations:

- A complex and politically sensitive evaluation requiring an effective team of people with the ability to work in a collegiate way using evidence in a joint analysis which accounts for different perspectives.
- An open and engaging process for an independent evaluation that national stakeholders have confidence in and readily contribute to.
- A comprehensive evaluation – both breadth and depth – requiring attention to detail, background research, focused enquiry and delivery to reporting deadlines.
- Requires a four month (min) to six month (max) period from start through to Draft Report; factoring in adequate time for sharing and discussion with the Country Evaluation Governance and Management structures at key milestones.
- Works within an expected budget for the inputs of the Evaluation Team of around 80.000 Euros (covering both fees & reimbursables).

#### **A) Evaluation Team Specification**

##### ***Team composition***

- A team of four consultants (men and women, all with a minimum masters level qualification and fluency in the language of government) supported by one full time Research Assistant
- The team of four to include one experienced national Team Leader, two national consultants (one senior & one mid career) complemented by one experienced international or regional consultant.

##### ***Team qualities (essential)***

- Experience in conducting strategic level (programmatic and/ or thematic) outcome & impact evaluations which assess 'contribution'.
- Broad and in-depth knowledge of aid practice and related institutional arrangements and relationships within/ relevant to the country (National Government, Donors & civil society).
- Familiarity with the principles of the Paris Declaration and some engagement in national and international policy efforts to improve aid effectiveness.
- Wider and historical – beyond aid – view of development processes in the country/ region.
- Excellent communication skills (written and oral)

- Multi-disciplinary professional backgrounds including; (i) management/ organisational behaviour, (ii) political economy/ economics, (iii) sectoral (social/ non-social) programmes and (iv) government structures and administration.

**Team qualities (desirable)**

- Some prior experience of working together successfully on evaluations.
- Experience with mixed methods evaluations.
- Experience with conducting joint evaluations
- Specialised knowledge on gender and social exclusion issues.
- Experience in the monitoring and reporting of development results (including use of disaggregated data) through application of a 'results chain' approach.

**Team independence**

- The important aspect is to aim for an Evaluation Team that can operate with integrity and will be recognised as such by the wider group of stakeholders. Consultants with strong conflicts of interest should be avoided. What constitutes a 'conflict of interest' will have to be judged within each country context as implementation of the Paris Declaration covers all aspects of aid management and has taken different paths.

**Indicative Team inputs** (will vary depending on negotiated fees reflecting market rates)

- Team Leader (National) – 50 days
- National Consultant (senior) – 30 days
- National Consultant (mid career) – 40 days
- International/ Regional consultant – 30 days
- Research Assistant – 100 days

**B) A Process for Team Selection**

(Possible Indicative steps and weightings, depending on national requirements or practices)

- Place open bid in a local press advertisement calling for institutions/ organisations ('firms') to express interest by presenting their credentials on management of strategic level evaluations and the relevant experience of the proposed Team leader candidate or directly issue invitation to bid to those firms pre-selected through a restricted tender arrangement (proceed direct to iii).
- Shortlist a maximum of up to four firms on basis of; (a) management of strategic level evaluations (50% total marks) and (b) the relevant experience of the proposed Team leader candidate (50% total marks).
- Assess the short bidding documents of shortlisted/ invited firms on the following basis:

**Criteria for Team Selection:**

**Technical Proposal (90 out of total of 100 marks)**

- Quality of the presented team (60% total marks) – essential qualities (40%), desirable qualities (20%)

b) Proposed work plan of the Team (20% total marks) – proposed use of pre-set budget resources made available to the team given the task outlined in the Country Specific ToR; description of team member roles, proposed sequencing of inputs etc.

c) Proposed management arrangements of the Team by the firm (10% total marks) – ability to conduct electronic surveys and manage sources of data, quality including timely delivery of previous work, responsiveness to clients.

***Financial Proposal (10 out of total of 100 marks)***

d) Price comparison across bids; fee rates for the different experience levels of consultants proposed within the evaluation team.

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