## TEMPLATE TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

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This template has been designed as a guidance document for use in evaluations of donor agency responses to COVID-19. It is meant to be used and adapted contextually by evaluators, evaluation commissioners and managers. The fields highlighted in yellow are editable and are to be customised based on the evaluation scope.

### 1. General information

#### 1.1 Introduction

The following terms of reference refer to the <name of the evaluation> during the COVID-19 pandemic in <partner country>.

#### 1.2 Evaluation object: Intervention to be evaluated

The evaluation objects are the <brief scope of the evaluation>.The period to be considered is <timeline of evaluation>.

#### 1.3 Intervention context

<Briefly summarise the multi-sectorial effects and impacts of COVID-19 pandemic in the partner country with emphasis on timelines, funding provided by donors, health statistics and major response efforts and protection policies>

### 2. The Assignment

#### 2.1 Evaluation purpose: Intended use and intended users

The purpose of the evaluation is to generate lessons learnt and recommendations for the future work of the <programme and donor agencies>. The primary intended users of the evaluation are <state the users- management board/ operational staff/ people/others>. At a broader level, these case-studies may serve to generate lessons and discussions in the global donor community, particularly within the COVID-19 Global Evaluation Coalition and other relevant networks. The evaluation is to be designed, conducted and reported to meet the needs of the intended users. Tenderers shall elaborate in the tender how this will be ensured during the evaluation process. Other stakeholders that should be kept informed about the evaluation include <state the counterparts of the agencies, their respective headquarters, and embassies>. During the inception phase, the evaluator and the users will agree on who will be responsible for keeping the various stakeholders informed about the evaluation.

#### 2.2 Evaluation scope

The evaluation scope is limited to the work of the agencies during the period Month X-Y 202X. If needed, the scope of the evaluation may be further elaborated by the evaluator in the inception report.

#### 2.3 Evaluation objective: Criteria and questions

The evaluation questions and areas of focus for a process evaluation of donor agencies’ responses during the COVID-19 pandemic include:

*Concerning the donors’ internal procedures:*

* Views on local relevance of instructions from Headquarters and Ministry of Foreign Affairs
* Views on functionality of agencies’ and their respective embassies’ administrative systems during the pandemic. - To what extent had donors’ procedures for identification and approval of contributions been relevant to respond to the needs caused by the pandemic?
* Views on leadership in terms of strategic direction of the team during the pandemic.
* Views on of the management of the respective teams during the pandemic.
* To what extent have the donors managed to perform their normal obligations (contribution management, reporting, and strategy work) as planned during the pandemic?

*Concerning the donors’ response:*

* Did the donors’ devote sufficient attention to the pandemic-induced crisis and its consequences?
* Were the donors’ able to effectively address other priorities in partner country during the pandemic?

*Concerning the donors’ performance as funders and partners during the pandemic:*

Was new funding approved to respond to partner’s funding requests related to the pandemic?

* To what extent have donors’ responses to the crisis by reprogramming and providing additional support been relevant to local demands from authorities and other actors?
* To what extent was this reprogramming relevant to local needs?
* Have donors been innovative in reprogramming and in monitoring projects in a context of pandemic?
* How flexible have the donors been towards their partners during the pandemic?
* How reliable and responsive partners have the donors been during the pandemic?
* How consistent have the donors been in their work and communications during its pandemic, both with regard to their initial strategy and reprogramming decisions?
* How has communication within the donor agencies and within the larger donor community functioned during the pandemic?
* How concerned and involved have the donor agencies been with regard to the situation in partner organisations during the pandemic?

*Recommendations:*

* For all of the above questions, evaluators can provide recommendations on how the donors’ work could be enhanced if a similar situation occurs in the future (i.e., during a possible subsequent waves of the pandemic). Questions are expected to be developed in the tender by the tenderer and further refined during the inception phase of the evaluation.

