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# Resource Pack on Joint Evaluations



# RESOURCE PACK ON JOINT EVALUATIONS

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## UN Evaluation Group Task Force on Joint Evaluation

This UNEG Resource Pack on Joint Evaluations was prepared by the UNEG Task Force on Joint Evaluations and published in December 2013. It is comprised of two main parts:

### The Joint Evaluations Guidance document



The Guidance document presents an overview of issues to consider when undertaking a joint evaluation, describes joint evaluation management and governance structures, and outlines the steps in undertaking a joint evaluation, including consideration of gender and human rights issues.

### The Joint Evaluations Toolkit



The Toolkit is a reference document that aims at helping joint evaluation practitioners conducting joint evaluations, and includes checklists, examples and good practices of joint evaluation products.

Specific links that connect the two documents when relevant are included in the text. Additionally, you can navigate from one document to the other by using the icons and tabs on the left side of the document.

# HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS INTERACTIVE PDF

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## GUIDE TO BUTTONS

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Previous view



Previous page



Home



Next page



How to page



Toolkit



Guidance document

## LINKS IN THIS PDF

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## TABS AND ICONS

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Clicking on one of the tabs at the side of the page takes you to the start of that section. The icon for the toolkit will take you to the toolkit section of the document. Clicking on the icon for the Guidance document will take you to that section of the document.

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# CONTENTS

---

BOXES, TABLES AND DIAGRAMS	6
----------------------------	---

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	7
----------------------------	---

## INTRODUCTION 9

WHY JOINT EVALUATIONS?	10
------------------------	----

WHAT? DEFINING JOINT EVALUATION	12
---------------------------------	----

TYPOLOGIES OF JOINT EVALUATIONS	14
---------------------------------	----

## GUIDANCE DOCUMENT 17

1. DECIDING TO UNDERTAKE A JOINT EVALUATION	18
---	----

2. ADVANTAGES AND CHALLENGES OF JOINT EVALUATIONS	21
---	----

2.1 ADVANTAGES OF JOINT EVALUATIONS	22
-------------------------------------	----

2.2 CHALLENGES OF JOINT EVALUATIONS	25
-------------------------------------	----

3. JOINT EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES	28
--	----

3.1 GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES	32
--	----

3.2 STEERING COMMITTEE	34
------------------------	----

3.3 MANAGEMENT GROUP	35
----------------------	----

3.4 LEAD AGENCY AND MANAGEMENT GROUP CHAIR	38
--	----

3.5 REFERENCE GROUP	39
---------------------	----

3.6 HOST COUNTRY STAKEHOLDERS	41
-------------------------------	----

3.7 ADVISORY GROUP	42
--------------------	----

<b>4.</b>	<b>UNDERTAKING A JOINT EVALUATION</b>	<b>43</b>
4.1	PREPARING FOR A JOINT EVALUATION	45
4.2	JOINT EVALUATION IMPLEMENTATION	54
4.3.	UTILIZATION OF JOINT EVALUATION OUTCOMES	55
<b>5.</b>	<b>GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS DIMENSIONS IN JOINT EVALUATIONS</b>	<b>64</b>
	<b>ANNEXES</b>	<b>67</b>
1.	LIST OF RESOURCES	67
2.	EXAMPLES OF JOINT EVALUATIONS WITH KEY INFORMATION	74
	<b>ENDNOTES</b>	<b>81</b>
	<b>TOOLKIT</b>	<b>85</b>

# BOXES, TABLES AND DIAGRAMS

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## BOXES

---

- Box 1.** The GEF Experience on Lighter Joint Evaluations
- Box 2.** Sample Categorization of Joint Evaluations
- Box 3.** General Learning to Guide the Management of Joint Evaluations
- Box 4.** Tasks of the Evaluation Management Group (EMG) of the Paris Declaration Evaluation
- Box 5.** Tasks of the Evaluation Reference Group of the Joint Evaluation of Joint Gender Programmes in the UN System
- Box 6.** Important Success Factors of Joint Evaluations
- Box 7.** Useful Questions to Ask When Designing the ToR
- Box 8.** Checklist for Developing the ToR
- Box 9.** Useful Questions to Ask When Considering Joint Evaluation Financing
- Box 10.** Useful Questions to Ask When Finalizing Results
- Box 11.** Joint Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change – Joint Management Response and Dissemination Strategy
- Box 12.** Fundamental Premises of the Utilization-Focus
- Box 13.** The JEFF Process: An Early Assessment of Impact of the JEEAR
- Box 14.** Management Response to the Joint External Evaluation: Operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund for Adaptation to Climate Change
- Box 15.** Mandate to Integrate Gender Equality in Evaluation

## TABLES

---

**Table 1.** Simple Joint Evaluation Typology

**Table 2.** Advantages and Challenges of Joint Evaluations

**Table 3.** Phases of Joint Evaluation

## DIAGRAMS

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**Diagram 1.** Governance and Management Structure of the Joint Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change

**Diagram 2.** Governance and Management Structure of UNDAF Evaluations

# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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**AGM** Annual General Meeting

**ALNAP** Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance

**CRG** Country Reference Group

**DAC** Development Assistance Committee

<b>EAG</b>	Evaluation Advisory Group
<b>EMG</b>	Evaluation Management Group
<b>ERG</b>	Evaluation Reference Group
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environment Facility
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>JE</b>	Joint Evaluation
<b>JEEAR</b>	Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MRP</b>	Management Response Plan
<b>OCHA</b>	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PRSPs</b>	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
<b>RTE</b>	Real-time Evaluation
<b>SC</b>	Steering Committee
<b>TEC</b>	Tsunami Evaluation Coalition
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of reference
<b>TFJE</b>	Task Force for Joint Evaluation
<b>UNEG</b>	United Nations Evaluation Group
<b>UNEG</b>	United Nations Evaluation Group Task Force on Joint Evaluations
<b>TF/JE</b>	
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund



# INTRODUCTION

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WHY JOINT EVALUATIONS?

WHAT? DEFINING JOINT EVALUATION

TYPOLOGIES OF JOINT EVALUATIONS

## WHY JOINT EVALUATIONS?

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Joint Evaluation is emerging as an important tool for influencing UN reform initiatives and high-level policy discussions. Driven by broad concerns about the need for greater UN system-wide coherence, Member States are asking UN agencies to be highly collaborative and to adopt coordinated approaches. The Secretary-General's 2006 High-Level Panel on UN system-wide coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment for example recommended that the UN seek to "Deliver as One" at country level, with one leader, one programme, one budget and where appropriate one office. Both the Millennium Development Goals and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) similarly place emphasis on coordinated and joint approaches to programming while in the field of peacekeeping, there is increased attention to multi-dimensional operations.

To respond effectively to these shifts, the evaluation function in the UN needs to develop its capacity to address issues of broad systemic concern. UN evaluation offices must be capable of working together to make the function more relevant and useful. The 2006 High-level Panel on system-wide coherence noted important weaknesses in this context and recommended the establishment of a new UN system-wide independent evaluation mechanism. The Panel's recommendation has recently been taken up by the General Assembly through the adoption of a new pilot independent system-wide evaluation mechanism, which is designed to help address the gap.

As the trend towards joint programming and implementation builds momentum and UN assistance strategies move away from isolated projects towards national, sector-wide and cross-sector programming stressing collaboration and harmonization, UNEG needs to respond with appropriate methodological support and guidance.

As part of its broader harmonization efforts, UNEG took the decision in 2010 to establish a Joint Evaluation Task Force. Its establishment was a reflection of the fact that a majority of UNEG members were involved in joint evaluation work and that these engagements were growing. The Task Force further determined that there was a practical demand from the membership for broad methodological guidance and the identification of good practices based on the group's collective experience. The Resource Pack is a first step to address this need.

### *NEED FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE*

Evaluation professionals are on a steep learning curve in terms of how to conduct Joint Evaluations, particularly in how best to manage and organize them. A 2011 survey conducted by the UNEG Task Force on Joint Evaluations found that 23 out of the 40 members of the UNEG are involved to varying degrees in Joint Evaluations. They requested further guidance in a number of specific areas such as appropriate governance arrangements, management structures. There was also an identified need for standard definitions and advice on management follow up arrangements.

### *PURPOSE OF RESOURCE PACK*

Taking into consideration the multitude of approaches and the diversity of actors who may be engaged in joint UN evaluation work, the purpose of this Resource Pack is to enhance system-wide programming efforts by strengthening the capacity of UN offices to engage in joint evaluations.

The Resource Pack is made up of two components:

1. A Joint Evaluation Guidance Document, which outlines main issues that arise when conducting a joint evaluation. The Guidance Document borrows heavily from previous best practices, tools, and lessons-learned documents from within and outside the UN but has explored new areas that are particularly relevant to the challenges in joint evaluations. It provides options and approaches based on lessons from previous joint evaluations.
2. A Toolkit, which includes a collection of documents, including examples of good practices and UNEG-specific guidance on planning, managing and utilizing joint evaluations. The toolkit has samples of terms of reference (ToR), governance and financing arrangements, management response, and follow-up strategies used in previous evaluations. This body of past experience provides readers with easily accessible references when drafting their own documents.

### *AUDIENCE*

The audience of this Resource Pack is primarily UNEG members. However, given the similarity of issues that organizations face when undertaking or participating in joint

evaluations, this Resource Pack might also be of interest and utility to a wider range of partners and stakeholders, including donors, governments, NGOs, as well as country-level processes. As such, the Resource Pack is not prescriptive and its application can be broad.

### *METHODOLOGY*

The Resource Pack was developed mainly through an extensive literature review on joint evaluations. Selected stakeholders provided further information on best practices, additional tools, and other issues related to joint evaluations in interviews. A Management Group made up of staff from the International Labour Organization, Global Environment Facility, OCHA, UNICEF, UNWOMEN, and UNFPA was closely involved throughout the process. The Management Group held two consultation workshops during the development of the Resource Pack to provide guidance and inputs. The Resource Pack builds upon guidance on conducting joint evaluations that already exists. The aim is not to duplicate efforts, but to collate lessons learned and best practices into a guide that can be applied across organizations and settings. The Resource Pack was developed with the support of a consultant.

## WHAT? DEFINING JOINT EVALUATION

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Much of the literature defines a JE as an evaluation in which different donor agencies and/or partners participate. The UNEG Task Force for Joint Evaluation (TFJE) adopted the following definition:

“a joint evaluative effort by more than one entity of a topic of mutual interest, or of a programme or set of activities which are co-financed and implemented, with the degree of ‘jointness’, varying from cooperation in the evaluation process, pooling of resources to combined reporting.”

Joint evaluations can vary greatly in terms of their focus: individual projects, multilateral agency programmes, sector-wide programmes, co-financing arrangements, crosscutting or thematic concerns. Joint evaluations have a wide-ranging scope: some are limited to a single country, whereas others may cover a region, or be worldwide.<sup>[1]</sup> There are also

various degrees of ‘jointness’ depending on the extent to which individual partners cooperate in the evaluation process, merge their resources and combine their reporting. Regardless of the level of ‘jointness’, however, a truly collaborative joint evaluation means sharing decisions concerning the evaluation’s planning and management, its scope of work, the team composition, the methodology, the reporting format and findings, and many other aspects.<sup>[2]</sup>

### **Box 1 The GEF Experience on Lighter Joint Evaluations**

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The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Evaluation Office conducts Country Portfolio Studies where opportunities to collaborate with independent evaluation offices of GEF agencies present themselves. These joint country-level evaluations are pursued when opportunities arise in terms of timing and portfolio characteristics (when a large portion of the GEF agency country portfolio consists of GEF projects). To date, the GEF Evaluation Office has conducted several joint country-level evaluations in collaboration with the UNDP Evaluation Office in El Salvador, Jamaica, and Timor-Leste. These joint evaluations were conducted at the same time as the UNDP Assessment of Development Results or country programme evaluations. Collaborating on a country-level evaluation provides a better understanding of the broader context in which the common activities are taking place, a reduction of the evaluation burden to the country and cost-sharing and savings of the two evaluation efforts. The collaboration for these types of joint evaluations has the following characteristics:

- An informal and pragmatic governance structure consisting of email exchanges to agree on how the evaluation will be conducted and reported on
- Joint communications with all relevant government ministries or agencies
- Contracting the same consultant for the GEF portfolio and the UNDP environment portfolio
- Joint data collection and project site visits for the common portfolio
- Joint stakeholder workshops to present and discuss key findings, conclusions and preliminary recommendations
- Separate evaluation reports that are shared with the respective governing bodies

## TYOLOGIES OF JOINT EVALUATIONS

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Joint evaluation approaches are not monolithic and there is considerable differentiation in terms of intended uses and overall approaches being applied. Any typology for JE needs to be broad and based on recognition of the varying levels of complexity.

The feasibility of joint evaluations including their degree of “jointness” has been evolving over time. While in the past joint evaluations most typically involved donors and agency-level evaluation staff, the growth of national evaluation capacities in many countries is creating new possibilities for building dynamic evaluation partnerships. The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration is a case in point. Being more of a partnership evaluation rather than a traditional joint evaluation, its governance and dialogue arrangements were established to reflect an emphasis on partnership involving 22 national governments, donors and aid agencies in a collective evaluation endeavor.

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### Box 2 Sample Categorization of Joint Evaluations

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**Classic joint evaluations:** participation is open to all stakeholder agencies. All partners participate and contribute actively and on equal terms.

**Qualified joint evaluations:** participation is open only to those who qualify, through membership of a certain grouping (e.g. DAC, Nordic governments) or through active participation in the activity (e.g. jointly implemented programmes) that is being evaluated.

**Framework evaluations:** participating organizations agree on a common evaluation framework. Responsibility for implementation of individual evaluations is then devolved to different partners resulting in individual case evaluations and a synthesis report.

*Adapted from: Niels Dabelstein (2006)*

**Table 1 below begins to outline an approach to grouping joint evaluations.**

LEVEL	EXAMPLE	SCOPE AND MANAGEMENT
<b>System-wide</b>	The Joint Evaluation on General Budget Support (GBS), (2004-2006)	<p>Commissioned by a group of 24 aid agencies – Australia, Belgium, Canada (CIDA), Denmark, European Commission (EuropeAid), France, Germany (BMZ), Ireland, Inter-American Development Bank, International Monetary Fund, Japan (JBIC, JICA and MOFA), the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, OECD/DAC, Portugal, Sweden (Sida), Switzerland (SECO), United Kingdom (DFID), USA (USAID) and World Bank – working within the framework of the OECD/DAC Evaluation Network. They were joined on the evaluation’s steering group (SG) by the governments of the seven countries used as case studies – Governments of Burkina Faso, Malawi, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Uganda and Viet Nam. The evaluation was contracted on behalf of the SG by DFID (UK), which also chaired both the SG and the management group composed of representatives of the European Commission (EuropeAid), Belgium and The Netherlands.</p> <p>The evaluation was undertaken by a consortium led by the International Development Department of the University of Birmingham. More than three dozen consultants, (sector and evaluation experts) including those based in the study countries, contributed to the reports.</p> <p>The consortium began work in August 2004 and the final <u>country and synthesis reports</u> were presented to the OECD/DAC in May 2006.</p>

LEVEL	EXAMPLE	SCOPE AND MANAGEMENT
<b>Policy/ Thematic</b>	World Food Programme (WFP) Enabling Development Policy (EDP)	<p>In 2003, representatives of Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy and the United States initiated an external assessment of the progress achieved and difficulties encountered with the implementation of the World Food Programme (WFP) Enabling Development Policy (EDP). Evaluation offices of the seven countries managed the process, in close cooperation with the Office of Evaluation of WFP and with the support of two senior advisers.</p> <p>The evaluation was undertaken by an international consortium comprised of Development Researchers' Network (DRN) of Italy, Aide à la Décision Economique of Belgium, Baastel of Canada, ECO Consulting Group of Germany, and Nordic Consulting Group of Denmark. Together, the members of the consortium represented a very broad and varied range of solid expertise in international development and development cooperation, both in OECD and in partner countries.</p>
<b>Programme/ Thematic</b>	Joint Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/ Cutting (FGM/C): accelerating change - 2012–2013	<p>The evaluation is conducted jointly by UNFPA and UNICEF. The joint evaluation management group is the main decision-making body for the evaluation and has the overall management oversight of the evaluation process. A joint evaluation reference group was established to support the evaluation at key moments and ensure broad participation in the conceptualization of the exercise, access to information, high technical quality of the evaluation products as well as learning and knowledge generation. National reference groups were established in countries where field visits will take place (broad participation, including civil society).</p> <p>The evaluation was undertaken by Universal Management Consulting with the contributions of national experts.</p> <p>The evaluation assesses the relevance, efficiency, sustainability and the effectiveness of the holistic approach adopted by UNFPA and UNICEF in their programme for the acceleration of the abandonment of FGM/C. The evaluation also assesses the quality of the coordination mechanisms that have been established at the global level and within countries to maximize the effectiveness of United Nations interventions. <a href="http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/about/Evaluation/EBIER/TE/pid/10103">www.unfpa.org/public/home/about/Evaluation/EBIER/TE/pid/10103</a></p>

For further examples of joint evaluations and their scope, management structures and financing arrangements, see [Annex 1](#).



# GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

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1. DECIDING TO UNDERTAKE A JOINT EVALUATION
2. ADVANTAGES AND CHALLENGES OF JOINT EVALUATIONS
3. JOINT EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES
4. UNDERTAKING A JOINT EVALUATION
5. GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS DIMENSIONS IN JOINT EVALUATIONS

## 1. DECIDING TO UNDERTAKE A JOINT EVALUATION

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The decision to undertake a joint evaluation should be taken on a case-by-case basis and with careful consideration to its potential value added, benefits and costs involved. Joint evaluations are particularly appropriate in cases where:

1. The evaluand is a co-financed or joint programme
2. When there are systemic questions and concerns about the UN's broad contribution to national development goals
3. When there is a need to address broad prospective-type policy issues or concerns which may be the subject of some debate or disagreement.
4. The issues being addressed are of a sensitive or potentially controversial nature for one agency alone to tackle.<sup>[3] [4]</sup>
5. There is the possibility to reduce the overall evaluation burden on national actors by combining evaluation efforts.

In cases where an evaluation needs to be conducted quickly, where the topic is narrowly focused, or is mainly concerned with domestic accountability needs, a joint evaluation approach may not be appropriate.<sup>[5]</sup> The following section further elaborates on these questions and highlights other factors to consider when deciding whether a joint evaluation approach may be more appropriate than a single-agency evaluation approach.

