GUIDANCE FOR EVALUATORS

IOM Central Evaluation

Department of Strategic Planning and

Organizational Performance

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This short guidance provides Evaluators with information about the conduct of evaluation at IOM and will ensure a transparent process leading to quality deliverables. Prior to starting the evaluation, it is recommended to read the reference documents below to ensure a clear understanding of IOM's expectations and requirements. The documents are listed with an explanation of their importance:

What	Why
Evaluation page of the M&E Guidelines	The Evaluation page of the M&E Guidelines is the main reference for the work of Evaluation in IOM. While it is written from the perspective of managing an evaluation, it also contains crucial information pertinent to conducting an evaluation.
Cross-cutting themes in Evaluation	This section provides guidance on the cross-cutting themes to include in IOM evaluations as an annex to the Evaluation section of the M&E Guidelines.
IOM Guidance for Addressing Gender in Evaluations	This document provides practical guidance for ensuring that gender is properly addressed in evaluation and complements what can be found in the document referred to above.
IOM Gender and Evaluation Tip Sheet	The Gender and Evaluation Tip Sheet provides a short guide to help staff involved in managing and conducting evaluations develop gender-sensitive M&E scope of work, methodologies, and findings.
UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation	IOM abides by the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and expects all evaluation stakeholders and the consultant(s) to be familiar with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, which include the Code of Conduct (Annex 1).
Quality checking of evaluation reports	The following document will be used by the Evaluation Manager to ensure that key expectations of the evaluation are met. These are available for review and understanding of basic expectations.
Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully	This guidance highlights the importance of the criteria definitions and their principles for use. It aims to support thoughtful and contextualised application of the criteria. The guidance will assist evaluators as they consider how to interpret and apply the criteria to improve the quality of their evaluations and better support learning and accountability.

The following deliverables are expected from the evaluator to complete this evaluation, in line with the ToR and instructions from the Evaluation Manager.

Inception report

The inception report is the first main deliverable that is provided by the evaluator and it should be developed after an initial document review and meeting with the evaluation manager or management committee. The document clarifies the evaluator(s)' understanding of the evaluation exercise, how each evaluation question will be answered and the intended data collection methods and overall methodology. The Inception report template is available in the Annex section under the Evaluation page of the IOM M&E Guidelines. This template as well as the other referenced in this guidance aim at signalling minimum expected content. The evaluator is free to apply particular formatting and graphic design styles as long as they remain in line with the template requirements. To check the quality of an inception report, kindly use the Inception Report Quality Control Tool, which is available in the Guidance on Quality Management of IOM Evaluations document.

⚠ Inception reports should always be included as deliverables in the evaluation TOR for external consultants. In the case of an internal evaluation, an evaluation matrix may be sufficient as contractual requirements and evaluation management defer.

A key element of the inception report is the evaluation matrix, which is also a tool guiding the evaluation exercise by specifying : (a) the evaluation criteria being assessed by the evaluation; (b) the questions and sub-questions that will be answered to assess each criterion; (c) the indicators to be used to guide the assessment; (d) the sources of data and data collection tools. It does not replace a full inception report - see also IOM Sample evaluation matrices for a development-oriented project and a humanitarian project.

Progress reports

Evaluator(s) must regularly report on the progress in conducting the evaluation, so the evaluation manager or committee can periodically monitor in particular how well data collection is progressing and if the methodologies selected for the evaluation are being properly used. The progress is usually assessed through regular exchange of information and meetings.

Formal Written Progress reports

The purpose of a more formal written progress report or message is to ensure that when problems are encountered that could adversely affect the quality and issuance of the evaluation (such as the cancellation of scheduled meetings, unmet target number of interviews or survey respondents or basic documents not properly reviewed), they are properly recorded and corrective measures are proposed and introduced in a timely manner, including possible adjustments to contractual requirements. Written progress reports do not need to be lengthy, but they need to properly

highlight the issues at stake, the consequences of deliverables and proposed corrective measures. The need for such reports may vary depending on the duration and complexity of the evaluation.

A note about logistical arrangements:

The evaluation management remains responsible for ensuring that suitable logistical arrangements are made for data collection. If circumstances outside of IOM or the evaluator's control occur (such as weather conditions, or social or political events that prevent some site visits), the evaluator(s) should alert the EM and the evaluation management should examine whether these circumstances will affect the quality and credibility of the exercise and in case, discuss relevant methodological and practical alternatives.

