

2

PREPARATORY
PHASE

2.1 DRAFTING THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The **terms of reference** (ToR) are a key element for guiding the entire evaluation process. The ToR specify the objectives and scope of the evaluation and are used as a reference in selecting the consultants to carry out the evaluation. They must be annexed to the contract of the selected evaluators since they are an integral part of their legal agreement with UNFPA, detailing the extent of services, the quality of deliverables and the timeline for the evaluation. The ToR should also indicate the number of days for each consultant and specify the budget for the evaluation.

BOX 1: OUTLINE OF TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR UNFPA CPEs

- Introduction (*explanation of the evaluation mandate, rationale and purpose of the CPE*)
- Context (*presentation of the country programme*)
- Objectives and scope of the evaluation (*objectives of the CPE and the time frame covered*)⁸
- Evaluation questions (*pre-selection of the evaluation questions to be covered by the CPE*)
- Methodology and approach (*describes the intended approach and methodology*)
- Evaluation process (*outline of the evaluation phases and steps*)
- Expected outputs (*description of the main deliverables of the CPE*)
- Work plan (*detailing specific activities, milestones and dates, including the planned submission date of the final report*)
- Composition of the evaluation team (*make-up, size and required qualifications of the evaluation team*)
- Management and conduct of the evaluation (*description of the roles and responsibilities of the evaluation manager, reference group and evaluation team, and outline of the quality assurance process*)
- Evaluation audience (*intended users of the evaluation report, and their responsibilities in terms of its use*)
- Bibliography and resources (*initial list of documents and information resources to be consulted by the evaluation team*)
- Annexes



Template 1 provides details of the content of the individual chapters for the ToR for a CPE.

⁸ The ToR should abide by the UNEG guidelines on drawing up ToR and must include a description of both the overall and the specific objectives of the CPE, as well as the structure, staffing requirements and key deliverables. See http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=608

2.2 SELECTING AND RECRUITING THE EVALUATION TEAM

During the preparatory phase, the evaluation manager must reflect on the composition of the team of evaluators. The team of evaluators for UNFPA CPEs typically consists of one team leader and at least two additional team members. Teams must be multidisciplinary, with both thematic expertise (e.g., SRHR, gender equality/women's empowerment, population dynamics, adolescents and youth, other relevant programmatic area) and experience and skills relating to evaluation methodology, including, to the extent possible, experience in conducting gender- and human rights-responsive evaluations

The evaluation manager should strive to create a gender-balanced team, and to the extent possible, include national and/or regional consultants. S/he must ensure that all requirements relating to the independence and the prevention of conflicts of interest defined by UNEG Ethical Code of Conduct, Ethical Guidelines, as well as Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the United Nations system and the UNEG guidance on integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations (see below) are duly observed.

It is of paramount importance that all members of the team, and in particular the team leader, can demonstrate strong writing and presentation skills. This is necessary to produce a good-quality evaluation report (see *Template 13*).

With regard to evaluation methodology, candidates for the evaluation team must demonstrate previous experience in carrying out theory-driven evaluations and should be able to work with, and collect both quantitative and qualitative data and information. Evaluators' data-collection skills need to include document and statistical analysis as well as experience in conducting focus groups and key informant interviews.

The required thematic and methodological expertise can be provided by a combination of members of the evaluation team – i.e., all team members do not have to be equally strong in each thematic area of expertise. The role of the evaluation team leader is preferably assigned to an expert with a strong evaluation methodological background. Note that the evaluation team leader does not necessarily have to possess expertise in SRHR, gender or population dynamics or any of the other UNFPA programmatic areas. In that case, it will be important to fill the remaining positions in the team with evaluators who have strong subject-matter expertise in the thematic areas covered by the country programme.

The evaluation team must be able to demonstrate a degree of knowledge of the social, economic and cultural context of the programme country, with at least one or two members of the evaluation team showing a significant working experience in the programme country. However, to avoid a conflict of interest, none of the team members should have worked on the design and/or implementation of UNFPA-supported interventions during the period covered by the evaluation.



The evaluation manager should be familiar with the UNEG Norms and Standards for evaluation in the United Nations system, UNEG Code of Conduct and UNEG Ethical Guidelines, as well as Guidance on Integrating Gender and Human Rights. These are available here:

- <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1616>
- <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>
- <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1452>
- <http://www.unevaluation.org/ethicalguidelines>
- <http://www.unevaluation.org/unegcodeofconduct>

2.3 ESTABLISHING THE REFERENCE GROUP FOR UNFPA CPEs

The reference group is a body made up of staff from UNFPA (country office, regional office, headquarters) as well as other relevant stakeholders (representatives from the partner government, non-government organizations, development partners and national experts, as well as other relevant stakeholders).

Establishing a well-balanced reference group helps to ensure that the CPE covers the issues relevant to and important for the key stakeholders of the country programme.

The following stakeholders should be represented in the reference groups for CPEs:

- The UNFPA country office whose country programme is covered by the CPE, including staff members from the different sub-programmes/programmatic areas
- The UNFPA regional office with, at least, the regional M&E officer
- National government counterparts and key non-governmental implementing partners, including representatives of marginalized groups and young people.

BOX 2: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE REFERENCE GROUP THROUGHOUT THE CPE

Preparatory phase:

- Provides input to the ToR of the evaluation, including the first selection of evaluation questions to be covered by the CPE.
- Provides input for selection of the team of evaluators.