### *BROAD FOCUS*

If there is a need for a broad assessment of collective results within a sector or at a cross sectoral level involving collaborative programming and exploring linkages and synergies, then a joint evaluation could be considered.<sup>[6]</sup>

### *JOINT FUNDING*

If the evaluand is of a single project or program funded by a single donor, it is probably best evaluated by that donor agency alone. However, if the focus is on a jointly funded project or program, a joint evaluation involving the co-sponsoring donors may be appropriate.

### *POLICY DEVELOPMENT*

If there is a need for evaluation to support broad policy development at a systemic level through the identification of lessons learned, joint approaches can be highly relevant. Lessons based on the collective wisdom of numerous actors are likely to be more valid and reliable than those based on a single agency experience.<sup>[7]</sup>

### *ASSESSMENT OF COLLECTIVE UN RESULTS*

If the purpose of the evaluation is to assess the combined contributions of a number of programs on a set of broader (e.g., sector-wide or cross-sectoral) development or humanitarian goals, then joint evaluation is suitable.<sup>[8]</sup> If, however, a donor agency is interested in assessing accountability for performance of its own program and wishes to single out its own individual contributions to results achieved, then a single agency evaluation is probably most appropriate.<sup>[9]</sup>

### *SENSITIVE TOPICS*

Joint evaluations may be the preferred mode of work if there are issues to be taken up in an evaluation that are too sensitive or controversial for one agency to tackle alone.<sup>[10]</sup> In this case, a joint approach may help build acceptance of results across agencies and achieve greater policy impact.

### *PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS*

The collaborative nature of joint evaluations tends to increase their complexity – which often increases the total level of effort and the length of time needed as well (see further elaboration in ‘Challenges of Joint Evaluations’ below).

Joint evaluations may increase the overall management burden, since frequent meetings or other forms of communication and collaboration among participants are typically required at every key stage.<sup>[11]</sup> It is important to have a clear timetable and for managers to ensure good

communication among partners to ensure that things run as efficiently as possible.

Joint Evaluations may be beneficial from a cost perspective insofar as they provide opportunities for cost sharing. Joint approaches may provide invaluable opportunities for small agencies to engage in comprehensive evaluations and to bring issues which may not be cost effective to evaluate on their own.<sup>[12]</sup>

Flexibility on the part of the evaluation manager is required to help accommodate the special circumstances of each evaluation partner, given differences in mandates, evaluation methods and work schedules.<sup>[13]</sup>

## 2. ADVANTAGES AND CHALLENGES OF JOINT EVALUATIONS

The decision of whether to conduct an evaluation singly, or jointly will be based on a careful weighing of all the likely advantages and disadvantages. Table 2 below highlights a number of documented advantages and challenges of conducting joint evaluations. These observations are further explained in the section below.

**Table 2. Advantages and Challenges of Joint Evaluations**

ADVANTAGES		POTENTIAL CHALLENGES	
+	Increased objectivity and legitimacy	—	Different terminology
+	Broader scope and picture of situation	—	Developing ToRs
+	Mutual capacity development and peer learning	—	Complexity of coordination arrangements
+	Helps foster a collective sense of accountability	—	Power differentials among partners
+	Promotes cost-sharing and a sense of partnership among UN evaluation offices and units	—	Longer time frames
+	Useful for developing consistent policy messages	—	Findings may not address individual agency accountability requirements
+	Greater credibility and broader ownership of findings and recommendations	—	Diffusion of responsibility for follow-up can weaken evaluation impact
+	Builds coordination and collaboration	—	Multi-sector data may be more complicated to interpret
+	Often yields higher quality evaluations		
+	May help reduce the overall number of evaluations undertaken – thereby reducing transaction costs and administrative demands on aid recipient countries.		

## 2.1 ADVANTAGES OF JOINT EVALUATIONS

Analysis of joint evaluations has shown benefit to diverse and independent actors. Such evaluations have facilitated the development of common policies and standards, and are useful for bringing a range of organizations and institutions together into a shared learning processes.<sup>[14]</sup>

### *INCREASED OBJECTIVITY AND LEGITIMACY*

Successful joint evaluations have the potential to increase the objectivity, transparency and independence of the evaluation process, ultimately leading to strengthened legitimacy and impact.<sup>[15]</sup> Because there are many actors involved, joint evaluations tend to be more transparent and this openness can make them less threatening than a single-agency exercise.<sup>[16]</sup>

### *BROADER SCOPE AND PICTURE OF SITUATION*

Joint evaluations can address broader evaluation questions and can facilitate a perspective on multi-agency coordination and impact beyond the results of one individual agency.<sup>[17]</sup> This wider view can expose how factors such as geographic coverage, sector-specific interventions, and stakeholder involvement all fit together and can provide learning opportunities on the overall setting.<sup>[18]</sup> This bigger-picture analysis is important for collective advocacy and fundraising purposes.

### *BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE BROADER CONTEXT IN WHICH THE JOINT INITIATIVE TAKES PLACE*

Due to their frequent focus on addressing issues of broad systemic concern, joint evaluations may help facilitate a sense of the bigger picture within which a programme or a set of joint activities is situated. Single agency approaches may not always afford the same opportunities. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) often undertakes joint evaluations as a means of gaining a better perspective on the context of a country by collaborating on country level evaluations with UNDP. Capturing the UNDP part of the work allows the GEF to better understand the general development context in which the GEF support takes place. At the same time, the GEF allows UNDP to place its environmental support in a richer context of other environmental efforts. This provides additional insight and possibilities for learning.

### *MUTUAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND PEER LEARNING*

Joint evaluations enable agencies to learn from each other and share evaluation techniques<sup>[19]</sup>. They provide a rare opportunity for partners to understand each other's programming and operations, to gain additional insights beyond those afforded by a single agency portfolio, to share technical knowledge directly or indirectly, and to benefit from relationships that are often established through the evaluation process which may result in future agency cooperation.<sup>[20] [21] [22]</sup> The process of collaborating on the evaluation itself can also be a powerful way of building relationships among partner agency staff that endure for the long term. Thus, the process can be as or even more important than the product, which in turn can improve the uptake of findings across agencies.

### *INCREASED ACCOUNTABILITY*

Joint evaluation reports usually end up in the public domain, thus enhancing accountability. Peer to peer accountability is also strengthened in joint evaluations as they generally involve a higher level of transparency than do single agency evaluations.<sup>[23]</sup> When agencies open up to each other by sharing weaknesses and strengths, they increase transparency and this creates an environment where it is easier to hold each other to account for acting upon recommendations.<sup>[24]</sup>

### *COST-SHARING AND REDUCTION OF TOTAL TRANSACTION COSTS*

To the extent that joint evaluations can help reduce the total number of agency-specific evaluations, the total transaction costs related to evaluation for partner countries can potentially be reduced. Reducing the burden of multiple, separate agency evaluation efforts on recipient country institutions, including overlapping team visits and duplicative data collection efforts can bring significant benefits.<sup>[25]</sup>

### *REDUCING MULTIPLE MESSAGES*

Joint evaluations help to avoid conveying too many different and often conflicting evaluation messages to partner countries, which may often compete for attention and action, and may be difficult to reconcile.<sup>[26]</sup>

This approach can help foster consensus building on key policy priorities.<sup>[27]</sup>

### *GREATER CREDIBILITY AND BROADER OWNERSHIP OF FINDINGS*

Insofar as analyses, findings, conclusions and recommendations arising from joint evaluations are based on broad knowledge, a wider range of inputs and contributions from partners, joint rather than individual scrutiny and quality assessment procedures, and multi-partner commitment, joint evaluations typically carry more weight, credibility and legitimacy, and may as such be less easy for decision makers to ignore.<sup>[28]</sup> To the extent that joint evaluations results become available to a wider policy audience and public, there may in turn be greater pressure to act upon the results. Additionally, JEs provide a larger body of evidence, which may be useful for purposes of collective advocacy.<sup>[29] [30] [31]</sup>

### *BUILDING COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION*

By comparing agencies' responses, joint evaluations can point out areas where partner agencies can improve complementary action and make recommendations for improving future coordination.

### *YIELDING HIGHER QUALITY EVALUATIONS*

Methodologies adopted in joint evaluations tend to be more rigorous than those of single-agency evaluations, and this contributes to the higher quality of their reports. Joint evaluations more often have clearer and more usable terms of reference, engage and consult more with beneficiaries and other stakeholders, pay more attention to international standards, and make more rigorous use of agreed criteria for the evaluation.<sup>[32]</sup> In particular, joint evaluations may, given their broader more systemic focus, be stronger in their examination of impact. In the case of joint humanitarian evaluations, one study showed that joint evaluations rated higher in assessing the question of connectedness – the linking of short-term, emergency interventions within the context of longer-term and interconnected issues and problems.<sup>[33]</sup>

### *METHODOLOGICAL CAPACITY-BUILDING*

Another advantage to undertaking joint evaluations is their potential for methodology development. When a set of activities conducted by several agencies or organizations is evaluated, there are higher chances of being able to use a variety of methods for data collection and analysis. Different agencies, for instance, may have different types of data



available, which can be put together to obtain a better picture of the issue being evaluated. Similarly, interviews can be conducted with a variety of stakeholders, allowing for better triangulation. Joint evaluations are also an excellent opportunity for evaluation offices to exchange practices and learn from one another.

## 2.2 CHALLENGES OF JOINT EVALUATIONS

While many benefits have been identified, a number of obstacles and challenges also have to be noted. Reasons for not doing joint evaluations often relate to the complexity of the process and the subject under consideration, the time-consuming and expensive nature of the activity, and heavy management structures.<sup>[34]</sup>

### *DIFFERENT TERMINOLOGY*

One challenge is agreement on terminology, concepts and approaches to evaluations. There may be different definitions and understandings which may not be applicable to all agencies. Agencies need to ensure that they are using terminology the same way.

### *DEVELOPING TORs*

Developing a comprehensive, yet manageable ToR to accommodate each country's or agency's preoccupations and interests is the key to a successful joint evaluation but may require time and a number of compromises.

### *COMPLEXITY OF COORDINATION REQUIRING INCREASED RESOURCES*

Joint evaluations are typically characterized by complex management, communications and governance systems.<sup>[35]</sup> This complexity often requires more resources than if the evaluations were to be conducted by one agency or donor. Differences among agencies' operational processes and organizational cultures can also create obstacles to smooth collaboration efforts. For example, joint evaluations can be complicated by differences among agencies' evaluation policies and procedures, methods, reporting requirements, administrative policies and procedures – especially financial and contracting mechanisms.<sup>[36]</sup>

### *POWER DIFFERENTIALS*

It has been observed that sometimes one agency involved in a joint evaluation may end up dominating the process. This may be related to that agency's investing more funding, having a stronger management position within the governance structure or because it has a particular agenda it wants to pursue. This has the potential to bias or disrupt the process and negatively affect the quality of the end product. More equal management and participation helps avoid the possibility of this outcome.

### *LOWER QUALITY*

At the same time as joint evaluations offer an opportunity for higher quality evaluations, lower quality evaluations may also result. If differences in methodology or in key questions arise, there may be a tendency to go for the lowest common denominator, rather than a higher-level agreement.

### *LONGER TIME FRAMES*

Typically joint evaluations will require longer time frames than single-agency efforts due to the need for greater consultation at every stage of the evaluation.<sup>[37]</sup> Exchanges with partners reveal that differences in organizational cultures, mandates and methodologies can impose significant constraints/delays to joint evaluations. Delays in the completion of joint evaluations adversely affect their timeliness and reduce their value in providing timely lessons to newly designed country assistance strategies.<sup>[38]</sup>

### *LACK OF SPECIFICITY*

Given the broad focus, findings from JEs can sometimes become overly generalized. This may be due to many varying analysis requirements, which different stakeholders may bring to the table.<sup>[39]</sup> Often it is not feasible or advisable to go into detail regarding any particular agency's programs as would happen in a single agency evaluation. Therefore many of the evaluation questions of interest to each agency may not get answered.<sup>[40]</sup>

### *DIFFUSION OF RESPONSIBILITY IN FOLLOW-UP*

A problem noted with joint evaluations is that because the results do not necessarily fit into the accountability system of any one agency, the recommendations and findings get lost.

The utilization of the outcomes and institutionalization of the findings within each agency tend to be weak because there are not clear procedures for how to take them on board. Dissemination strategies within the agency (i.e. to Executive Boards) as well as procedures for taking up the recommendations. Agencies may feel less ownership over joint evaluation results. The lack of a clear commissioning body to report to may cause actors to feel less ownership over the various issues and recommendations raised.

### *HIGHER TRANSACTION COSTS FOR EVALUATION TEAMS*

Joint evaluations may have greater transaction costs for teams undertaking the evaluation insofar as they may have to contend with issues such as a lack of coherence across data systems in different organizations; lack of awareness of different entities' respective programmes and processes for M&E and reporting; poor institutional memory or storage of, or access to past evaluations and studies. In terms of management of joint evaluations, the very different ways in which different organizations manage evaluations creates problems during the field work in terms of logistics, oversight, quality assurance, and to a certain extent, the overall independence of the process.

### 3. JOINT EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

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When initiating a Joint Evaluation, one of the first steps is to decide whether there is a need for a Management and Governance Structure. If the evaluation is a relatively small effort, sometimes pragmatic solutions can be found on the level of projects or programmes, that do not require creating such a structure, as this may add out-of-proportion costs to the evaluation. For example, the GEF undertook some of the most pragmatic joint evaluations on the basis of e-mail exchanges, which spelled out the agreement between two evaluation offices on how the evaluation would be undertaken and reported. Experience has shown that these solutions tend to work well with relatively small evaluations, while for larger evaluations, setting up formal management and governance structures is generally required.

It is important to keep in mind, when deciding on management and governance structures for a joint evaluation, that systemic structures put in place for management and governance of the evaluation will determine to a large extent the way the joint evaluation is carried out.

Creating a functional and effective Governance Structure for a Joint Evaluation may be one of the most difficult components to carrying out a Joint Evaluation. The structure can be agreed in a number of ways: partners may all share in management decision making, perhaps with one agency acting as the coordinator. Alternatively, partners can delegate management responsibility to one agency while the others limit their role to sponsorship and reviewing key outputs. Much of this will depend on the size of the evaluation as well as the number of partners involved.

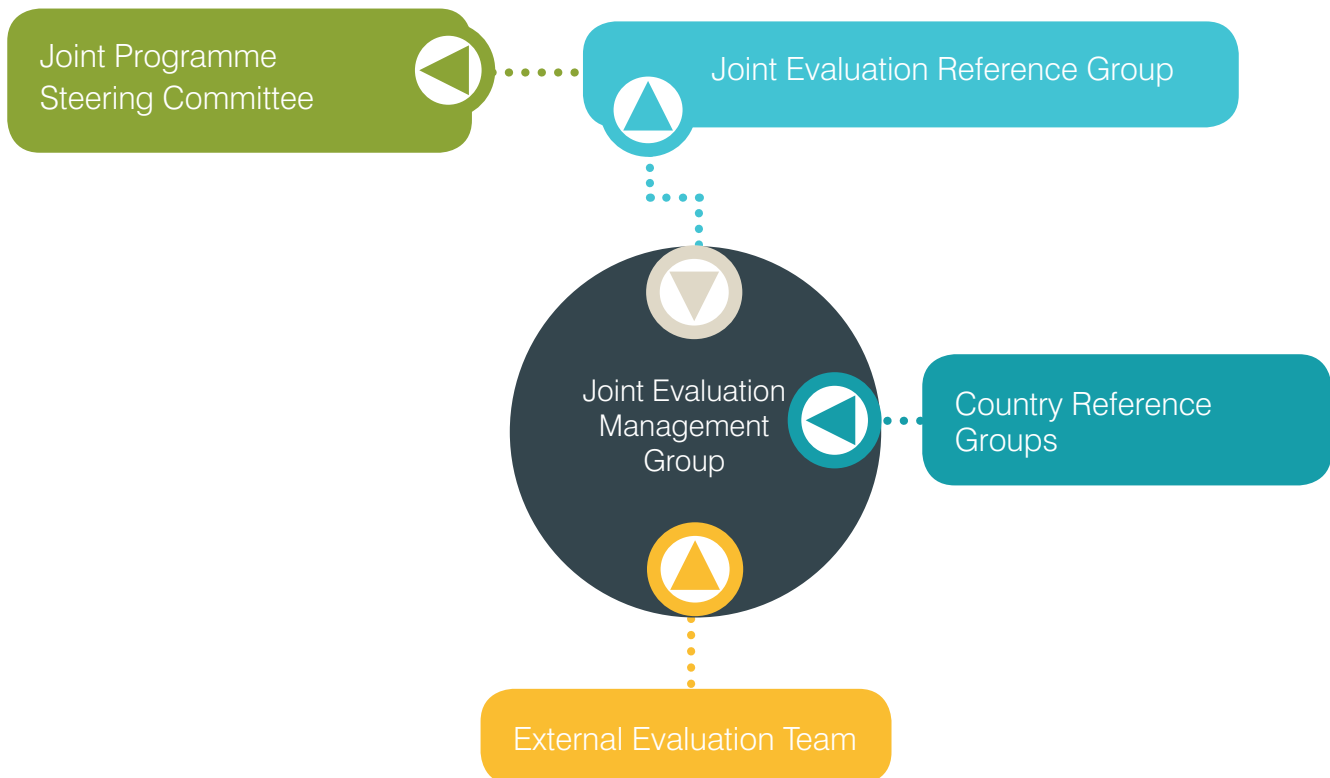
When setting up a joint evaluation governance structure, it is important to have a good common understanding of the key objectives and purpose of such government structures. This understanding should precede the particular forms of governance structures and their tasks, which may need to be very different in each evaluation. Moreover, the same structure

can have different tasks in any particular case. Key functions for management structures can include the following:

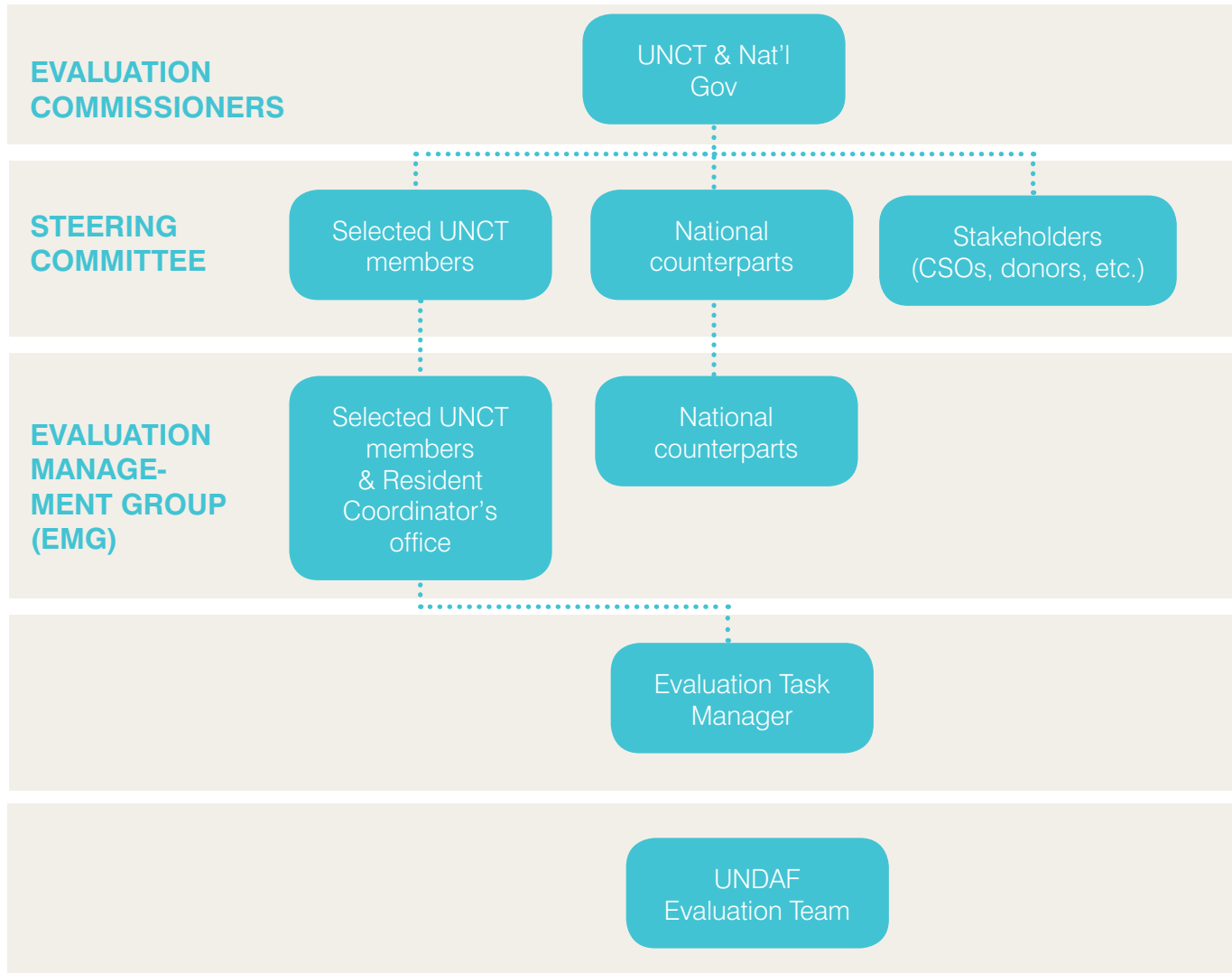
- Quality assurance
- Communication with stakeholders
- Representation of stakeholders
- Technical input
- Logistics and support
- Management of funds
- Management of the evaluation process
- Management response

A common joint evaluation management structure is a system created on the basis of a steering committee and a smaller management group. An advisory group consisting of technical experts in either evaluation methods or the sectors being evaluated may also be established, often called the evaluation reference group. Other key roles include a lead agency, a chairperson, as well as a lead manager or administrator. Two examples of large-scale joint evaluation management structures are shown in Diagrams 1 and 2 below.

**Diagram 1. Governance and Management Structure of the Joint Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change**



**Diagram 2. Governance and Management Structure of UNDAF Evaluations**



Regardless of the structure adopted, a joint evaluation takes time, skill and patience to get partners to agree on a short list of objectives; to defuse any tensions that may arise; to ensure that group decision-making processes are clear and respected; all while dealing with hiring and supervising an evaluation team, setting up interviews, ensuring logistics are in place. Without a proper management arrangement and committed leadership, a joint evaluation can be frustrating and unsuccessful.<sup>[41]</sup>

### 3.1 GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

When determining roles and responsibilities, thought should be given to the comparative advantages of each agency. The pool of funds, for instance, may be best established in an agency that has flexible rules for financial management. Similarly, the contractual arrangements with the consultants could become the responsibility of the agency which allows the most flexibility and has the lowest fees.

Within any governance structure, agencies need to be sure they can maintain the required outlay in terms of staff time and travel for the full evaluation period. Lack of continuity in the membership of the steering committees or management groups can be a key problem. The longer the duration of the evaluation, the more likely it is that changes in group membership will occur. Agencies contemplating joining a joint evaluation should ensure that their representatives in the steering and management groups will be able to remain as representatives throughout the process and that changes will be kept to a minimum.

This section will outline typical management structures and management bodies for joint evaluations which include: steering committee, management group, reference group, lead agency, chairperson and host country actors.



### **Box 3**    **General Learning to Guide the Management of Joint Evaluations**

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- ➔ Management structures should be kept simple and light
- ➔ As the experience of doing joint evaluations grows, so will the trust between agencies, thus making management easier
- ➔ It is critical to have a core group of four or five agencies involved at an early stage to move it forward
- ➔ There should be a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities
- ➔ Joint evaluations require full-time coordination, administration and research support
- ➔ A good communications strategy is critical to keep agencies involved, and can help to build trust in the process among agencies that are less-engaged and/or more sceptical
- ➔ There must be adequate funding, including a contingency budget (if, indeed, the dissemination and follow-up is not funded upfront)

*Adapted from: (2006) ALNAP workshop*

## 3.2 STEERING COMMITTEE

### WHAT?

The steering committee is the central forum in any joint evaluation; it represents the sponsors and financiers of the evaluation, who are normally also important stakeholders in the exercise. The steering committee will typically be comprised of representatives from each partner organization and government entity. They are typically the ultimate decision-making organs for the evaluation.

Typical tasks include:<sup>[42]</sup>

- ✓ apportioning the evaluation's costs;
- ✓ providing broad guidance and direction;
- ✓ taking responsibility for key decisions such as the approval of the ToR, endorsing the overall evaluation framework and the release of the evaluation products;
- ✓ having overall responsibility for oversight of the evaluation and being accountable for its robustness;
- ✓ reviewing and approving all deliverables including the evaluation reports;
- ✓ endorsing the evaluation's dissemination strategy and participating in dissemination activities.

Steering committees should reflect carefully on the optimal balance between oversight and control. A steering committee must agree, early on, as to the degree of its direct involvement in the evaluation process.

### *WHO?*

Steering committees are usually comprised of the evaluation commissioners, key stakeholders such as national civil society organizations, and policy and operational staff. A steering committee may also be composed of executive directors/directors of the joint evaluation partners and donor countries to provide political and institutional support for the evaluation at the highest level. Members of the steering committee will bring practical experience to the table and help ensure that findings are relevant and useful for decision and policy-making.

## 3.3 MANAGEMENT GROUP

### *WHAT?*

Day-to-day management is typically delegated to a few members who are responsible for most aspects of planning and managing the evaluation.

Typical tasks include:

- ✓ drafting the evaluation scope of work;
- ✓ preparing a desk study;
- ✓ preparing the ToR for the evaluation in coordination with the evaluation steering committee;
- ✓ hiring the team of external consultants, reviewing proposals and approving the selection of the evaluation team;
- ✓ providing overall administrative support such as budget tracking, scheduling, and progress reporting;
- ✓ supervising and guiding the evaluation team in each step of the evaluation process;

- ✓ reviewing, providing substantive comments and approving the inception report, including the work plan, analytical framework and methodology;
- ✓ reviewing, providing substantive feedback to the draft and final evaluation reports, for quality assurance purposes;
- ✓ ensuring the quality and independence of the evaluation and guaranteeing its alignment with UNEG Norms and Standards and Ethical Guidelines;
- ✓ ensuring the evaluation findings and conclusions are relevant and recommendations are implementable;
- ✓ preparing documents for publication;
- ✓ contributing to the dissemination of the evaluation findings and follow-up on the management response.

### **Box 4** Tasks of the Evaluation Management Group (EMG) of the Paris Declaration Evaluation

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The EMG fulfilled the executive role of coordinating the overall evaluation process and managing the evaluation components to ensure progress according to the agreed time schedule and within budget. Tasks included:

- keeping the international reference group and other relevant stakeholders appropriately involved with and informed about the evaluation's progress
- developing a terms of reference for various components and criteria for selecting consultants as needed in these efforts
- providing advice and support to partner countries, donors and development agencies regarding the planning and implementation of their evaluation activities
- commissioning the thematic and cross-cutting studies, the synthesis report, and other consultancies as necessary

- ensuring that mechanisms for resolving disputes were developed and communicated to all involved
- developing a communication and dissemination strategy
- facilitating the establishment of the overall evaluation budget
- developing a plan outlining the structure, approach and methodology for the Phase 2 summative evaluation.

The EMG met nine times during the one-and-a-half-year period of the evaluation. It established a separate Evaluation Secretariat to handle the bulk of the administrative work involved in the day-to-day management of this complex evaluation.

In larger studies with several sub-components, often different members will take the lead on each component – conducting them concurrently, thus speeding the process. One member then takes responsibility for pulling the component studies together into a synthesis report.<sup>[43]</sup>

### *WHO?*

The management group is normally made up of evaluation managers with the technical capacity to assess the performance of the consultants. But the members must also have administrative and communication skills and it is important that they are able to work together in an effective and trust-based team.<sup>[44]</sup> The group must be delegated sufficient and clear decision-making authority to keep the evaluation process running smoothly as well as having the requisite capacity and skills to take on the responsibilities. They must also have a high level of subject-matter expertise required to assess the appropriateness or realism of subject-specific evaluation questions and indicators.<sup>[45]</sup>

The division of labour within the management group should be agreed at the outset of the evaluation process. This involves determining who among the management group will take the lead role in each of the subsequent steps in the evaluation. A conflict resolution process should be determined to deal with any problems that may arise in accepting the final results of the evaluation.<sup>[46]</sup>

### 3.4 LEAD AGENCY AND MANAGEMENT GROUP CHAIR

#### WHAT?

A lead role is normally ascribed to an agency that has taken the initiative for the evaluation, or accepted certain duties and responsibilities such as administering the pool of funds, acting as employer of the contractor, shouldering a particularly large share of the total cost, or playing a more prominent role – for example, as chair of the steering committee or management group.<sup>[47]</sup>

It is essential to have a strong and effective chair for the management group. The chair must have management, administration, leadership, problem-solving and communication skills as well as evaluation and subject-matter expertise.

Typical tasks of the chair include:

- ✓ Coordinating the overall study process;
- ✓ Chairing working group meetings;
- ✓ Reporting progress to the larger group;
- ✓ Overseeing quality control;
- ✓ Keeping the study on track;
- ✓ Facilitating coordination and communication among teams working on different study components, thus avoiding overlaps, preventing gaps;
- ✓ Ensuring greater consensus when it comes time to synthesize overall study findings and recommendations.

Instituting a policy of rotating a chairperson can broaden the sense of ownership of steering committee/management group members, demonstrate joint responsibility for the success of the exercise, avoid the resource burden imposed on one agency by a one-chair arrangement and, finally, allow the different temperaments and characters represented in the group to come fully into play. Although this is not a universally accepted approach, it can go a long way in balancing the overall approach of the steering committee and in setting the atmosphere surrounding it.<sup>[48]</sup>

## 3.5 REFERENCE GROUP

### WHAT?

The evaluation reference group is a consultative body representing the most relevant stakeholders in the joint programme. These individuals and institutions are the natural users of the conclusions and recommendations derived from the evaluation study.<sup>[49]</sup>

Typical tasks include:

- ✓ Identifying information needs, defining objectives and delimiting the scope of the evaluation;
- ✓ Providing input on the evaluation planning documents, (work plan and communication, dissemination and improvement plan);
- ✓ Providing input and participating in the drafting of the ToR;
- ✓ Facilitating the evaluation team's access to all information and documentation relevant to the intervention, as well as to key actors and informants who should participate in interviews, focus groups or other information-gathering methods;
- ✓ Monitoring the quality of the process and the documents and reports that are generated, so as to enrich these with their input and ensure that they address their interests and needs for information about the intervention;
- ✓ Disseminating the results of the evaluation, especially among the organizations and entities within their interest group;
- ✓ Supporting the integration of the recommendations from the evaluation in the management structure.

### WHO?

People forming the reference group take advantage of the existing knowledge and experience on the topic. The evaluation reference group could function in a decentralized manner with the leadership of the joint programme coordinator.

#### Box 5

### Tasks of the Evaluation Reference Group of the Joint Evaluation of Joint Gender Programmes in the UN System

Under the leadership of UN Women, the Evaluation of the Joint Programme on Gender Equality in the UN System is being undertaken in collaboration with UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, MDG-Fund and the Government of Spain and the Government of Norway.

A reference group composed of gender focal points, joint programme focal points, UNDG gender team members, representatives from donor countries, UN Resident Coordinators, UNCT members, UN Gender Theme Group members, CSOs and national counterparts will be consulted on key aspects of the evaluation process. The group will be composed to ensure that both headquarters and field perspectives are represented.

More generally, reference group members will be expected:

- To act as a source of knowledge for the evaluation and coordinate feedback from other sections, units and offices from headquarters and from the field, as possible
- To act as an informant of the evaluation process
- To assist in identifying external stakeholders to be consulted during the process
- To play a key role in disseminating the findings of the evaluation and implementation of the management response

More specifically, reference group members will be expected:

- To participate in any meetings of the reference group
- To review the draft evaluation ToR and provide substantive feedback
- To be informed on the analytical framework for the evaluation, its methodology and the selection of case studies for in-depth review and site visits



- To provide feedback on a paper/PowerPoint on the emerging findings of the evaluation
- To review the draft evaluation report and provide substantive feedback to ensure quality and completeness
- To participate in the validation meeting of the final evaluation report

### 3.6 HOST COUNTRY STAKEHOLDERS

#### *WHAT?*

The active engagement of host country actors – both national and international – also needs to be considered. Examples of good practice include planning visits, which can help engage national actors through their early involvement. Government participation and ownership can be especially challenging in countries with low evaluation capacity.

In the case of joint humanitarian evaluations, it may be easier to engage with national governments in natural disaster situations, where issues of independence and neutrality tend to be less acute than in conflict-related crises. In the latter context, governments may be parties to a conflict.<sup>[50]</sup> The second phase ‘Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development’ evaluation of the TEC, in 2008/09, attempted to improve this by engaging the governments of Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the Maldives as key partners in the evaluation process. Their record of engagement, however, was reportedly mixed<sup>(1)</sup>.

Agencies proposing joint evaluations need to be creative in their attempts to engage government and local institutions, for example through membership of steering committees, as peer reviewers or as evaluation team members. Where there is limited capacity, or where joint programming has not taken place, it may be possible to start with small, manageable initiatives such as briefings for governments, including pre-evaluation briefings on focus, methodology and evaluation team composition.<sup>[51]</sup> Including representatives from national institutions in joint evaluation processes can help build its overall credibility.

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1 Training on the evaluation of Humanitarian Action. Channel Research / ALNAP

### 3.7 ADVISORY GROUP

#### *WHAT?*

Advisory panels may be established with a view to assessing the quality of the work performed and to securing the acceptability of the products of the evaluation.<sup>[52]</sup> These groups add an additional layer of quality assurance and act as a ‘peer review’ to the process.

Typical tasks Include:

- ✓ Offering advice in methodology design
- ✓ Reviewing drafts
- ✓ Being on call for referral throughout the process

#### *WHO?*

These may be people outside of the evaluation process, such as academics or persons from relevant think tanks. In-country advisory groups representing a broader set of organizations can be important mechanisms for widening institutional engagement.

## 4. UNDERTAKING A JOINT EVALUATION

This section outlines the steps taken in undertaking a joint evaluation. Table 3 highlights the key processes and phases. These are elaborated in detail below. It should be noted that not all these steps and elements may be relevant, especially in the case of JEs which are less ambitious in scope. A first element of phase one is to identify which steps are essential for the joint evaluation that is going to be undertaken.

**Table 3. Phases of Joint Evaluation**

<b>PHASE 0 DECIDING TO UNDERTAKE A JE</b>	<b>PHASE I PREPARATION</b>	<b>PHASE 2 IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>PHASE 3 UTILIZATION OF OUTCOMES</b>
Weighting pros and cons ( <i>checklist one</i> )	Undertake an 'evaluability' or readiness study ( <i>section 2.1</i> )	Iron out methodological issues	Prepare management response ( <i>checklist 7 and table 2</i> )
Assessing timing needs and budget limitations	Get broad buy-in	Review and finalize the inception report ( <i>checklist 3</i> )	Prepare and disseminate evaluation products and organize knowledge-sharing events ( <i>checklist 9</i> )
Assessing which evaluation phases to undertake	Determine partners	Data collection and analysis	Use results – Review evaluations prior to designing the next programme
Developing a theory of change	Divide procedural responsibilities	Quality assurance	Monitor implementation of recommendations ( <i>checklist 8</i> )

PHASE 0 DECIDING TO UNDERTAKE A JE	PHASE I PREPARATION	PHASE 2 IMPLEMENTATION	PHASE 3 UTILIZATION OF OUTCOMES
	<p>Agree on the management structure of an evaluation, and roles and responsibilities and contributions by different participating agencies <i>(section 3 and checklist 5)</i></p>	<p>Reporting: Finalization and presentation of report by the evaluation team <i>(checklist 6)</i></p>	
	<p>Agree on purpose, scope and objectives</p>	<p>Review the draft evaluation report/ validate findings by stakeholders</p>	
	<p>Organize the relevant documentation and develop data inventories</p>	<p>Create a work plan and meeting schedule</p>	
	<p>Develop communication protocols</p>		
	<p>Develop ToR <i>(checklist 2)</i></p>		
	<p>Agree on logistical arrangements and administrative functions</p>		

PHASE 0 DECIDING TO UNDERTAKE A JE	PHASE I PREPARATION	PHASE 2 IMPLEMENTATION	PHASE 3 UTILIZATION OF OUTCOMES
	Select the evaluation team		

## 4.1 PREPARING FOR A JOINT EVALUATION

Once agencies have agreed to conduct a joint evaluation, collaborative preparation is needed. Clear and agreed-upon roles and responsibilities at the outset are essential. In some cases, preparation can take years, as was the case in the ‘Joint Evaluation of the Role and Contribution of the United Nations System in the Republic of South Africa’ where it took more than two years.<sup>[53]</sup>

Agencies need to be prepared to invest the necessary time upfront in agreeing on the necessary arrangements; they need to have the energy and invest the time for detailed preparation.