#### 2.4 Evaluation approach and methods

It is recommended that evaluators conduct interviews of staff and representatives from their respective organisations/HQs. Interviews should be representative of all of the donors’ direct counterparts (both public, international and non-governmental) in the partner country, including implementing partners when applicable. Documents/records of communication between the donors’ and their counterparts can be used to corroborate interview accounts. The donors will supply accounts of reorientations/reprogramming/additional contributions approved during the pandemic, as well as any other document putting into perspective the lessons learnt at this stage, to be used for the same purpose. Interviews for the evaluation can be performed either in person or digitally.

If there are more than one agency, it is recommended that the evaluation be undertaken in a comparative fashion, allowing for the juxtaposition of similarities and differences between the multiple donor agencies. Conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation can both be presented in a joint fashion when they apply to all countries involved, or be directed towards individual donor agencies when applicable. It is expected that the evaluator describes and justifies an appropriate evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection in the tender. The evaluation design and methods for data collection and analysis are expected to be fully developed and presented in the inception report. Given the situation with COVID-19, innovative and flexible approaches/methodologies and methods for remote data collection should be suggested when appropriate and the risk of doing harm managed. The evaluator is to suggest an approach/methodology that provides credible answers (evidence) to the evaluation questions. Limitations to the chosen approach/methodology and methods shall be made explicit by the evaluator and the consequences of these limitations discussed in the tender.

The evaluator shall to the extent possible present mitigation measures to address them. A *gender-responsive* approach/methodology, methods, tools and data analysis techniques should be used.[[1]](#footnote-2) The evaluation should be *utilisation-focused*, which means the evaluator should facilitate the *entire evaluation process* with careful consideration of how everything that is done will affect the use of the evaluation. It is therefore expected that the evaluators, in their tender, present i) how intended users are to participate in and contribute to the evaluation process and ii) methodology and methods for data collection that create space for reflection, discussion and learning between the intended users of the evaluation. In cases where sensitive or confidential issues are to be addressed in the evaluation, evaluators should ensure an evaluation design that do not put informants and stakeholders at risk during the data collection phase or the dissemination phase.

#### 2.5 Organisation of evaluation management

This evaluation is commissioned by the <name of the agency>. The intended users are the <name country> donor cooperation agencies in <partner country>. The intended users of the evaluation form a steering group, which has contributed to and agreed on the ToR for this evaluation. The steering group is a decision-making body that will approve the inception report and the final report of the evaluation. The steering group will participate in the start-up meeting of the evaluation, as well as in the debriefing/validation workshop where preliminary findings and conclusions are discussed.

#### 2.6 Evaluation quality

It is recommended that the evaluation conform to OECD/DAC’s Quality Standards for Development Evaluation[[2]](#footnote-3) and use the OECD/DAC Guidance for Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies and COVID-19 Global Evaluation Coalition’s Strategic Evaluation Questions[[3]](#footnote-4). When applicable, the evaluators may use the OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation[[4]](#footnote-5) and the OECD/DAC Better Criteria for Better Evaluation[[5]](#footnote-6). The evaluators shall specify how quality assurance will be handled by them during the evaluation process.

#### 2.7 Time schedule and deliverables

The evaluation shall be carried out during <month x to month y> of 202X. The timing of any field visits, surveys and interviews will need to be settled by the evaluator in dialogue with the main stakeholders during the inception phase. The table below lists key deliverables for the evaluation process. Alternative deadlines for deliverables may be suggested by the consultant and negotiated during the inception phase.

**Deliverables Participants Deadlines**

1. Start-up meeting Donor <insert deadlines>
2. Inception report Evaluators <insert deadlines>
3. Inception meeting Donor <insert deadlines>
4. Data collection, analysis, report writing and quality assurance Evaluators <insert deadlines>
5. Debriefing/validation workshop (meeting) Donor <insert deadlines>
6. Draft evaluation report Evaluators <insert deadlines>
7. Comments from intended users to evaluators Donor <insert deadlines>
8. Final evaluation report Evaluators <insert deadlines>
9. Seminar/presentation <insert deadlines>

The consultants should present an **inception report** informing on their intended interviewees, questionnaires, and approach, *including how an utilisation-focused and gender-responsive approach will be ensured*. This report should be approved by the donor agencies involved. A draft report should be presented no later than <Deadline>. After receiving comments from the donors, the consultants will have another week to submit the final report. Prior to submitting the final report, the consultants’ should liaise with the COVID- 19 Global Evaluation Coalition in order to ascertain whether there are relevant findings from other, similar evaluations to which reference could be made in the final report.