Debrief on initial findings

Initial findings should be presented at the end of the field visits or of the data collection phase, providing an opportunity for relevant parties – such as government stakeholders, donors, beneficiaries or implementing partners – to identify any misinterpretation or factual mistake at an early stage before report writing. This can be done in the form of a PowerPoint or short report; it should be added as a deliverable if expected.

Evaluation report

Final evaluation reports are to be written in one of IOM's official languages as agreed in the TOR. If a donor or government ask for having it written in the local or another language, a summary of the findings and recommendations should be prepared in one of IOM's official languages.

IOM encourages evaluators to use the IOM reporting format, but if for various reasons the IOM format is not used, the report should however include the following components:

- Title page, including the title of the evaluation, date of completion (it can be the date of the draft or the final report) and the name of the evaluator(s) or evaluation firm(s);

- Executive summary, including an explanation of the project background, an overview of the evaluation background, a concise description of the evaluation methodology, a summary of main findings, conclusions, lessons learned and good practices (some detailed and less important findings, conclusions, lessons learned and good practice may be dropped in that section to keep it as a summary section) and a summary of all recommendations;

- Project background, including its objectives and expected results, a brief overview of contextual factors and key stakeholders, and a description of the intervention logic and funding arrangements;

- **Evaluation background**, including an explanation of the purpose of the evaluation, a description of the evaluation scope and a list of evaluation clients and the main audience for the report;

- **Evaluation approach and methodology,** including a statement on the evaluation approach, questions and criteria (providing a justification for their use or lack thereof), the methodology used, the inclusion of cross-cutting themes, the stakeholder participation, the limitations of the evaluation and a brief description of the evaluation norms and standards that have been adhered to;

- **Evaluation findings per criteria,** requiring that all questions are properly addressed and findings aligned with the evaluation purpose, questions and approach, that findings are justified by robust evidence and data disaggregated by key variables, that causal factors that led to accomplishments and failures are identified, and that the report adequately address IOM cross-cutting themes;

- **Conclusions,** requiring to be based on and clearly linked to the evidence presented in the evaluation findings and that they are objective and well justified;

- **Recommendations,** requiring to be relevant, clear, concise and actionable based on findings and/or conclusions of the report, and to identify the person(s)/entity responsible for their implementation. The multiplication of very detailed recommendations should be avoided;

- **Lessons learned,** requiring to be relevant, specific to the context, targeting specific users and applicable, keeping in mind that lessons learned are generalizations that abstract from specific circumstances to broader situations;

- **Good practices,** concisely capturing the context from which they are derived and specifying target users and being applicable and replicable.

> More detailed guidance for each evaluation report component is provided in the IOM evaluation report components template. A template for reporting is provided in the IOM evaluation report template.

Evaluation brief

An evaluation brief must be developed by the evaluator(s) after the final report has been completed. A Microsoft Publisher template will be provided by IOM. The brief provides a short overview of the evaluation, ensuring also that conclusions, recommendations, lessons learned and good practices are properly captured and included. Guidance for the evaluation brief is provided in the Evaluation brief template and guidance.

Final presentation of the evaluation

A final presentation of the evaluation may be organized, which would provide an overview of the key elements of the evaluation, its findings, conclusions and recommendations. Other deliverables presenting the evaluation, such as a PowerPoint presentation or infographic, may also be requested from the evaluator(s). Such deliverables should ideally be included within the deliverable section of the evaluation ToR, but they can also be decided during the conduct of the evaluation if interest in such presentation is becoming evident and useful for the dissemination of evaluation results.

Management response matrix

Evaluator(s) should prepare a draft management response matrix by inserting the recommendations, the party to which the recommendation is addressed, and an indicative time frame or deadline for implementation. The draft matrix will then be shared with the evaluation manager, who will liaise with relevant IOM management and staff to complete the matrix. The drafting of the management response matrix should be part of the evaluator's deliverables.

For more information regarding the management response matrix, see the Guidance on the use of Evaluations and Follow-up of Evaluation document. A management response matrix template is also available under IOM Evaluation Webpage - Management Response and Follow-up on IOM Evaluation Recommendations.