### Box 6 Important Success Factors of Joint Evaluations

- timely and inclusive planning to identify and engage evaluation partners
- generating commitment of all partners
- inclusive, consensus-based decision-making that is necessary to ensure the evaluation’s legitimacy
- agreed arrangements for dissemination, follow-up and feedback
- building on mutual trust and confidence, rather than tight bureaucratic control and predetermined administrative processes

*Adapted from: Niels Dabelstein and Ted Kliet (2013) Preparing, Governing and Managing the Paris Declaration Evaluation, The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation. Vol. 27, No 3. Pp. 37-67.*

Agreeing on common ground rules includes deciding on who should be involved and how, what the overall purpose and objectives of the evaluation should be, making sure that all stakeholders share the main principles and standards for the evaluation, and deciding on sound management structures.<sup>[54]</sup> This section outlines a number of these steps taken in the preparation phase of a joint evaluation.

### *REVIEW THE EVALUABILITY OR READINESS OF EVALUATION*

Before undertaking large-scale joint evaluations on complex, sector-wide topics, it may be useful to first undertake an evaluability study. For example, prior to the ‘Joint Evaluation of General Budget Support (GBS)’, DFID, the major donor involved, began an evaluability study which culminated in a draft framework for the evaluation. It was taken forward by a much wider group of aid agencies and partner countries. The evaluation framework was attached to the final ToR of the evaluation with clear indication that this framework was a basis for work, but required further detail and assessment during the inception phase.<sup>[55]</sup>

### *SEEK BROAD BUY-IN*

Whoever initiates or manages the evaluation should ensure that the concept gets broad buy-in. If a proposed evaluation was initiated at the global level, a pre-visit to the selected country should be arranged to discuss the proposed purpose with the stakeholders in that country so that they become more engaged and their interests are taken into account. The evaluation should also be presented to UN and NGO representatives through in-country coordination bodies. There must be general agreement within the relevant bodies on the need for a joint evaluation and the appropriateness of timing (i.e. it can inform important planning such as the common humanitarian action plan in the consolidated appeals process, and/or inform any other decision-making process), and that it does not interfere with other in-country activities.<sup>[56]</sup>

### *DETERMINE PARTICIPANTS*

There should be agreement at the start on who should be involved in the joint evaluation. Partners could be selected by thinking through a few factors:<sup>[57]</sup>

- ➔ Agencies supported by same donors

- ➔ Agencies implementing similar programmes
- ➔ Partners who can make significant contributions
- ➔ Objectivity of the potential partner
- ➔ Diversity of participants (disciplines, skills and perspectives)

A broad, inclusive approach can create greater ownership of the evaluation and its findings – which can lead to a higher degree of follow-up. However, if too many actors are involved, it may lead to management problems and impede progress. It will be important to remember that the costs involved in participating in joint evaluations can be particularly challenging for smaller organizations.<sup>[58]</sup>

### *DETERMINE PROCEDURAL RESPONSIBILITIES*

The various partners engaged in a joint evaluation initiative may likely have different procedures and approaches to evaluation. It is important to allow flexibility to adapt to these differences. There are two common approaches: one option is to agree that the evaluation will be managed using the systems and procedures from one agency; the alternative is to split the evaluation into components and agree on whose systems will be used to manage different components.<sup>[59]</sup>

### *DEVELOP INVENTORIES*

It may be useful to create an inventory of what materials exist, including secondary sources, where they can be accessed, contact information of stakeholders, and programme descriptions. The process of creating these can uncover differences in terminologies, cataloguing systems, data collection and procedural approaches among partners. The process can be a good opportunity to reconcile these and envisage how they will be handled moving forward.

### *CREATE A WORK PLAN AND MEETING SCHEDULE*

An evaluation calendar should be designed at the outset. Partners should identify key moments in the evaluation and make sure that meetings are set around them. The first meeting should take place at the very beginning of the evaluation process to finalize reference group members, agree on the ToR and scope. Depending on the complexity and the need for regular consultation, meetings should be scheduled with corresponding frequency. Dates for workshops where findings are discussed and agreed by stakeholders should be planned for. Workshops at key stages of the study are an important part of the quality-assurance process.

Also, the duration and process of the entire evaluation should be mapped out and for each stage identify what may be unclear, who is supposed to act and by when. An approach paper which outlines when people should meet, key decisions and what the various roles are at each stage should be drafted and agreed.

Make sure the evaluation leaves enough time for key steps. Extra time spent refining the methodology (a critical step) comes at a high cost if it cuts short the study.<sup>[60]</sup>

### *COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS*

It is useful to put in place clear agreements about the communication of results. Face-to-face meetings are critical to ensuring common understandings and to building cohesion. Moreover, frequent, informal communications via phone conversations, conference calls, and Internet and email help build trust and transparency.<sup>[61]</sup> Records of all meetings should be circulated.

Deciding how to store key documents and identifying communication focal points is also very important. One solution is to set up a simple webpage to upload documents, contact lists, schedules and other essential information.<sup>[62] [63]</sup>

It is also important to have regular opportunities along the way for the evaluation team to discuss any concerns with steering committee members. For example, in the inception phase, there should be close collaboration between the evaluation team and the steering committee to ensure expectations are met and steps are properly understood. Also, early in the evaluation process, the team can give feedback as to how well the evaluation methods are working and check with the steering committee should they need to be modified.<sup>[64] [65]</sup>



### *AGREEING TO PURPOSE, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES*

Purpose, scope and objectives are crucial building blocks for the foundation of a joint evaluation. When this is not done with the necessary time and patience, there is greater likelihood that the evaluation process will run into difficulties. Any time and effort saved in bypassing these discussions will very likely need to be invested at a later stage and under more stressful conditions.<sup>[66]</sup> The fact that the stakeholders in the Darfur Real Time Evaluation (RTE) and the Tsunami Joint Evaluation, for example, shared a common general understanding of what the main important issues and the problem areas were at the outset facilitated the conduct of these evaluations. The parameters for analysis were shared early on, and the standards for judging success, were deemed broadly the same.<sup>[67]</sup>

The tendency to overload the evaluation with issues and objectives is prominent in single-agency evaluations, as various sections and actors within the organization may have differing interests and perspectives on a programme, and will attempt to throw in questions from their own agenda. With joint evaluations, this tendency will only be magnified. A rigorous process, at an early stage, of narrowing down the main focus, purpose and objective will facilitate the later work.<sup>[68]</sup>

A concept note or approach paper is particularly useful in providing common ground for the process. If possible, it should also attempt to differentiate between divergent interests and analysis on one hand, and differences in language and terminology on the other.<sup>[69]</sup>

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## **Box 7 Useful Questions to Ask When Designing the ToR**

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- What are the possible uses of the proposed evaluation and who will use the findings? This includes prioritization of those uses by possible target users and audiences for the products of the evaluation.
- What are the priority uses and therefore the main evaluation questions that need to be addressed within the time and resource limits available?

- What might be the expected methods in light of the purposes of the evaluation and coverage?
- What other aspects are needed for the ToR? Possible stakeholders to be involved, locations to be visited, duration, report style and length, etc. might be considered.

*Adapted from: ECB (2011) What We Know About Joint Evaluations*

### **DEVELOPING A TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)**

The ToR will provide details on the evaluation purpose, object and audience, the evaluation questions, methodology, the report requirements (format, content, length, language), the evaluation team, governance structures, budget, and dissemination plan. One partner may take the lead in drafting the ToR, which is then discussed and agreed upon by the partner organizations. It is important to satisfy the interests of all parties concerned in the ToR to the extent possible. Consideration should be given to creating a common agenda reflecting priorities that balance ownership with what is feasible.

The lessons-learned processes after the Darfur RTE and the Tsunami Joint Evaluation concluded that both these evaluations could have benefited from a more thorough discussion of the main issues to be explored. Many of the stakeholders involved in the Darfur RTE commented that the ToR were too broad, and included too many diverse issues.<sup>[70]</sup> Having a large number of issues will inevitably lead to a large number of recommendations, which in turn can disperse responsibilities for follow-up action. For the tsunami evaluation, the number of issues was not a problem, but the stakeholders reflected later that the issues had been decided somewhat at random, and that a more thorough discussion would have been advantageous.<sup>[71]</sup>

That said, others have noted that care is need to ensure that the time taken in securing agreement on the ToR does not leave too little time for the study itself, especially when there is a deadline for the production of results. Also, reconciling different perspectives must not lead to formulations that are methodologically unsound.

## Box 8 Considerations when Developing the Terms of Reference

- ✓ The purpose of the joint evaluation is defined through a participatory process that engages all interested users of the evaluation.
- ✓ Identify possible users of the joint evaluation, i.e. those groups that are expected to make use of the evaluation process and its results, and how the information will be used.
- ✓ Determine the most appropriate timing for carrying out the joint evaluation, taking into consideration the purpose/s of the IHE, the phase of the humanitarian crisis to be evaluated, and the varying time-frames and deadlines of stakeholders for planning and decision-making.
- ✓ Decide on the scope of the joint evaluation including key topics and questions, time period, geographical area/s and target population/s to be evaluated.
- ✓ Formulate the evaluation questions and methods used to collect data in key areas.
- ✓ Devise a work plan for the evaluators.

*Adapted from: Interagency Health and Nutrition Evaluations in Humanitarian Crises (IHE) Initiative (2007) Guidelines for Interagency Health and Nutrition Evaluations in Humanitarian Crises*

To access the checklist for development of Terms of reference for a Joint Evaluation please [click here](#):

### *FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS AND COST-SHARING*

Agreeing on the budget for a joint evaluation is another crucial step in preparing the ground for a successful exercise. Realistic costing is required: full budgeting of all expenditures of the evaluation cycle, and sufficient budgetary provisions to meet additional costs that may be incurred during the evaluation due to unexpected circumstances.<sup>[72]</sup> A budget line for contingencies will help avoid difficult procedures and possible disagreements if the original estimates need to be augmented.<sup>[73]</sup>

It is essential to agree on the overall cost and finances for a particular evaluation; on the procedures for securing the required financing; on the kind of financial administration to be set up; and on a formula for sharing unforeseen expenditures.<sup>[74]</sup>

For large, long, complex evaluations, a full-time leader is needed. Sufficient budgeting for this position should be included in the cost.

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## **Box 9**      **Useful Questions to Ask When Considering Joint Evaluation Financing**

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- ➔ Which agency(ies) will provide cash or in-kind contributions?
- ➔ Will there be equal sharing of the costs among all partners, or individual pledging?
- ➔ Will resources be pooled or will there be individual payments of expenditure?
- ➔ Will one agency administer the funds on behalf of all? According to what rules? With what kind of control and audit in place?
- ➔ What are the procedures for agencies transferring funds to/receiving funds from other agencies?

It is preferable to start the budget process with the question of cost, and not with the financing aspect. There will be opportunities thereafter to try and match expenditure and income in a balanced budget.<sup>[75]</sup>

The preliminary costing of a joint evaluation should be based on experiences with comparable exercises, plus an additional safety margin. However, to the extent possible, no final financial commitments should be made on the basis of these preliminary figures, as they may still change substantially in the budget process that follows. Early commitments by some run the risk for the others of becoming stuck with all of the additional unforeseen costs.<sup>[76]</sup>

The true size of the final budget will only be known after the contract has been awarded and the contract negotiations with the bidder have come to a successful end. That should be the moment at which all partners in an evaluation firmly pledge their financing contributions.<sup>[77]</sup>

#### *LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS*

Logistics can be especially complicated in joint evaluations, with team members often coming from different agencies and continents. Each donor or agency has its own policies and procedures for travel arrangements, for contracting services, and coordination of all these administrative aspects can be daunting. Some joint evaluations have simplified things by assigning all administrative aspects to a single agency or donor. If the joint evaluation has been divided into separate sub-components, typically each participating agency handles the administrative support and contracting for its own component.<sup>[78]</sup>

Other joint evaluations designate one member to provide overall administrative support for the evaluation effort, possibly including tasks such as contracting with consultants, keeping track of overall budget and schedule, handling fieldwork logistics, preparing progress reports, and finalizing documents for publication.<sup>[79]</sup>

## 4.2 JOINT EVALUATION IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation phase is the litmus test for the quality and adequacy of the initial preparations, but it is also normally a period of unforeseen challenges that require all actors to demonstrate flexibility, mutual understanding and patience.<sup>[80]</sup> This section focuses on a few issues when designing the joint evaluation approach and implementing it.

### *METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS*

Each agency will have its own methodologies so this section will not elaborate on evaluation approaches, but will touch on a few considerations specific to undertaking a joint evaluation. Obviously, the analysis plan, the sampling method selected (and subsequent geographic coverage), the data collection instruments chosen, and the questions identified for inclusion in the survey instrument must be agreed by all partners. Further, the theory of change (TOC) of the programme should be well articulated and understood by evaluators, especially when an evaluation is examining impact or outcomes, or effectiveness of systems or processes. The TOC is relevant in guiding the methodology of the evaluation as to what level the evaluators will seek to examine. If the joint evaluation is to evaluate a joint programme, a unique TOC is sufficient. However, if the joint evaluation considers multiple coordinated interventions, multiple TOCs will be needed. For example, in the case of the GEF/UNDP country-level evaluations, there is not one programme, but several, and there are higher-level considerations of the collaboration between the two agencies and the country concerned. In a case like this, more than one TOC will be needed.

Joint programmes may also have a more complex structure and they may not have been developed at the outset with clear evaluable outcomes. Methods must accommodate what is feasible given these limitations.

Typically, joint evaluations require examining multisectoral data with varying indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, with difficulty in comparison.

While occasionally evaluations of joint programmes can be simple, JEs can often be more complicated than single evaluations. The desired ultimate effects of the joint programme may be complex (for example, poverty reduction in a number of dimensions across diverse countries), changes in outcome and impacts will be partly (and sometimes dominantly)

the effects of other causes, the causality chain may be controversial, difficult to ascertain or measure and reliability of those links may be weak, and the construction of appropriate counterfactuals may be difficult and controversial.<sup>[81]</sup> All of these factors will have impacts on the methodology and may create significant limitations.

### *QUALITY ASSURANCE*

Governance structures of the evaluation should insist on consultant teams demonstrating quality assurance right from the outset. Consultants typically must submit early drafts of their reports to quality advisers for review. Once early drafts are revised in view of the reactions of the quality advisers, revised drafts are then officially submitted to the steering group. Thus, the initial quality assurance mechanisms reduce the need for official comments and for long discussions and leading to significant time.

Holding workshops before drafts are submitted to the management group, steering committee and any other stakeholders is an important way to get feedback, validate findings and address any issues before the report is written.

## 4.3. UTILIZATION OF JOINT EVALUATION OUTCOMES

### *REPORTING*

One thing to consider when preparing a joint evaluation is whether the end result will be a combined report or separate reports for each agency. An important question to resolve is whether each agency needs a separate report for its board or to meet other reporting requirements. For example, the research, interviews and team visits can be undertaken jointly while individual agencies prepare separate reports.

Agencies such as the GEF and UNDP have conducted country-level evaluations this way so that they do not duplicate work. The end result are two reports instead of one which touch on

issues relevant to both agencies but provide more in-depth findings and recommendations to be taken up by each individual agency. This reduces partner-country transaction cost while allowing the participating agencies to tailor the reports in a way that addresses their different domestic accountability needs.<sup>[82]</sup>

A critical phase in a joint evaluation is when draft reports become available and are circulated for comments. The comments received are usually wide ranging, often only very general in nature, and frequently omit concrete proposals for changes or new formulations. On the other hand, many comments are very detailed. Comments usually cover the whole range of issues; dealing with substance, methodology, findings, conclusions and judgements, and often they miss important points made by the consultants, or create misunderstandings. Most importantly, however, they can be quite contradictory in nature and substance.<sup>[83]</sup>

### *DISSEMINATION OF FINDINGS*

It is important to agree in advance on principles of transparency with evaluation results, including communicating results in a transparent manner. The translation, publication, and dissemination of joint evaluation results to relevant audiences demonstrate transparency and a commitment to contribute to learning.<sup>[84]</sup> Dissemination should go beyond evaluation stakeholders, but reach a wider audience. Dissemination strategies should be developed early in the evaluation process, which identify different stakeholder groups and the most appropriate channels to reach them.

One of the findings of Inter-Agency Review of RTEs was that communication of the IA RTE results and outputs were poor and that this undermining their usefulness in real time and as learning or corrective mechanisms.

The Management group should draft at the outset an options paper setting out possible approaches and responsibilities regarding communication and follow-up of IA RTEs. The paper should address the issues around responsibilities for implementing (and monitoring the implementation of) joint evaluation recommendations. Additionally, it should outline a model of proactive communications. The strategy should specify responsibilities for funding follow-up activities and for reproduction, translation and communication of the joint evaluation products.



Agencies are encouraged to be creative about dissemination and communication tools. One-page summaries of key findings and recommendations, events or workshops, use of social media are all useful means. Other options include synopses, user-friendly thematic and key-lessons papers, web-based and other media products, training materials, etc.

Lessons learned from the joint evaluation process should also be extracted and disseminated in order to contribute to strategic planning, learning, advocacy and decision-making.

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### **Box 10 Useful Questions to Ask When Finalizing Results**

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- ➔ What joint activities, including workshops and meetings, are required to facilitate quality understanding and analysis?
- ➔ When, how and by whom will draft reports be reviewed?
- ➔ How many and what type of products will result from the joint evaluation, in order to meet the needs of the diverse sets of target groups/audiences, including individual and joint agency initiatives?
- ➔ How, by whom and by when will the products be disseminated and communicated?
- ➔ As a complement to the communication plan, can a joint follow-up action plan be developed to address issues in the evaluation?