Design phase:

- Contributes to the final selection of the evaluation questions, and provides overall comments on the design report of the CPE.

Field phase:

- Facilitates access of the evaluation team to information sources (documents and interviewees) to support data collection.

Reporting phase:

- Provides comments on the main deliverables of the evaluation, in particular the (draft) final report (in this regard, timely distribution of documents by the evaluation manager is essential).

In creating the reference group, the evaluation manager must identify the relevant organizations and individuals and prepare a letter of invitation. This letter must explain the role played by the reference group and include the draft ToR. It should be sent by, or on behalf of, the country office representative.



See [Template 14, Letter of invitation to participate in a reference group](#).

2.4 PREPARING THE INITIAL DOCUMENTATION

The evaluation manager must compile the most relevant documents on the country programme and its context (global UNFPA strategic plan, the UNDAF, the country context in general). In order to ensure an efficient launch of the evaluation, this documentation must be collected at the preparatory phase to ensure it is readily available at the beginning of the design phase. The evaluation manager must make those documents available to the evaluators as soon as the team has been selected.

BOX 3: DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPILED DURING THE PREPARATORY PHASE OF THE CPE

UNFPA country programme:

- Country programme document (CPD)
- List of UNFPA interventions by country programme output and strategic plan outcome (see below)
- Copies of annual work plans (AWPs) for the period covered by the CPE
- Workplan progress reports, quarterly reports on programme outputs (SIS), country office annual reports (COARs) and donor reports, if any.

Strategic context of UNFPA country programme:

- Common country assessment (CCA) and United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)
- UNFPA strategic plan(s) for the years covered by the CPE
- Relevant national policy and strategy documents for the different outcome areas of the UNFPA strategic plan
- Relevant external reviews or evaluation reports covering development on the outcome areas of the CPD

Wider country context relevant to population and development, SRHR and gender:

- References to documentary sources for more information on demographic, social, political, economic context in programme country are listed in *Table 19*.

2.5 PREPARING A LIST OF UNFPA INTERVENTIONS

The evaluation manager, the reference group and the evaluators need to obtain an accurate picture of the activities implemented under the country programme as well as of their links with the outputs and outcomes of the country programme. To this end, the individual annual work plans (AWPs) list the activities undertaken by the country office to operationalize the CPD on an annual basis.

However, the AWPs often do not offer a sufficiently detailed and comprehensive overview of the portfolio of activities supported by UNFPA. To obtain a precise list of all activities planned and/or implemented during the period under evaluation, evaluators need to complement their review of AWPs with a study of Atlas data on budgeted interventions and actual expenditure.

For this purpose, during the preparatory phase of the CPE, the evaluation manager must compile a list of all intervention budgets and expenditures for the period covered by the CPE. S/he must make this information available to the evaluators in Excel format. To this end, the evaluation manager is required to use the Excel template called "List of UNFPA interventions by country programme output and strategic plan outcome" ([Tool 3](#)). When completed, this spreadsheet offers detailed information that can also be used for other purposes.⁹

i See [Tool 3, List of UNFPA interventions by country programme output and strategic plan outcome](#). This tool enables the evaluation manager to present a wide range of data otherwise not readily retrievable as it is spread throughout a number of AWPs.

2.6 PREPARING A STAKEHOLDERS MAP

The evaluation manager and the evaluators need to have a comprehensive overview of the different stakeholders – government, implementing partners, beneficiaries, civil society, donors, etc. – who have either: (i) been involved in the preparation and the implementation of the country programme; or (ii) been directly or indirectly affected by its implementation. Identified stakeholders serve as important sources of information for the evaluators. They can provide both quantitative data, and qualitative information, which evaluators should use to analyse the contribution of UNFPA support to changes for each outcome of the country programme.

i The steps in the process of selecting the sample and the role of the evaluator manager in each stage are presented in [section 3.3, Selecting a sample of stakeholders](#), and use the stakeholders mapping table ([Tool 4](#)).

⁹ E.g., the spreadsheet can be used: for the selection of the sample of stakeholders; when assessing the efficiency criteria; in interviews (when evaluators want to know precisely which activities implementing agencies have been involved in).

TABLE 5 *The responsibilities of the evaluation manager at the preparatory phase*

Main activities	Responsibility
Development of terms of reference (ToR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines required scope and methodological requirements of the CPE • Defines the staffing requirements for the evaluation • Drafts first version of the ToR in consultation with the regional M&E adviser and circulates the ToR to the reference group (see below) • Finalizes the ToR based on feedback from the reference group • Sends the ToR to the regional M&E adviser, who shares it with the Evaluation Office for approval
Compilation of preliminary list of background documents and other materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares list of UNFPA interventions • Compiles list of other documents and materials for the CPE • Prepares the stakeholders map
Establishing the reference group for the evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies relevant services and qualified participants to take part in the reference group • Prepares and sends invitations to identified participants to join the reference group • Circulates relevant documents to the reference group in a timely manner • Calls meetings and leads the work of the reference group
Selecting the evaluation team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies potential candidates to compose the evaluation team in consultation with the regional M&E adviser • Prepares the summary assessment table with the input of the regional M&E adviser, who then sends it to the Evaluation Office for pre-qualification of consultants • Undertakes the competitive selection process of consultants • Proceeds with the recruitment of consultants