 The final report should be written in <state languages> with a summary document, and be professionally proof read. The final report should have clear structure. The report shall clearly and in detail describe the evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection and analysis and make a clear distinction between the two. The gender-responsive approach shall be described and reflected in the findings, conclusions and recommendations along with other identified and relevant crosscutting issues.

Limitations to the methodology and methods and the consequences of these limitations for findings and conclusions shall be described. Evaluation findings shall flow logically from the data, showing a clear line of evidence to support the conclusions. Conclusions should be substantiated by findings and analysis. Evaluation questions shall be clearly stated and answered in the executive summary and in the conclusions. Recommendations and lessons learned should flow logically from conclusions and be specific, directed to relevant intended users and categorised as a short-term, medium-term and long-term.

The report should be no more than <number> pages, excluding annexes. If the methods section is extensive, it could be placed in an annex to the report. Annexes shall always include the Terms of Reference. Lists of key informants/interviewees shall only include personal data if deemed relevant (i.e. when it is contributing to the credibility of the evaluation) based on a case-based assessment by the evaluator and the commissioning unit/embassy. The inclusion of personal data in the report must always be based on a written consent.

The evaluator shall adhere to the OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation, when relevant. The evaluator shall, upon approval of the final report, insert the report into donor agency’s template for decentralised evaluations and submit it (in pdf-format) for publication and release.

#### Evaluation team qualification

In addition to the qualifications already stated in the framework agreement for evaluation services, the evaluation team shall include the following competencies:

* Knowledge of the working practices of different donor agencies; partner country context, language.
* A CV for each team member shall be included in the call-off response. It should contain a full description of relevant qualifications and professional work experience.
* The use of local or regional evaluation consultants is welcomed.
* The evaluators must be independent from the evaluation object and evaluated activities, and have no stake in the outcome of the evaluation.
* Please note that in the tender, the tenderers must propose a team leader that takes part in the evaluation by at least thirty percent of the total evaluation team time including core team members, specialists and all support functions, but excluding time for the quality assurance expert.

#### 2.9 Financial and human resources

The maximum budget amount available for the evaluation is XX USD [USD 50,000 Reference Value]. Invoicing and payment shall be managed according to the following: 50 per cent after the approval of the inception report, 50 per cent after the approval of the final report. The contact person is <name of the person, contact and donor agency name>.

The contact person should be consulted if any problems arise during the evaluation process. Relevant documentation will be provided by each of the participating donors. Contact details to intended users will be provided by each of the participating donors. The evaluator will be required to arrange the logistics including any necessary security arrangements

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| C:\Users\johnson_l\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Word\COVID-19 Coalition Logo (ENG).jpgThis paper has been produced by the evaluators of the COVID-19 Global Evaluation Coalition. Comments on this paper are welcome and may be sent to the Secretariat: COVID19evaluation@oecd.org Development Cooperation Directorate, OECD2 rue André Pascal, 75775Paris Cedex 16, France |

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1. See for example UNEG United Nations Evaluation Group (2014) Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations

<http://uneval.org/document/detail/1616> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. OECD/DAC (2010) Quality Standards for Development Evaluation. OECD/DAC (1999) Guidance for Evaluating Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. COVID-19 Global Evalution Coalition (2020), Strategic Evaluation Questions, [www.covid19-evaluation-coalition.org/about/](http://www.covid19-evaluation-coalition.org/about/) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Sida OECD/DAC (2014) Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. OECD/DAC (2019) Better Criteria for Better Evaluation: Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)