- ➔ Is a new structure required to implement and monitor relevant recommendations? Agencies may wish to take the results forward into a new 'review-and-action' process.
- ➔ Will there be a review of the joint evaluation itself, to identify lessons from the exercise? This would probably require at least one workshop or meeting of all main actors and stakeholder

### *MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND FOLLOW-UP*

The governance body/bodies must ensure that the production of the evaluation report does not become an end in itself but that the changes in policy or implementation recommended in the report are delivered. For an evaluation to improve practice, the question of how it is to be used should be addressed from the start, not least in terms of agreeing that a management response will be formulated with a budget, timelines and allocation of responsibility.<sup>[85]</sup>

#### **Box 11**

#### **Joint Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change - Joint Management Response and Dissemination Strategy**

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The evaluation was conducted jointly by the Evaluation Offices of UNFPA and UNICEF. The main products consist of a joint global synthesis report and four joint country reports – Burkina Faso, Kenya, Senegal and Sudan.

A joint dissemination note has been prepared which included:

- joint dissemination products (e.g. evaluation brief)
- joint webinars
- joint presentation of the evaluation report at an international conference on FGM jointly organized by UNFPA and UNICEF and hosted by the Italian Government in Rome in October
- joint management response prepared jointly by UNFPA and UNICEF relevant units and endorsed by the respective senior managements
- joint presentation to the Executive Boards of UNFPA and UNICEF

[www.unfpa.org/public/home/about/Evaluation/EBIER/TE/pid/10103](http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/about/Evaluation/EBIER/TE/pid/10103)

[www.unicef.org/evaluation/index\\_69673.html](http://www.unicef.org/evaluation/index_69673.html)

Before the evaluation is conducted, clear guidance as to who should be responsible for follow-up and who should be responsible for monitoring follow-up must be made. As noted during the RTE assessment, ‘if everyone owns it, then nobody owns it’.<sup>[86]</sup> The dispersion of responsibilities and accountabilities among agencies and lack of clarity regarding authority to demand detailed reporting can hamper the usefulness of joint evaluations and the follow-up process. Also, the higher level the joint evaluation, the harder it is to know who has responsibility for follow-up.

A management response may not always be required in a joint evaluation – for example, ‘agenda-setting’ joint evaluations, or evaluations conducted to provide an answer to issues that are being debated in the international community, do not need a management response, as there is no follow-up action expected in those cases. Agenda-setting evaluations intend to look for different follow-up mechanisms, like international conferences or negotiation processes.

Recommendations are typically made at the level of individual institutions and at the level of the partnership between them, requiring partners to agree on what to do individually and collectively, and decide upon a follow-up mechanism that monitors the status of the changes being implemented.<sup>[87]</sup> There is a risk of including too many recommendations or recommendations become either too general or inadequately focused. The strongest sets of

recommendations are those targeted to individual agencies or where responsibility is clearly indicated, with a suggested time-frame and order of priority for implementation.<sup>[88]</sup>

Utilization of outcomes also becomes a problem when findings and recommendations do not fit within individual agency accountability systems. Agencies committed to taking on the evaluation outcomes should share findings with their individual Executive Boards and create a specific mechanism for follow-up. If not, the findings may fall between the cracks. Agencies involved in joint evaluations need to have clear procedures and specific mechanisms on how they will take the recommendations on board and follow them up.

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## **Box 12 Fundamental Premises of the Utilization-Focus**

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1. Commitment to intended use by intended users should be the driving force in an evaluation
2. Strategizing about use is ongoing and continuous from the very beginning of an evaluation
3. The personal factor contributes significantly to use
4. Careful and thoughtful stakeholder analysis should inform identification of primary intended users
5. Evaluations must be focused in some way; focusing on intended use by intended users is the most useful way
6. Focusing on intended use requires making deliberate and thoughtful choices
7. Useful evaluations must be designed and adapted situationally
8. Intended users' commitment to use can be nurtured and enhanced by actively involving them in making significant decisions about the evaluation
9. High-quality participation is the goal, not high-quantity participation
10. High-quality involvement of intended users will result in high-quality evaluations
11. Evaluators have a rightful stake in that their credibility and integrity are always at risk, thus the mandate to be active-reactive-interactive-adaptive
12. Evaluators committed to enhancing use have both an opportunity and a responsibility to train users

13. Use is different from reporting and dissemination
14. Serious attention to use involves financial and time costs that are far from trivial
15. Commitment to improving practice means following up evaluations to find out how they have been used

Source: [www.unevaluation.org](http://www.unevaluation.org); 'Utilization-Focused Evaluation' 3rd Edition. (Patton, 1997, Sage Publications).

As the 'Guidelines for Interagency Health and Nutrition Evaluations in Humanitarian Crises' recommend, a point-by-point management response to the recommendations and/or main findings by agency managers should be developed. The managers' response to the joint evaluation should include answers to the following questions: Are the recommendations accepted or rejected? Will they prompt action? If so, which actions? What support will be needed? Do the findings and conclusions of the joint evaluation have any practical implications beyond those raised in the recommendations, and if so, which ones? If recommendations are rejected, why and what alternatives are proposed?

A joint action plan with specific tasks, completion dates and assigned responsibilities for each identified action should be written. The joint evaluation steering committee should oversee the process to develop an action plan together with the relevant stakeholders. The action plan should consist of clear, practical steps that are time-bound, and presented in order of priority. The responsibilities of each agency/individuals should be assigned for each action. Action plans should be as realistic as possible, taking into consideration available human, financial and organizational resources. Accordingly, the joint evaluation action plan should be accompanied by a budget and list of other required and available resources.<sup>[89]</sup>

Once the action plan has been approved, the joint evaluation steering committee should put it on the agenda of the normal coordination meetings at designated intervals, to monitor progress of proposed activities, and to review the items remaining in the action plan for possible adjustments. A brief summary for agency managers regarding actions taken and results obtained should be completed at the end of the process. Peer accountability mechanisms inherent in joint exercises allow partners to hold one another accountable for progress on recommendations. Follow-up workshops could be scheduled to discuss progress.<sup>[90]</sup>

Some joint evaluations have specific budgets for follow-up activities. See Boxes 13 and 14 below, which describe the follow-up to the JEEAR and the ‘Joint External Evaluation: Operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund for Adaptation to Climate Change’.

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### **Box 13**    **The JEFF Process: An Early Assessment of Impact of the JEEAR**

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At its meeting in November 1995, the steering committee agreed to review the impact of the JEEAR reports one year after their publication, and a second process, the Joint Evaluation Follow-up, Monitoring and Facilitation Network (JEFF), was set up to monitor and report on the evaluation’s 64 recommendations. JEFF was a small network of 11 individuals representing the management group, the study teams and the steering committee, with a part-time secretariat and a modest budget. In the 15 months following publication, JEFF members participated in a total of 73 events. JEFF’s final report was issued in June 1997, 15 months after the publication of the evaluation itself.

The JEFF process assessed the status of each of the 64 recommendations according to four principal categories (A–D) and two mixed categories (A/D and C/D).

*Adapted from: Borton, John (2004) The Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda. Humanitarian Exchange Magazine, Issue 26, Humanitarian Practice Network*

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**Box 14** **Management Response to the Joint External Evaluation:  
Operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund for  
Adaptation to Climate Change**

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The evaluation was carried out in joint management by the Danida Evaluation Office (Danida EVAL) and the GEF Evaluation Office (GEF EO) at the request of the Environmental Secretariat of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The purpose of the joint evaluation of the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) was to assess the results and lessons learned from the operations of the LDCF (including countries, agencies, donors, and secretariat) in financing and promoting adaptation in Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The evaluation team consisted of staff from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the Danish consulting firm COWI, and the management team was drawn from the GEF EO and the Evaluation Office of DANIDA.

As a follow-up to the Joint External Evaluation of the Operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF)<sup>2</sup> for Adaptation to Climate Change carried out during November 2008-September 2009, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) has commissioned further work to provide a status report on the recent accomplishments by the LDCF, as follow-up to the recommendations made in the Evaluation of the LDCF. MoFA has also requested a status report on the Special Climate Change Fund.

## 5. GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS DIMENSIONS IN JOINT EVALUATIONS

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The incorporation of Gender Equality and Human Rights principles is mandatory for all UN evaluations. Insofar as joint evaluations are used to address cross cutting issues of broader programmatic and policy concern, they may afford unique opportunities to gain further insight and perspective.

UNEG Handbook ‘Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation: Towards UNEG Guidance’, provides the United Nations system with practical guidance on addressing gender and human rights in their evaluations. The handbook was formally approved in 2011 and is a reference for all United Nations evaluations<sup>(2)</sup>. The handbook should be consulted on the various issues which arise.

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### Box 15 Mandate to Integrate Gender Equality in Evaluation

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**ECOSOC Resolution 2007/33**<sup>[91]</sup> requests the United Nations system, including United Nations agencies, funds and programmes within their organizational mandates, to strengthen institutional accountability mechanisms, including through a more effective monitoring and evaluation framework for gender mainstreaming based on common United Nations evaluation standards.

**Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review Resolution A/RES/67/226** <sup>[92]</sup> notes the development of the norms and standards for evaluation by the United Nations Evaluation Group as a professional network, and encourages their inclusion in the evaluation functions of United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, as well as in system-wide evaluations of operational activities for development; encourages the United Nations development system to institute greater accountability for gender equality in evaluations conducted by country teams

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2 Currently the Task Force is developing a more comprehensive and methodological guidance document to further showcase rigorous and tested methodologies and to further address the issue of adequate resources, accountability mechanisms and follow-up for the implementation of evaluation recommendations and use at all levels. The Handbook is available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic.



by including gender perspectives in such evaluations; and welcomes the development of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, under the leadership of UNWOMEN, as an accountability framework to be fully implemented by the United Nations development system.

### *UN-SWAP FOR GENDER EQUALITY*

On 13 April 2012 a landmark System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on gender equality and women's empowerment was adopted at a meeting of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to be applied throughout the UN system. For the first time, the UN will have a set of common measures with which to measure progress in its gender-related work, including the mainstreaming of the gender perspective across all its operations. UN entities are expected to meet UN-SWAP performance standards by 2017, with an extended time-frame to 2019 for those entities with a mainly technical focus. The ultimate goal is that all UN system entities 'meet requirements' related to this performance Indicator in terms of integrating gender equality and empowerment of women in their respective evaluations.

UNWOMEN has developed a UN-SWAP Evaluation Scorecard that provides a basis for harmonizing the meta-reviews/evaluations conducted by different entities by assigning an overall aggregate score for reporting against the UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator's scaled rating system. UNEG Human Rights and Gender Equality Task Force has endorsed the scorecard.

### *GENDER IN TOR*

Very often, ToR include, if at all, only vague references to gender. No explicit gender questions are asked. In order to engender them, systematic attention to gender issues should be brought into any evaluation concept and design. Staff responsible for preparing the ToR should be gender competent or call in expertise in this field.

The collaboration of the Gender Unit to prepare the ToR might help to focus on relevant gender issues and represent a good practice to guarantee that ToR are engendered.

For a checklist on incorporating gender in joint evaluations, please see checklist 10 in toolkit.

# ANNEXES

## 1. LIST OF RESOURCES

### GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

DESCRIPTOR	TITLE	DATE	ORGANIZATION	DESCRIPTION
Guidance Note	Joint Programme Mechanism Review	Jan-13		This Joint Programme Mechanism Review was commissioned by UN Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO) on behalf of the Joint Funding Sub-Committee of the UNDG/FMOG to inform revision of the 2003 UNDG Guidance Note on Joint Programming by identifying areas in which country-level use of the joint programme mechanism indicated there was a need for such revision.
Guidance Note	Joint Evaluations	Oct-12	ILO	This guidance note presents a review of trends on joint evaluations, including definitions, roles, benefits, challenges, and guidance on how to prepare, conduct and conclude a joint evaluation.
Guidance Note	Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Strategy, Learning to Improve Making Evidence Work for Development	Oct-12	MDG Achievement Fund	This is a guide to the MDG Achievement Fund's Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Strategy

DESCRIPTOR	TITLE	DATE	ORGANIZATION	DESCRIPTION
Lessons Learned	Workshop on Lessons Learned from International Joint Evaluations	Feb-12	French Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry; DAC, Paris Declaration Evaluation Secretariat	This report identified the lessons learned for future joint evaluations, drawing directly from the experiences of the Paris Declaration Evaluation, and guidance on how to build on the capacity and network relations developed through a joint evaluation process.
Guidance Note	DANIDA Evaluation Guidelines	Jan-12	Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs	These guidelines provide the basic framework for evaluations of Danish development cooperation.
Concept Note	Mapping of Joint Evaluation Practices	Dec-11	UNEG	This concept note summarizes successes and challenges, as well as potential areas for guidance development, in response to a questionnaire administered by UNEG to 24 evaluation offices of agencies, funds and programmes.
Lessons Learned	ECB Standing Team Joint Evaluation Workshop	Nov-11	ECB	Documents a number of lessons learned from an ECB Standing Team workshop focused on joint evaluations and was held 7-10 November 2011 in Casablanca, Morocco.
Guidance Note/Lessons Learned	What We Know About Joint Evaluations of Humanitarian Action: Learning from NGO Experiences	Apr-11	ECB	This report includes best practices, case studies as examples, and templates and tools to conduct a joint evaluation, including ToRs, agreement documents and checklists.
Guidance Note	Evaluation of the Joint UN Programmes - A Guidance Sheet on Joint Evaluation in the ILO	Oct-09	ILO	This guidance note includes guidance on how to conduct an evaluation of joint UN programmes, including a section on the types of joint evaluation and practical steps for implementing a joint evaluation.

DESCRIPTOR	TITLE	DATE	ORGANIZATION	DESCRIPTION
Guidance Note/Lessons Learned/Best Practices	Evaluation Study on Experiences with Conducting Evaluations Jointly with Partner Countries	May-09	DANIDA	This evaluation study aims to document both the positive and negative experience gained from the evaluations carried out jointly with partner country institutions; to assess the pros and cons of the different methods used; and presents recommendations to the Evaluation Department and partners for further refinement of methods for enhanced cooperation in the field of different types of joint partner-donor evaluation exercises at sector and/or country level.
Best Practices	Identifying and Sharing Good Practices	Nov-08	Asian Development Bank	Identifies a number of approaches to developing and sharing 'good' rather than best practices within an organization.
Lessons Learned	Challenges, Opportunities and Approaches for Increasing Joint Donor Programming of Evaluations	Nov-08	Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation	This report identifies the challenges, opportunities and approaches for increasing joint donor programming of evaluations, based on a questionnaire that was sent to all members of the DAC Evaluation Network. The report concludes with a number of recommendations and best practices for initiating joint evaluations.
Guidance Note	Standards for Evaluation in the UN System	Apr-05	UNEG	This document provides standards build upon the UNEG Norms for Evaluation in the UN system and drawn from best practice of UNEG members. They are intended to guide the establishment of the institutional framework, management of the evaluation function, conduct and use of evaluations. They are also a reference for the competencies of evaluation practitioners and work ethics, and are intended to be applied as appropriate within each organization. UNEG will periodically update, elaborate and expand the coverage of these standards in the service of the UN system organization.

DESCRIPTOR	TITLE	DATE	ORGANIZATION	DESCRIPTION
Guidance Note	Evaluating Humanitarian Action: An ALNAP Guidance Booklet	Sep-03	ALNAP	The objective of this guidance booklet is to provide practical support as to how to use and apply the DAC criteria in the evaluation of humanitarian action relative to particular contexts, types of intervention, and evaluation approaches.
Lessons Learned	Lessons Learned From World Bank Experiences in Joint Evaluation	Mar-03	DAC, World Bank	This report reviews the experience, costs, and benefits of joint evaluations and concludes with a set of lessons learned.
Lessons Learned	Joint Evaluations and Learning in Complex Emergencies	2009	The Norwegian Institute of International Affairs	Examines the joint donor evaluation of Rwanda, the TEC evaluation process and the Inter Agency Real Time Evaluation of Darfur to draw lessons for future joint evaluation initiatives.
Guidance Note	Guidelines for Implementing Interagency Health and Nutrition Evaluations in Humanitarian Crises	August 2007		
Guidance Note	Guidance for Managing Joint Evaluations	2006	DAC	Practical guide to joint evaluations of development assistance programmes.
Guidance Note	Guidance on Evaluation and Review for DFID Staff	2005	DFID	This guide provides steps for designing, managing, reporting on and responding to an evaluation.
Guidance Note	CIDA Evaluation Guide	2004	Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)	Provides guidelines for how CIDA conducts evaluations.

DESCRIPTOR	TITLE	DATE	ORGANIZATION	DESCRIPTION
Guidance Note	Looking Back, Moving Forward: Sida Evaluation Manual	2004	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)	This is a manual for evaluation of development interventions. It deals with the concept of evaluation, roles and relationships in evaluation, and the evaluation criteria and standards of performance employed in development co-operation. It is also a step-by-step guide for Sida programme officers and others involved in the management of evaluations initiated by Sida or its partners.
Guidance Note	A Methodological Framework for Project Evaluation	2003	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	This guide provides a methodological framework and additional guidance on how to conduct an evaluation for IFAD programmes.
Guidance Note	ODA Evaluation Guidelines	2003	Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs	This report is designed to serve as a guide for objective and fair ODA evaluation at the policy level.
Guidance Note	Evaluation in the European Commission	2001	EuropeAid Co-operation Office	
Guidance Note	Evaluation Guidelines	1999	Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs	
Guidance Note	Review of the DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance	1998	OECD	This is a review to examine the implementation and use of the DAC Principles for Evaluation and Development Assistance, in order to assess their impact, usefulness and relevance and to make recommendations.
Guidance Note	DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance	1991	OECD	This document offers a series of policy principles addressing key areas of aid programming and management including project appraisal, programme assistance and technical cooperation.

