TOOLS AND GUIDANCE

The use of the UNFPA Evaluation Quality Assessment Grid

Version 1

UNFPA Evaluation Office

July 2017

Guidance note for the use of the UNFPA EQA grid

19/07/2017

I. Introduction

The UNFPA Evaluation Office has developed a new evaluation quality assessment (EQA) template in 2016.[1] The present note is meant to propose adjustments and complement the EQA template with guidance on how to approach the sub-criteria under each quality criterion with a view to:

1. Ensuring consistency among quality assessment reviews;
2. Establishing objective thresholds for the rating scale (Unsatisfactory; Fair; Good; Very Good).

II. Approaching the sub-criteria

In the table below, under each quality criterion, sub-criteria have been numbered for ease of use. A column has also been added, to indicate whether each sub-criterion is considered totally (Y), partially (P), or not (N) met.

Under each quality criterion, the relative importance of the sub-criteria varies (see section III).

III. Relative importance of the sub-criteria and resulting thresholds for the EQA rating scale

   a. Quality assessment criteria 1 to 6

Under each quality criterion, <u>core sub-criteria</u> (in bold) have been identified.

The absence of <u>any</u> of the core sub-criteria identified for a given quality criterion results in the quality criterion being rated "**Unsatisfactory**".

> *E.g., for quality criterion 1 (Structure and clarity of reporting), three core sub-criteria have been identified: 1 (Is the report easy to read and understand?), 3 (Is the report structured in a logical way etc.?) and 5 (Is an executive summary included in the report etc.?). If the value of any of the three core sub-criteria is "N" (i.e., sub-criterion not met), the overall rating of quality criterion 1 should be "Unsatisfactory", no matter the value of the other sub-criteria.*

If <u>all</u> identified core sub-criteria are either fully or partially met, the overall rating of the quality criterion may range from "Fair" to "Very good", based on the combination of values of the other sub-criteria (see table below for the various combinations of values under each quality criterion and the resulting overall rating).

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[1] http://www.unfpa.org/admin-resource/evaluation-quality-assurance-and-assessment-tools-and-guidance

The rating "**Very good**" being used to highlight an exemplary level of quality, a good practice and/or a model to follow, this note proposes that all sub-criteria be met in order for the quality criterion to be rated as "Very good".

b. Quality assessment criterion 7

Quality assessment criterion 7 being fully based on the UN-SWAP Scoring Tool (cf. the EQA template), it is already associated with a specific rating scale.

Quality Assessment Criteria	Insert <u>assessment level</u> followed by main <u>comments</u>. (use 'shading' function to give cells corresponding colour)	
1. Structure and Clarity of Reporting *To ensure the report is comprehensive and user-friendly* 1. **Is the report easy to read and understand (i.e. written in an accessible language appropriate for the intended audience) with minimal grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors?** 2. Is the report of a reasonable length? (maximum pages for the main report, excluding annexes: 60 for institutional evaluations; 70 for CPEs; 80 for thematic evaluations) 3. **Is the report structured in a logical way? Is there a clear distinction made between analysis/findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned (where applicable)?** 4. Do the annexes contain – at a minimum – the ToRs; a bibliography; a list of interviewees; the evaluation matrix; methodological tools used (e.g. interview guides; focus group notes, outline of surveys) as well as information on the stakeholder consultation process? *Executive summary* 5. **Is an executive summary included in the report, written as a stand-alone section and presenting the main results of the evaluation?** 6. Is there a clear structure of the executive summary, (i.e. i) Purpose, including intended audience(s); ii) Objectives and brief description of intervention; iii) Methodology; iv) Main conclusions; v) Recommendations)? 7. Is the executive summary reasonably concise (e.g. with a maximum length of 5 pages)?	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:
		Unsatisfactory 1,3,5: No (<u>For any of the three</u>) 2,4,6,7: Yes/No/Partial **Good** 1,3,5,6,7: Yes 2,4: Partial/Yes **Very good** 1,2,3,4.5,6,7: Yes **Fair** Any combination different from the above

2. Design and Methodology	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	

To ensure that the evaluation is put within its context
  1. Does the evaluation describe the target audience for the evaluation?
  2. Is the development and institutional context of the evaluation clearly described and constraints explained?
  3. Does the evaluation report describe the reconstruction of the intervention logic and/or theory of change, and assess the adequacy of these?
 	