DESCRIPTOR	TITLE	DATE	ORGANIZATION	DESCRIPTION
Meta-Evaluation	Joint Evaluations Coming of Age? The Quality and Future Scope of Joint Evaluations		ALNAP	This meta-evaluation identifies areas of weakness and offers examples of good practices that can be built upon for future joint evaluations.
Lessons Learned	Joint Evaluations: Recent Experiences, Lessons Learned and Options for the Future	2006	DAC	This document was produced prior to and complements the larger report produced by DAC, Guidance for Managing Joint Evaluations, see above.
Best Practices	Effective Practices in Conducting a Multi-Donor Evaluation		DAC/OECD	This report addresses what joint multi-donor evaluations are and why they are useful, discusses some of their strengths and limitations, and provides tips for conducting them effectively.
Guidance Note	Guidelines for Programme Design, Monitoring and Evaluation		Finland Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Development Co-operation	This guide provides steps for designing, managing, reporting on and responding to an evaluation for the Finland MFA.
Evaluation Report Comments Matrix	Draft Evaluation Report Comments Matrix		MDG Achievement Fund	Draft Evaluation Report Comments Matrix
Evaluation Report Comments Matrix	Draft Evaluation Report Comments Matrix (for Secretariat)		MDG Achievement Fund	Draft Evaluation Report Comments Matrix (for Secretariat)
File for the Joint Programme Improvement Plan	File for the Joint Programme Improvement Plan		MDG Achievement Fund	This file is to be used as the basis for establishing an improvement plan for the MDG-F evaluated joint programme, which will bring together all the recommendations, actions to be carried out by programme management.
Guidance Note	First Steps to Follow When Starting Mid-Terms Evaluation for MDG-F Joint Programmes		MDG Achievement Fund	This document offers guidance for preparing for a mid-term joint programme evaluation for MDG-F.



DESCRIPTOR	TITLE	DATE	ORGANIZATION	DESCRIPTION
Guidance Note	Final Evaluation-FAQ		MDG Achievement Fund	This document includes FAQs on hiring a consultant and “Hands-On Tips” for performing an evaluation for MDG-F.
Guidance Note	Writing the Evaluation Report: General Tips		MDG Achievement Fund	This documents provides guidance and general tips for preparing an evaluation report for MDG-F Joint Programmes.
Sample ToR	Generic Terms of Reference for the Mid-Term Evaluation of Children Food Security and Nutrition Joint Programmes		MDG Achievement Fund	Sample ToR that explains the goals, scope, evaluation criteria, methodologies, final product expectations as well as actors for joint programme evaluations conducted with the MDG-F.
Guidance	Utilization-Focused Evaluation Checklist	2002	Michael Quinn Patton January 2002	<a href="http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/archive_checklists/ufe.pdf">www.wmich.edu/evalctr/archive_checklists/ufe.pdf</a>
Sample ToR	Generic ToRs for Final Evaluation of MDG-F Joint Programmes		MDG Achievement Fund	A Sample ToR used for MDG-F Joint Programme Evaluations.
Guidance Note	Ch. 6 - Key Elements of the Joint Evaluation Process in the Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results		UNDP	Offers a number of suggested steps in planning and conducting a joint evaluation.

## 2. Examples of Joint Evaluations with Key Information

EVALUATION OVERVIEW	SECRETARIAT	MANAGEMENT GROUP	FUNDING/COST	THEMATIC	CONSULTANTS/ REVIEWERS
<p><b>The Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) (2005-2007)</b></p> <p>TEC included five joint thematic evaluations on selected aspects of the response. The reports from these five studies form the basis of the TEC's Synthesis Report.</p>	ALNAP	A Core Management Group (CMG) provides general oversight and direction and was made up of 14 agencies. The CMG met every six weeks between February 2005 and March 2007.	<p>CMG agencies were also core funders of the TEC.</p> <p>Cost not clear</p>	5 thematic evaluations and one synthesis draws together learning and recommendations contained in these TEC studies as well as over 170 additional reports.	

<p><b>The Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda (JEEAR)</b></p> <p>The JEEAR process was first proposed by the Danish Government to the OECD's DAC Expert Working Group. It did not receive the full support of all DAC member governments. Danida and partners therefore agreed on a joint evaluation.</p>	<p>Danida served as secretariat and the effort was guided by a 38-strong Steering Committee.</p> <p>(Diagram attached)</p>	<p>Management group comprising the heads of the evaluation departments of Sida, Norad, Danida, DFID and USAID.</p> <p>Each member of the management group took responsibility for managing one of the reports, with Danida organizing the synthesis.</p>	<p>The cost of the whole process, including translation and dissemination of the published reports, was \$1.7 million.</p> <p>The largest of the studies, Study 3 on humanitarian aid, cost \$580,000 and had a team of 20 specialists and support staff with a combined input of four person-years.</p>	<p>I: Historical Perspective                  II: Early Warning and Conflict Management                  III: Humanitarian Aid and Effects                  IV: Rebuilding Post-Genocide Rwanda</p> <p>And one synthesis report containing 64 recommendations.</p>	<p>Overall, 52 researchers and consultants were employed on the five studies, and All five reports were published in March 1996. Simultaneous launch events were held in Geneva, New York and Nairobi, with a press launch in London. Over 5,000 copies were printed and distributed.</p>
<p><b>Implementation of the Paris Declaration</b></p> <p>PHASE 1                  The architecture of Phase 1 of the evaluation (2007-2008) comprised of country-level evaluations; donor headquarters evaluations; thematic studies; and the synthesis of the first two sets.</p>	<p>A reference group and management group were supported by a small secretariat hosted by Denmark.</p>	<p>A reference group provided strategic guidance and convened three times in 2007 and 2008. The reference group appointed a small management group which was tasked with the day-to-day coordination and management of the overall evaluation process.</p>	<p>The country-level evaluations were managed by the respective country and most were supported, both financially partner and substantively, by donors.</p>	<p>Eight country-level evaluations and 11 donor and multilateral development agency evaluations. The report is a synthesis of these 19 evaluations. It was prepared by an independent team.</p>	<p>Conducted by an independent synthesis team.</p> <p>The country and agency evaluations were reviewed by two independent advisers, and the synthesis report was reviewed by two other advisers.</p>

<p><b>Implementation of the Paris Declaration PHASE II</b></p> <p>The first phase of the evaluation was conducted with the purpose of strengthening aid effectiveness by assessing changes of behaviour and identifying better practices for partners and donors in implementing the Paris commitments. The second phase was conducted with the purpose of assessing the Declaration's contribution to aid effectiveness and development results.</p>	<p>Day-to-day coordination and management of the evaluation was entrusted to a small secretariat hosted by the Danish Institute for International Studies in Copenhagen, Denmark.</p>	<p>Guidance to the evaluation was provided by an international reference group that convened four times at milestone moments. The reference group appointed a small management group tasked with oversight of the evaluation process.</p>		<p>Phase II comprises 22 country- level evaluations and seven donor and multilateral development agency studies. Each of these evaluations was conducted by independent evaluation teams managed by the respective partner country.</p>	<p>The final report was peer reviewed for quality, strategic and policy relevance and the communicative power by Mary Chinery-Hesse, and Mark Malloch-Brown. An independent audit of the evaluation's quality was undertaken by Dr. Michael Quinn Patton.</p>
<p><b>UN DaO Evaluation 2011-2012</b></p> <p>Evaluation on Delivering as One Commissioned by the Secretary-General (SG)</p>	<p>UN-DESA was mandated to provide administrative, logistical and technical support, ensuring a fully independent process. Evaluation Secretariat was Lucien Back, Chief of the Secretariat.</p>	<p>The SG appointed an Evaluation Management Group (EMG) of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. one expert from each of the five regions,</li> <li>b. one expert from two pilot countries, and</li> <li>c. the chairs of the JIU and the UNEG</li> </ol>		<p>An international evaluation team composed of consultants with outstanding evaluation expertise and experience. It included nationals of both developed and developing countries.</p>	<p>A Quality Assurance Panel (QAP) was established to provide independent substantive and methodological advice.</p>

<p><b>The Humanitarian Response Review (HRR) requested by Emergency Relief Coordinator in 2005</b></p> <p>The HRR was launched by the ERC to assess the humanitarian response capacities of the UN, NGOs, Red Cross/ Red Crescent movement and other key humanitarian actors.</p>	<p>OCHA</p>	<p>No formal management group was established. An interactive process allowed the consultants to engage, at different stages, in discussion with the IASC, donors' Humanitarian Liaison Working Group and some G77 countries.</p>			<p>The review was conducted by four independent consultants.</p>
<p><b>Joint Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in DRC</b></p> <p>This evaluation was commissioned by a steering committee of bilateral cooperation donors and aid agencies, to review conflict prevention and peacebuilding policies in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).</p>	<p>Coordinated by the Belgian Special Evaluation Office.</p> <p>The joint evaluation was commissioned by Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.</p>	<p>A steering committee was composed of donors UN agencies and the DAC Evaluation Network. Along with the steering committee, local advisory committees in Kinshasa, Bunia, Goma and Bukavu were set up. These groups were composed of representatives of agencies involved in peace efforts and civil society organizations, meeting under the auspices of the Government.</p>		<p>Drawing on examples from a portfolio of projects funded by steering committee members, the evaluation is designed to provide general conclusions relevant to all international interventions in the eastern DRC.</p>	<p>Conducted by Channel Research.</p> <p>A team of 15 consultants representing eight nationalities was deployed to design and carry out the evaluation over a period of 12 months between 2009-2010.</p>

	Canada, Japan, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNIFEM AND OHCHR joined the evaluation.				
<p><b>Cluster Phase II Evaluation</b></p> <p>The IASC requested an evaluation of its implementation in two phases. Phase 1 of the evaluation was finalized in 2007 and focused on processes related to the implementation of the cluster approach. Phase 2 focuses on the outcomes generated by the cluster approach and takes a country-level perspective to bring the reality on the ground back to decision makers at the global level.</p>	IASC	<p>The evaluation was managed by OCHA with the support of the Inter-Agency Cluster Evaluation 2 Steering Group including representatives of Belgium, Canada, the European Union, Norway, the United Kingdom, Save the Children Switzerland, Action Against Hunger UK, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Care International, the International Federation of the Red Cross, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children’s Fund,</p>		<p>Five country-level evaluations and a synthesis report. The purpose was to assess the main outcomes of the joint humanitarian response at the country level, and the overall operational effectiveness of the cluster approach in facilitating and supporting the coordinated humanitarian response at the country level. The purpose also was to present suggestions on how the cluster approach could be further improved and strengthened.</p>	

The World Food Programme, the World Health Organization and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

It was financed by Germany, the European Commission, Belgium and Finland.

The results of this evaluation were presented to the IASC working group, which established a task team on the cluster approach to develop a management response plan in response to the evaluation findings and recommendations.

<p><b>Five-Year CERF Evaluation</b>                  In 2008, the UN General Assembly (GA) requested an evaluation of the CERF's activities, with results to be presented at the GA's 65th session. The evaluation encompassed the five-year period of 2006-2010 and marked the third evaluation since 2005 to specifically focus on the CERF. It highlighted the CERF's strengths and weaknesses and provided recommendations at the policy and operational levels to improve its effectiveness. More broadly, the evaluation was intended to inform debates at the GA on the delivery of humanitarian assistance.</p>	<p>The evaluation was commissioned and managed by OCHA's Evaluation and Guidance Section</p>	<p>A headquarter-level steering group was established to provide guidance on the evaluation, made up of evaluation experts from UN Agencies, Member States, NGOs and independent experts.</p> <p>A Reference Group of stakeholders was established to provide informed feedback on evaluation products, to ensure accuracy and resonance with organizational realities.</p> <p>The group also included representatives from UN agencies, Member States and NGOs.</p>		<p>Team of 12 independent consultants over an eight-month period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Data collected through 16 case studies, based on seven field missions (Afghanistan, Kenya, Niger, the occupied Palestinian territory, Pakistan, the Philippines and Somalia (the Somalia study was conducted from Kenya)) where the CERF had funded humanitarian programmes and a desk-based review of CERF operations in nine other countries.</li> </ul>	<p>The evaluation was conducted by Channel Research.</p>
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# TOOLKIT

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## REFERENCE DOCUMENT

This Toolkit was compiled by the UNEG Task Force on Joint Evaluation and published in December 2013.

It accompanies the Guidance Document on Joint Evaluations (cite UNEG Document Number, link).

# CONTENTS

HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS TOOLKIT	88
INTRODUCTION	91
1. PLANNING A JOINT EVALUATION	93
2. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A JOINT EVALUATION	97
3. INCEPTION REPORTS FOR A JOINT EVALUATION	101
4. JOINT EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES	106
5. REPORTING ON A JOINT EVALUATION	114
6. MANAGEMENT RESPONSE	125
ANNEX 1. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR JOINT EVALUATIONS	135

## TABLES, DIAGRAMS AND CHECKLISTS

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- Table 1:** Key Phases in a Joint Evaluation
- Table 2:** Steps for Establishing a Joint Evaluation Management and Governance Structure
- Table 3:** Success Factors for Effective Follow-up and Response to Joint Evaluation Recommendations
- Diagram 1:** Governance and Management Structure of the Joint Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change

- Diagram 2:** Governance and Management Structure of UNDAF Evaluations
- Checklist 1:** Key Questions to Ask When Planning a Joint Evaluation
- Checklist 2:** Key Element of the Joint Evaluation Terms of Reference
- Checklist 3:** Key Element of Joint Evaluation Inception Reports
- Checklist 4:** Key Questions to Ask When Establishing a Joint Evaluation Management and Governance Structure
- Checklist 5:** Useful Tips for Establishing a Joint Evaluation Management and Governance Structure
- Checklist 6:** Joint Evaluation Report
- Checklist 7:** Steps for Preparation and Finalization of Management Response Plans (MRPs) in Joint Evaluations
- Checklist 8:** Good Practices in Ensuring Follow-up and Implementation of Joint Evaluation Recommendations
- Checklist 9:** Knowledge Management for Joint Evaluations
- Checklist 10:** Incorporating Gender in Joint Evaluations

## GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

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- Good Practice Examples** of Joint Evaluation Terms of Reference
- Good Practice Examples** of Joint Evaluation Inception Reports
- Good Practice Examples** of Joint Evaluation Management Structures
- Good Practice Examples** of Joint Evaluation Reports
- Good Practice Example** of Monitoring Plans for Management Responses

# HOW TO NAVIGATE THIS TOOLKIT

ELEMENT OF JOINT EVALUATION	REFERENCE TO GUIDANCE DOCUMENT	TOOL(S)	GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE
Planning a Joint Evaluation	<a href="#">2.1. Deciding to Undertake a Joint Evaluation</a>	<p><b>Table 1:</b> Key Phases in a Joint Evaluation</p> <p><b>Checklist 1:</b> Key Questions to Ask When Planning a Joint Evaluation”</p>	None
Terms of Reference for a Joint Evaluation	<a href="#">4.1. Developing a TOR</a>	<b>Checklist 2:</b> Key Elements of the Joint Evaluation Terms of Reference	<p>Joint Evaluation of Joint Gender Programmes in the UN System; Evaluation of the Phase 2 of the Paris Declaration;</p> <p>Mid-Term Evaluation of the Joint Donor Team in Juba, Sudan; Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change;</p> <p>Joint Evaluation of the Role and Contribution of the UN System in the Republic of South Africa; Joint Programme Final Evaluation, generic ToR</p>



ELEMENT OF JOINT EVALUATION	REFERENCE TO GUIDANCE DOCUMENT	TOOL(S)	GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE
Inception Reports for a Joint Evaluation		<b>Checklist 3:</b> Key Elements of Joint Evaluation Inception Reports	Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change (Volume 1; Volume 2 (Annexes); Volume 3 (Draft Portfolio of Interventions)); 5-Year Evaluation of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)
Joint Evaluation Management and Governance Structures	3. Joint Evaluation Management and Governance Structures	<p><b>Diagram 1.</b> Governance and Management Structure of the Joint Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change</p> <p><b>Diagram 2.</b> Governance and Management Structure of UNDAF Evaluations</p> <p><b>Table 2.</b> Steps for Establishing a Joint Evaluation Governance Structure</p> <p><b>Checklist 4:</b> Useful Tips for Establishing a Joint Evaluation Management Structure</p>	<p>Joint Evaluation of Joint Gender Programmes in the UN System;</p> <p>Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting;</p> <p>Joint Evaluation of the Role and Contribution of the UN System in the Republic of South Africa;</p> <p>Mid-Term Evaluation of the Joint Donor Team in Juba, Sudan;</p> <p>Paris Declaration Evaluation;</p> <p>ToR for the Steering Committee of OCHA 5-year Evaluation of the Central Emergency Response Fund;</p> <p>Joint Evaluations and Learning in Complex Emergencies;</p> <p>MDG Achievement Fund, ToRs for Generic Joint Programme Final Evaluation</p>

ELEMENT OF JOINT EVALUATION	REFERENCE TO GUIDANCE DOCUMENT	TOOL(S)	GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE
Reporting on a Joint Evaluation	4.3. Section on Reporting	<b>Checklist 5:</b> Joint Evaluation Reports	Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change (Volume 1; Volume 2); 5-Year Evaluation of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)
Management Response	4.3. Section on Management Response and Follow up	<p><b>Checklist 6:</b> Steps for Preparation and Finalization of Management Response Plans in Joint Evaluations</p> <p><b>Table 3.</b> Success Factors for Effective Follow-Up and Response to Joint Evaluations</p> <p><b>Checklist 7:</b> Good Practices in Ensuring Follow-Up and Implementation of Joint Evaluation Recommendations</p>	<p>CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND - Interim Review, Management Response Matrix;</p> <p>Update to the Management Response Plan to the 5-Year Evaluation of the Central Emergency Response Fund</p>
Annex. Knowledge Management for Joint Evaluations	4.3. Section on Dissemination of Findings	<b>Checklist 9:</b> Knowledge Management for Joint Evaluations	

# INTRODUCTION

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## WHAT IS THE TOOLKIT ABOUT?

This toolkit complements the UNEG Guidance Document on Joint Evaluations. It provides useful tips, examples and checklists for planning, managing and using joint evaluations.

## WHO IS IT FOR?

It is aimed at evaluation managers, evaluators, and a variety of stakeholders who are involved in the decisions and conduct of joint evaluations. The key target users are the UNEG community; however, the content is equally applicable to evaluations by other entities, including national governments, bilateral donors and non-governmental organizations.

## WHAT DOES THE TOOLKIT CONTAIN?

The toolkit is organized as a user-friendly reference document and includes the following topics:

- ➔ Planning a Joint Evaluation (including table on “Key Phases in a Joint Evaluation” and checklist on “Key Questions to Ask when Planning a Joint Evaluation”)
- ➔ Terms of Reference for a Joint Evaluation (including checklist on “Key Elements of the Joint Evaluation Terms of Reference”); Inception Reports for a Joint Evaluation (including checklist on “Key Elements of Joint Evaluation Inception Reports”)
- ➔ Joint Evaluation Management and Governance Structures (including diagram on “Governance and Management Structure of the Joint Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting”, diagram on “Governance and Management Structure of UNDAF Evaluations”, table on “Steps for Establishing a Joint Evaluation Governance Structure” and checklist on “Useful Tips for Establishing a Joint Evaluation Management Structure”);

- ➡ Reporting on a Joint Evaluation (including checklist on “Joint Evaluation Reports”); and Management Response (including checklist on “Steps for Preparation and Finalization of Management Response Plans in Joint Evaluations”, table on “Success Factors for Effective Follow-Up and Response to Joint Evaluations” and checklist on “Good Practices in Ensuring Follow-Up and Implementation of Joint Evaluation Recommendations”). An annex provides tools for Knowledge Management of Joint Evaluations, including a checklist.