To ensure a rigorous design and methodology
  4. Is the evaluation framework clearly described in the text and in the evaluation matrix? Does the evaluation matrix establish the evaluation questions, assumptions, indicators, data sources and methods for data collection?
  5. Are the tools for data collection described and their choice justified?
  6. Is there a comprehensive stakeholder map? Is the stakeholder consultation process clearly described (in particular, does it include the consultation of key stakeholders on draft recommendations)?
  7. Are the methods for analysis clearly described for all types of data?
  8. Are methodological limitations acknowledged and their effect on the evaluation described? (Does the report discuss how any bias has been overcome?)
  9. Is the sampling strategy described?
  10. Does the methodology enable the collection and analysis of disaggregated data?
  11. Is the design and methodology appropriate for assessing the cross-cutting issues (equity and vulnerability, gender equality and human rights)?
		Unsatisfactory
		
		2,3,4: No (for any of the three)
		
		1,5,6,7,8,9,10,11 : Yes/No/Partial
		
		Good
		
		2,3,4,5,6,7,9: Yes
		
		1,6,8,10,11: Yes/Partial
		
		Very good
		
		1-11: Yes
		
		Fair
		
		Any combination different from the above	

3. Reliability of Data *To ensure quality of data and robust data collection processes* 1. **Did the evaluation triangulate data collected as appropriate?** 2. **Did the evaluation clearly identify and make use of reliable qualitative and quantitative data sources?** 3. Did the evaluation make explicit any possible limitations (bias, data gaps etc.) in primary and secondary data sources and if relevant, explained what was done to minimize such issues? 4. Is there evidence that data has been collected with a sensitivity to issues of discrimination and other ethical considerations?	Yes No Partial	Assessment Level:	
		Unsatisfactory 1,2 : No (For any of the two) 3,4: Y/P/N **Good** 1,2,3 : Yes 4: P **Very good** 1-4: Yes **Fair** Any combination different from the above	

4. Analysis and Findings
 	
To ensure sound analysis and credible findings
  1. Are the findings substantiated by evidence?
  2. Is the basis for interpretations carefully described?
  3. Is the analysis presented against the evaluation questions?
  4. Is the analysis transparent about the sources and quality of data?
  5. Are cause and effect links between an intervention and its end results explained and any unintended outcomes highlighted?
  6. Does the analysis show different outcomes for different target groups, as relevant?
  7. Is the analysis presented against contextual factors?
  8. Does the analysis elaborate on cross-cutting issues such as equity and vulnerability, gender equality and human rights?
	Yes
	No
	Partial
		Assessment Level:	

		Unsatisfactory 1,5,7: No (For any of the three) 2,3,4,6,8: Y/N/P **Good** 1,2,7,8: Y 3,4,5,6: P/Y **Very Good** 1-8: Y **Fair** Any combination different from the above	

5. Conclusions
 	
To assess the validity of conclusions
  1. **Do the conclusions flow clearly from the findings?**
  2. Do the conclusions go beyond the findings and provide a thorough understanding of the underlying issues of the programme/initiative/system being evaluated?
  3. Do the conclusions appear to convey the evaluators' unbiased judgement?
	Yes
	No
	Partial
		Assessment Level:	

		Unsatisfactory 1: No 2,3: Y/P/N **Good** 1,3 : Yes 2: P **Very Good** 1,2,3: Yes **Fair** Any combination different from the above	

6. Recommendations
 	
To ensure the usefulness and clarity of recommendations
  1. **Do recommendations flow logically from conclusions?**
  2. **Are the recommendations clearly written, targeted at the intended users and action-oriented (with information on their human, financial and technical implications)?**
  3. Do recommendations appear balanced and impartial?
  4. Is a timeframe for implementation proposed?
  5. Are the recommendations prioritised and clearly presented to facilitate appropriate management response and follow up on each specific recommendation?
	Yes
	No
	Partial
		Assessment Level:	

		Unsatisfactory 1,2: No (For any of the two) 3,4,5: Y/P/N **Good** 1,2,3,5: Yes 4: P **Very Good** 1-5: Yes **Fair** Any combination different from the above	

7. Gender	0-3	Assessment Level:	
To assess the integration of Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (GEEW)[2] 1. Is GEEW integrated in the evaluation scope of analysis and indicators designed in a way that ensures GEEW-related data to be collected? 2. Do evaluation criteria and evaluation questions specifically address how GEEW has been integrated into design, planning, implementation of the intervention and the results achieved? 3. Have gender-responsive evaluation methodology, methods and tools, and data analysis techniques been selected? 4. Do the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender analysis?		See footnote.	

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[2] This assessment criteria is fully based on the UN-SWAP Scoring Tool, see Annex 7. Each sub-criteria shall be equally weighted (in correlation with the calculation in the tool and totaling the scores 11-12 = very good, 8-10 = good, 4-7 = Fair, 0-3=unsatisfactory).

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