### HOW TO USE IT?

Like the guidance document, this toolkit will be reviewed and improved periodically based on demand and feedback by its intended users.

# 1. PLANNING A JOINT EVALUATION

**Table 1. Key Phases in a Joint Evaluation**

<b>PHASE 0 DECIDING TO UNDERTAKE A JE</b>	<b>PHASE I PREPARATION</b>	<b>PHASE 2 IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>PHASE 3 UTILIZATION OF OUT- COMES</b>
Weighting pros and cons <i>(checklist one)</i>	Undertake an ‘evaluability’ or readiness study <i>(section 2.1)</i>	Iron out methodological issues	Prepare management response <i>(checklist 7 and table 2)</i>
Assessing timing needs and budget limitations	Get broad buy-in	Review and finalize the inception report	Prepare and disseminate evaluation products and organize knowledge-sharing events <i>(checklist 9)</i>
Assessing which evaluation phases to undertake	Determine partners	Data collection and analysis	Use results – Review evaluations prior to designing the next programme
Developing a theory of change	Divide procedural responsibilities	Quality assurance	Monitor implementation of recommendations <i>(checklist 8)</i>

PHASE 0 DECIDING TO UNDERTAKE A JE	PHASE I PREPARATION	PHASE 2 IMPLEMENTATION	PHASE 3 UTILIZATION OF OUT- COMES
	<p>Agree on the management structure of an evaluation, and roles and responsibilities and contributions by different participating agencies</p> <p><i>(section 3 and checklist 5)</i></p>	<p>Reporting: Finalization and presentation of report by the evaluation team</p> <p><i>(checklist 6)</i></p>	
	<p>Agree on purpose, scope and objectives</p>	<p>Review the draft evaluation report/ validate findings by stakeholders</p>	
	<p>Organize the relevant documentation and develop data inventories</p>	<p>Create a work plan and meeting schedule</p>	
	<p>Develop communication protocols</p>		
	<p>Develop ToR</p> <p><i>(checklist 2)</i></p>		
	<p>Agree on logistical arrangements and administrative functions</p>		
	<p>Select the evaluation team</p>		

## Checklist 1: Key Questions to Ask When Planning a Joint Evaluation

### 1. NEED FOR A JOINT EVALUATION

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- Is the focus of the programme on an outcome that reaches across sectors and agencies?
- Is the programme co-financed by multiple partners?
- Is the topic a contentious issue, thus calling for a balanced approach?

### 2. FEASIBILITY OF A JOINT EVALUATION

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- Is the time available for the evaluation sufficient for the joint evaluation process which can be time-consuming?

### 3. PARTNERS FOR CONDUCTING THE EVALUTION

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- Which are the agencies that will fund the evaluation?
- Which are the agencies that will participate in the management and implementation of the evaluation?

### 4. PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS OF THE EVALUATION

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- Are partners identified during the planning stage?
- Are different stakeholder groups at the national level given adequate representation in the evaluation process?

- Who are the partners at the global, regional and country level?

## 5. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE AND DIVISION OF LABOUR

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- What is the evaluation management structure?
- What are the roles and functions of different levels of management structure?
- Which is the lead agency for coordinating the evaluation?
- What is the specific role and responsibilities of participating agencies?
- What will be the funding modality of the evaluation? How will the evaluation funds be managed?

## 6. AGREEMENT ON THE SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

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- What is the coverage of the evaluation (the issues to be covered, geographical coverage and the time-period of the programme that will be evaluated)?

**Source:** Adapted from UNDP Handbook with some modifications. UNDP (2009). 'Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results'. UNDP: New York.



## 2. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A JOINT EVALUATION

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The checklist for terms of reference (ToR) is intended to help create ToRs based on quality standards for evaluations consistent with the concepts and terms presented in Guidance Document on Joint Evaluations ([link](#)) and the UNEG 'Standards for Evaluation in the UN System'.

### Checklist 2: Key Element of the Joint Evaluation Terms of Reference

#### 1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE EVALUATION SUBJECT

.....

- Concise discussion highlighting only those issues most pertinent to the evaluation.

#### 2. EVALUATION PURPOSE

.....

- Explain why the evaluation is being conducted, who will use or act on the evaluation results, and how they will use or act on the results.

#### 3. EVALUATION SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

.....

- Define the parameters and focus of the evaluation.

#### 4. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

.....

- Define the information that the evaluation will generate.

## 5. METHODOLOGY

---

- Suggest an overall approach and method for conducting the evaluation.
- Retain enough flexibility for the evaluation team to determine the best methods and tools for collecting and analysing data.

## 6. EVALUATION MANAGEMENT

---

- Describe the organization and management structure for the evaluation and define the roles, key responsibilities and lines of authority of all parties involved in the evaluation process.

## 7. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESS

---

- Outline the review process.

## 8. EVALUATION PRODUCTS (DELIVERABLES)

---

- Specify evaluation products the evaluation team will be accountable for producing.

## 9. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION AND REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

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- Specify: a) expected structure and composition of the evaluation team; b) roles and responsibilities of team members; c) skills, competencies and characteristics needed in the evaluator or evaluation team.

## 10. EVALUATION ETHICS

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- Include an explicit statement that evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'.

## 11. TIME-FRAME FOR THE EVALUATION PROCESS

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- Describe all tasks and deliverables with timelines for which evaluators or the evaluation team will be responsible and accountable.

## 12. COST

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- Outline total funds available for the evaluation (consultant fees, travel, subsistence allowance, field studies and data collection, workshops/meetings, etc.).

## 13. ANNEXES

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- Provide additional detail about evaluation background and requirements to facilitate the work of evaluators.

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## Good Practice Examples of Joint Evaluation Terms of Reference

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1. [ToR: Joint Evaluation of Joint Gender Programmes in the UN System](#)
2. [Australia ToR: Evaluation of the Phase 2 of the Paris Declaration](#)
3. [Appendix 1 \(ToR\): Mid-Term Evaluation of the Joint Donor Team in Juba, Sudan](#)
4. [ToR: Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting \(FGM/C\): Accelerating Change](#)
5. [Annex 1 \(Framework ToR\): Joint Evaluation of the Role and Contribution of the UN System in the Republic of South Africa](#)
6. [MDG Achievement Fund: Joint Programme Final Evaluation, Generic ToR](#)

# 3. INCEPTION REPORTS FOR A JOINT EVALUATION

.....

This checklist is aimed at providing guidance to evaluation managers to make good use of inception reports when they are required. Not all joint evaluations may require them, but inception reports are highly recommended for complex and high-budget evaluations. The submission of the inception report is a good time to double check that the evaluators understand the terms of reference, that the conceptual framework, methodology and work plan are agreeable to all commissioning parties, and that there are no issues hampering the independence of the evaluators or otherwise potentially biasing and distorting results.

Inception reports should be shared with key stakeholders for their information, comment, and approval.

## Checklist 3: Key Element of Joint Evaluation Inception Reports

### 1. TITLE PAGE (KEY FACTS)

.....

- Title of joint programme, theme, or system-wide issue being evaluated.
- Partners involved in implementation.
- Partners involved in evaluation.
- Date of evaluation.

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

---

- Brief statement why this theme or programme is important for the United Nations system and/or partner agencies involved.
- Brief description of the history and current status of the topic or intervention, including UN policy/strategy in the area, key milestones, duration of initiatives, location, budget, partners, donors and implementation phase.
- Representation of the underlying theory of change or logic model.
- Explanation of the hypotheses to be tested, if any.

## 3. OBJECTIVES, CLIENTS AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

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- Explanation of the overall result expected from the evaluation.
- Statement of purpose that explains for what the evaluation will be used (e.g. accountability, ongoing improvement, organizational learning, etc.).
- Identification of the principal clients of the evaluation as set out in the terms of reference.
- Statement of the scope that delimits the boundaries around the object of evaluation by time, geography, structure, or sequence and in relation to a universe of related issues.
- Explanation if changes to the ToR are required.

## 4. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK, EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

---

- Overarching statement on the methodological approach taken (e.g. impact evaluation, contribution analysis, gender and human rights responsive evaluation).

- Clear statement of the evaluation criteria against which the intervention will be assessed (e.g. relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, coverage, others).
- Contextualization of pre-defined criteria (e.g. for each criterion, formulation of two or three specific questions that the evaluation will answer).
- Specific evaluation questions on 'jointness' (coordination, transaction costs, etc.).
- Explanation if changes to the ToR are required.

## 5. INDICATORS, SOURCES, DATA COLLECTION METHODS

---

- Review of key indicators, primary and secondary sources of information.
- Mapping of the key informants and stakeholders.
- Explanation of how data will be collected (e.g. desk review, individual interviews, focus groups, surveys).
- An evaluation matrix linking evaluation criteria to required information and sources as well as the draft data collection instruments are placed in annex (or provided in the body text).
- Explanation of the criteria to be used (e.g. when extracting desk review samples or selecting country case studies).

## 6. DATA ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

---

- Description of how data and information will be analysed (i.e. how will it be coded, displayed, processed, synthesized).
- Explanation about how causal inference will be made regarding the UN's contribution to results (e.g. contribution analysis, rival hypotheses).

## 7. LIMITATIONS, RISKS AND POTENTIAL SHORTCOMINGS

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- Specification of limitations that flow from the evaluation approach taken.
- Description of risks or potential shortcomings anticipated.
- Explanation of strategies that will be adopted to mitigate these.

## 8. WORK PLAN AND MAIN DELIVERABLES

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- Description of the timeline, which shows the evaluation, phases (data collection, data analysis and reporting) and indicates who is responsible for each phase.
- Specification of the main outputs of the evaluation, including oral and written reports, by phase of work.
- Specification of the knowledge management and dissemination strategy for final products.
- Statement of the quality standards against which the deliverables will be assessed.

## 9. TEAM COMPOSITION AND DIVISION OF LABOUR

---

- Description of the management structure (as per ToR) under which the evaluation team operates.
- Portrayal of the expertise needed, evaluation team roles and members, qualifications required and how the team matches these.
- Explanation of requirements for logistic support and who will provide it.



- Description or table showing workload of each team member.

## 10. ANNEXES

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- Terms of reference.
- Proposed format of the report.
- Stakeholder mapping.
- Evaluation matrix.
- Draft data collection instruments/interview checklists.

### Sources:

ILO Evaluation Unit (2012). 'Writing the Inception Report'. I-eval Resource Kit. International Labour Organization.

UNODC (2011). 'Guidelines for Inception Reports'. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

UNESCO Evaluation Section, Internal Oversight Service. (2008). 'Guidelines for Inception Reports'. IOS/EVS/PI/51. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

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## Good Practice Examples of Joint Evaluation Inception Reports

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1. Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change  
[Volume 1](#)  
[Volume 2 \(Annexes\)](#)  
[Volume 3 \(Draft Portfolio of Interventions\)](#)
2. 5-Year Evaluation of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)

## 4. JOINT EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

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The governance bodies and the management structure for a joint evaluation can differ depending on the scope, the number of participating stakeholders, and the methodology of the evaluation.

The more complex and multi-partner joint evaluations are, the more an elaborate governance and management structure are important if a fair degree of efficiency is to be achieved.

Existing joint evaluations demonstrate that a good practice is, when undertaking a joint evaluation, to elaborate a hierarchical structure, including, at least:

- ✓ An evaluation steering committee ; and
- ✓ An evaluation management group .

Other governing bodies that the steering committee might consider to set up are:

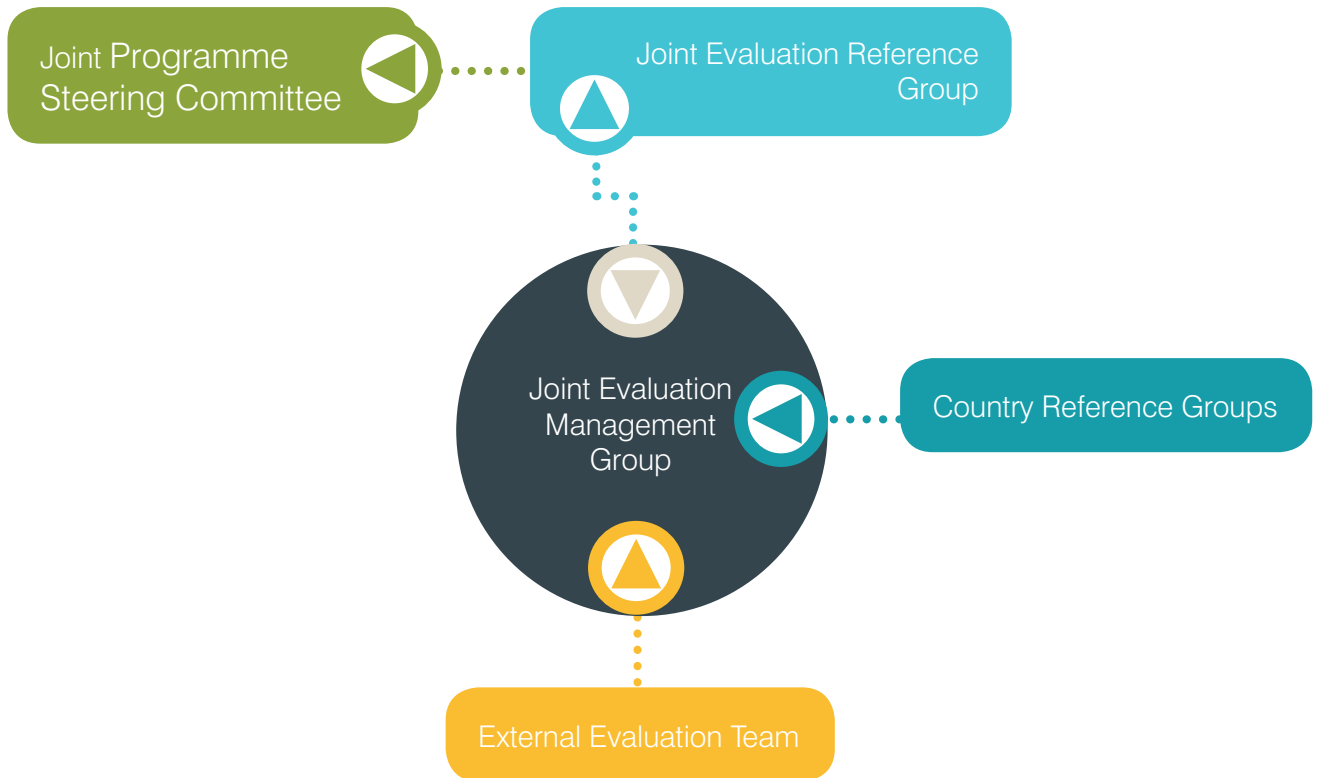
- ✓ An evaluation advisory group;
- ✓ An evaluation reference group; and
- ✓ National or regional reference groups.

Participant agencies and stakeholders should agree about the roles and responsibilities of governance bodies before engaging in a joint evaluation. The responsibilities of governing bodies should be appropriately collected in the ToR of the joint evaluation.

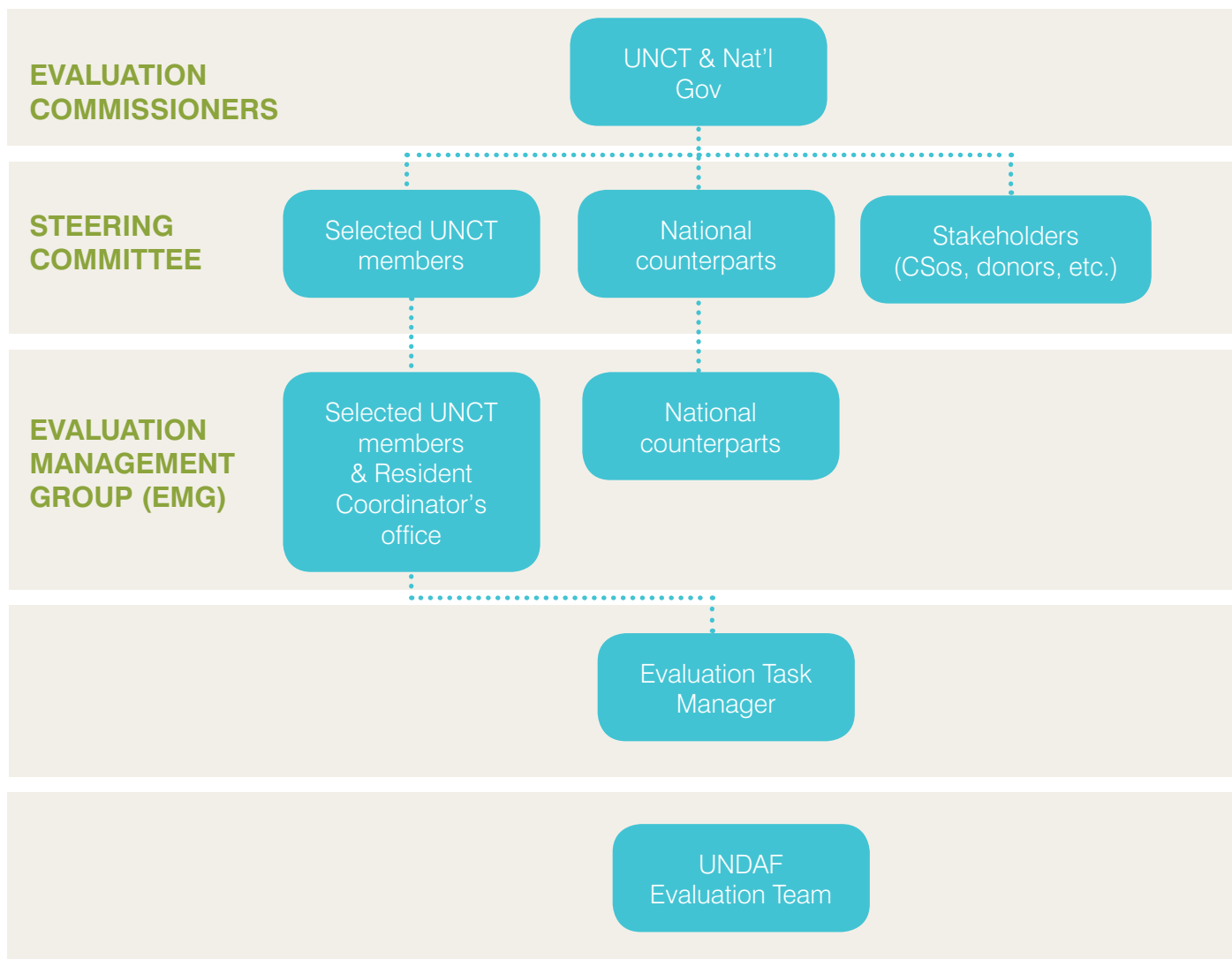
**BEWARE:** Experience indicates that broad and widely inclusive governing bodies increase transaction costs and can engender delays in joint evaluation processes.

Stakeholders must be conscious that deciding for a light or more complex management structure has important consequences on the entire evaluation process.

**Diagram 1. Governance and Management Structure of the Joint Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change**



**Diagram 2. Governance and Management Structure of UNDAF Evaluations**



**Checklist 4: Key Questions to Ask When Establishing a Joint Evaluation Management and Governance Structure**

*Adapted from: ECB (2011) 'What We Know About Joint Evaluations'.*

- ✓ Can the main actors be identified and committed to the process (e.g. through their unambiguous commitment to provide time and resources)?
- ✓ Can a lead or host agency be identified?

- ✓ Given the strengths and weaknesses of each organization, what is the most effective and efficient management structure?
- ✓ Can an explicit agreement or protocol be signed on roles, responsibilities, rights and obligations of all concerned?
- ✓ What resources are available from whom for the implementation of the plan, and for unforeseen costs?

## Table 2. Steps for Establishing a Joint Evaluation Management and Governance Structure

STEP 1.	SET UP AN EVALUATION STEERING COMMITTEE
STEP 2.	SET UP AN EVALUATION MANAGEMENT GROUP
STEP 3.	ESTABLISH AN EVALUATION ADVISORY GROUP (OPTIONAL)
STEP 4.	ESTABLISH AN EVALUATION REFERENCE GROUP (OPTIONAL)
STEP 5.	ORGANIZE COUNTRY REFERENCE GROUPS (OPTIONAL)

## Checklist 5: Useful Tips for Establishing a Joint Evaluation Management and Governance Structure

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| STEP 1. | SET UP AN EVALUATION STEERING COMMITTEE (SC) |
|---------|--|
- The choice of a broad or a small steering committee:
    - Stakeholders should balance the need of inclusiveness against the necessities in terms of flexibility and efficiency. A smaller SC tends to be a more versatile and efficient body.
  - Who is represented in the SC?
    - A SC is commonly formed by sponsors and financiers of the evaluation.
  - The SC should define the extent of its participation and involvement in the evaluation process: a ToR for the SC is prepared.

- ❑ The SC establishes the general scope of the joint evaluation and, after setting up an Evaluation Management Group (EMG), review the ToR for the evaluation proposed by the EMG.
- ❑ The SC defines the needs for subsidiary management structures, such as: ERG, EAG, CRG (see steps 3, 4 and 5).

## STEP 2. SET UP AN EVALUATION MANAGEMENT GROUP (EMG) AND A GROUP CHAIR

- ❑ Who is represented in the EMG?
  - The EMG is a technical body, often made up of evaluation managers or specialists only.
  - Participating agencies should appoint focal points for the group.
  - Possibility of including participants from participating countries, CSOs, etc.
- ❑ Elect a chair for the EMG. The chair will be the spokesperson of the group. A leading role is normally ascribed to the agency that has taken the initiative for the evaluation, or accepted certain duties and responsibilities such as administering the pool of funds.
- ❑ The EMG will prepare the draft ToR for the evaluation. The ToR will include the functions and responsibilities of the EMG.

## STEP 3. ESTABLISH AN EVALUATION ADVISORY GROUP (EAG) – OPTIONAL

- ❑ According to the SC decisions, an EAG might be set up.
- ❑ Who is represented in the EAG?
  - This group is often composed by high respectable and recognized people in the specific field to be evaluated or in the field of evaluation.
- ❑ The EMG prepares the ToR for the EAG, defining the extent of the participation of the EAG in the evaluation process.

- The EMG, in consultation with the SC, will propose a list of possible candidates for the EAG.
- Candidates of the EAG are in general well-recognized academia representatives, notable evaluations experts, or sector-specific accredited figures.
- EAG members are involved in the process upon request of the EMG and the SC. In general, the EAG supports the review of the evaluation inception report, the first draft and the final report of an evaluation.

#### STEP 4. ESTABLISH AN EVALUATION REFERENCE GROUP (ERG) – OPTIONAL

- According to the SC decisions, an ERG might be set up.
- Who is represented in the ERG?
  - The ERG is a consultative body representing the most relevant stakeholders in the joint programme. These individuals and institutions are the natural users of the conclusions and recommendations derived from the evaluation study.
  - The ERG is often composed of the different UN agencies' focal points, CSOs and national counterparts. They are consulted on key aspects of the evaluation process.
- The ERG informs the evaluation process and ensures its quality.
- The ERG participates in disseminating the findings of the evaluation and implementation of the management response.

#### USEFUL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A good example related to the role of the evaluation reference group functions is provided by the ToR for reference group of the first Joint Evaluation on [Joint Programmes on Gender Equality](#), led by the UNWOMEN Evaluation Office.

A simpler joint evaluation might opt for lighter governance structure. The MDG Achievement Fund, [ToRs for Generic Joint Programme Final Evaluation](#), provides an example of a joint evaluation where the main participation body is the evaluation reference group.

## STEP 5. COUNTRY REFERENCE GROUP (CRG) – OPTIONAL

- For joint evaluations involving multiple countries or multiple case studies based on country experiences, the SC can consider the creation of country reference groups.
- Who is represented in the CRG?
  - The CRG can involve UN country offices, national government representatives, decentralized governments, local partners, CSOs and academia.
- Establish ToR for CRGs.
- Appoint a focal point in each reference group and a CRG's chair.
- The CRG provides quality assurance for the country report.
- The CRG ensures that the evaluation report is based on the evidences that were collected during the field visit.
- The CRG supports the dissemination of the evaluation and its use.

## Good Practice Examples of Joint Evaluation Management Structures

Examples of a management arrangement for a global joint evaluation:

1. Joint Evaluation of Joint Gender Programmes in the UN System.
2. [Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting \(FGM/C\): Accelerating Change](#)

Examples of country level joint evaluation:

1. [Joint Evaluation of the Role and Contribution of the UN System in the Republic of South Africa.](#)
2. [Mid-Term Evaluation of the Joint Donor Team in Juba, Sudan.](#)



Annex 2 of the [Paris Declaration Evaluation](#) (OECD, 2008, see pp. 61-62) provides a good example for large, widely inclusive, multi-country joint evaluations. The document clearly points out the responsibilities of the steering committee and the management group.

The [ToR for the Steering Committee of OCHA 5-year Evaluation of the Central Emergency Response Fund](#) is another comprehensive example related to the responsibilities of the steering committee.

The document [Joint Evaluations and Learning in Complex Emergencies](#) (Lægroid T., 2009), is a good compendium of lessons learned regarding management structures in emergencies joint evaluations.

A simpler joint evaluation might opt for a lighter governance structure. The MDG Achievement Fund, [ToRs for Generic Joint Programme Final Evaluation](#), provides an example of a joint evaluation where the main participation body is the evaluation reference group.

# 5. REPORTING ON A JOINT EVALUATION

.....

This checklist is aimed at providing guidance to evaluation managers to ensure that the final product of the joint evaluation – the evaluation report – meets the expected quality criteria. The checklist can also be shared as part of the ToR prior to the conduct of the evaluation.

It is adapted from the [‘UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports’ \(UNEG/G\(2010\)/2\)](#), which is based on [‘UNEG’s Standards for Evaluation in the UN System \(UNEG/FN/Standards\(2005\)\)’](#). The checklist also draws on the [UNDP ‘Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results’](#) and other sources.

## Checklist 6: Joint Evaluation Report

### 1. OVERALL, A QUALITY JOINT EVALUATION REPORT SHOULD:

.....

- Be well structured, logical, clear and complete.
- Describe what is being evaluated and why.
- Identify the questions of concern to users.
- Explain the steps and the procedures used to answer those questions.
- Present findings supported by credible evidence in response to the questions.
- Acknowledge limitations.
- Draw conclusions about findings based on the evidence.
- Propose concrete and usable recommendations derived from conclusions.

- Be written bearing in mind the readers and how they will use the evaluation.

## **IN PARTICULAR, THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS SHOULD BE PRESENT:**

### **2. TITLE PAGE AND FRONT MATTER**

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- Report title (sufficiently clear and concise to facilitate indexing).
- Title of joint programme, theme, or system-wide issue being evaluated.
- Location (country, region, etc.) of the object of evaluation, if applicable.
- Partners involved in implementation.
- Partners involved in the evaluation.
- Time-frame of the evaluation and date of the report.
- Acknowledgements section references sponsors, evaluators and/or evaluation firm, data collectors, informants, reviewers of the report, etc.
- Table of contents (containing at least all first and second level headers in the reports) and list of tables, graphs, figures and annexes.
- List of acronyms.

### **3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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- Overview of the object of evaluation (joint programme, theme, or system-wide issue being evaluated) and brief statement why this is important for the United Nations system and/or partner agencies involved.
- Statement of purpose explaining what the evaluation will be used for (e.g. to inform policy decisions, accountability, organizational learning).
- Evaluation objectives and primary intended users/principal clients of the evaluation.

- Evaluation methodology, noting in particular how ‘jointness’ is being analysed.
- Summary of main findings, implications of findings, conclusions.
- Main recommendations.

#### 4. OBJECT OF EVALUATION

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- Brief introduction to the joint programme, theme, or system-wide issue being evaluated and brief explanation of why it is important for the United Nations system and/or partner agencies involved.
- Brief review/key messages from related research.
- Statement regarding the purpose and goal, and organization/management of the joint programme, theme, or system-wide issue being evaluated.
- Clarification regarding the total resources from all sources, including human resources, made available to the object of evaluation.
- Overview of the key stakeholders involved in implementation and their roles.
- Brief description of the history and current status as well as scale and complexity of the topic or intervention, including UN policy/strategy in the area, key milestones, duration of initiatives, location and implementation phase.
- Analysis of any significant changes (e.g. plans, strategies, logical frameworks) that have occurred over time; explanation regarding the implications of those changes for the evaluation.
- For country/regional-level joint evaluations, analysis of the context (key social, political, economic, demographic, and institutional factors that have a direct bearing on the object of evaluation), e.g. the partner government’s strategies and priorities, international, regional or country development goals, strategies and frameworks, as appropriate.
- Representation of the underlying theory of change or logic model.

- Explanation of the hypotheses to be tested, if any.

## 5. EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVE(S), CLIENTS AND SCOPE

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- Explanation of the overall result expected from the evaluation.
- Statement of purpose that explains for what the evaluation will be used (e.g. accountability, ongoing improvement, organizational learning, etc.) and why the evaluation was needed now and what kind of information is needed.
- Identification of the principal clients of the evaluation as set out in the terms of reference.
- Statement of the scope that delimits the boundaries around the object of evaluation by time, geography, structure, or sequence and in relation to a universe of related issues; justification regarding what the evaluation did and did not cover.
- Statement, as appropriate, on how the evaluation objectives and scope address issues of gender and human rights.

## 6. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK, EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

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- Overarching statement on the methodological approach taken (e.g. impact evaluation, contribution analysis, gender and human rights responsive evaluation) that clearly explains how the evaluation was specifically designed to address the evaluation criteria, yield answers to the evaluation questions and achieve evaluation purposes.
- Explanation about how causal inference was made regarding the UN's contribution to results (e.g. contribution analysis, rival hypotheses).
- Clear statement of the evaluation criteria against which the intervention was assessed (e.g. relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, coverage, others).
- Contextualization of pre-defined criteria (e.g. for each criterion, formulation of two or three specific questions that the evaluation will answer).

- ❑ Specific evaluation questions on 'jointness' (coordination, transaction costs, etc.).
- ❑ Specification of limitations that flowed from the evaluation approach taken.

## 7. METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION OF DATA LIMITATIONS

---

- ❑ Statement on design of the evaluation, including sample sizes and timing of data collection.
- ❑ Description of data sources used (primary and secondary), the rationale for selecting them, and their limitations, discussion of how the mix of sources helped overcome data limits, ensure diversity of perspectives and data accuracy (triangulation of sources).
- ❑ Explanation of the sampling strategy used for both primary and secondary sources, rationale for selection, mechanics of selection, numbers selected out of potential subjects/objects, and limitations of the sample.
- ❑ Description of tools used for collecting primary data, the rationale for using these and their limitations, discussion of how the mix of collection methods enhanced validity and depth of data (\*all tools to be placed in the annex).
- ❑ Reference to key indicators, targets and benchmarks, where relevant.
- ❑ Complete description of stakeholder consultation process that took place as part of the evaluation, including the rationale for consultation at different levels.
- ❑ Brief description of how data and information was analysed, i.e. how it was coded, displayed, processed, synthesized (\*all details should go in the annex) and how causal inference was made regarding the UN's contribution to results.

## 8. QUALITY ASSURANCE

---

- Statement of the quality standards against which the deliverables can be assessed.
- Overall statement on measures taken to ensure data quality (triangulation, interview protocols, coding frames, etc.).
- Description of the management structure (as per ToR) under which the evaluation team operated.
- Portrayal of advisory/reference groups, if any, and how they reflect the joint nature of the evaluation.
- Description of (non-methodological) shortcomings encountered and explanation of strategies adopted to mitigate these.

## 9. FINDINGS

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- Clear organization of findings demonstrating how findings address the evaluation criteria and questions detailed in the scope and objectives section of the report; explanation is included for questions that could not be answered.
- Charts, tables and graphs are understandable and appropriately and consistently labeled.
- Proof that findings are based on evidence gathered and analysed in accordance with what is described in the methodology section of the report.
- Provision of sufficient evidence to credibly substantiate the findings: reported findings reflect systematic and appropriate analysis and interpretation of the data; findings are objectively reported based on evidence; overall findings are presented with clarity, logic, and coherence.

- Discussion of evaluation findings is objective and includes both negative and positive findings.
- Discussion of gaps and limitations in the data and/or unanticipated findings.
- Identification of reasons for findings, e.g. accomplishments and failures, especially continuing constraints.
- Summaries of findings are included in each chapter or altogether in a summary chapter.

## 10. CONCLUSIONS

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- Evidence that the conclusions are reasonable evaluative judgments relating to the key evaluation questions.
- Confirmation that conclusions are well substantiated by the evidence presented and are logically connected to evaluation findings.
- Evidence that stated conclusions provide insights into the identification and/or solutions of important problems or issues pertinent to the prospective decisions and actions of evaluation users.
- Confirmation that conclusions present strengths and weaknesses of the object being evaluated (joint programme, theme, or system-wide issue), based on the evidence presented and taking due account of the views of a diverse cross-section of stakeholders.

## 11. RECOMMENDATIONS

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- Description of the process followed in developing the recommendations including consultation with stakeholders.



- Proof that the recommendations are firmly based on evidence and conclusions.
- Confirmation that the recommendations are relevant to the object and purpose of the evaluation.
- Recommendations clearly identify the target group for each recommendation.
- Recommendations are clearly stated with priorities for action made clear.
- Recommendations are actionable and demonstrate an understanding of the commissioning organizations and potential constraints to follow-up.

## 12. GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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- The report uses gender-responsive and human rights-based language throughout, including data disaggregated by sex and age at the least.
- Confirmation that the evaluation approach and data collection and analysis methods are responsive to gender equality and human rights and appropriate for analysing the gender equality and human rights issues identified in the scope.
- Assessment if the design of the joint programme, thematic or system-wide intervention was based on a sound gender analysis and human rights analysis and if implementation for results was monitored through gender and human rights frameworks, as well as evaluating the actual results on gender equality and human rights outcomes, if appropriate.
- Reported findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons provide adequate information on gender equality and human rights aspects.

## 13. FOOTNOTES/BIBLIOGRAPHY/FORMAT OF ANNEXES

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- References follow a common scientific style and format and one style is used consistently for all footnotes and for references in the bibliography.

- References cover all in-text citations.
- All appendices referenced in the text are included in the annex section in the order they are referenced.
- Data and information in the annexes are clearly presented and explained.

## 14. ANNEXES

---

- Terms of reference.
- Theory of change/results framework, if not included in body text.
- Review of key indicators, primary and secondary sources of information.
- An evaluation matrix linking evaluation criteria to required information and sources.
- Explanation of the criteria used, e.g. when extracting desk review samples or selecting country case studies.
- List of persons interviewed and sites visited; can be supplemented by mapping of the key informants and stakeholders (from inception phase).
- List of documents consulted.
- Data collection instruments in full (interview schedules, focus groups guides, surveys, etc.).
- Data analysis tools in full (coding frames, instruments used for displaying, processing and synthesizing qualitative data, information on weighting and/or standardization of quantitative data, etc.)
- Evaluators' biodata and/or justification of team composition.

## Good Practice Examples of Joint Evaluation Reports

Evaluation of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): Accelerating Change

[Volume 1](#)

[Volume 2](#)

[5-Year Evaluation of the Central Emergency Response Fund \(CERF\)](#)

## Good Practice Examples of Joint Programmes Mid-Term Evaluation Reports

[Mid-Term Evaluation of Children, Food Security and Nutrition Joint Programme in El Salvador \(Spanish\)](#)

[Mid-Term Evaluation of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Joint Programme in Ethiopia](#)

[Mid-Term Evaluation of Environment and Climate Change Joint Programme in Senegal \(French\)](#)

## Good Practice Examples of Joint Programmes Final Evaluation Reports

[Final Evaluation of Children, Food Security and Nutrition Joint Programme in Guatemala \(Spanish\)](#)

[Final Evaluation of Children, Food Security and Nutrition Joint Programme in Timor-Leste](#)

[Final Evaluation of Youth Employment and Migration Joint Programme in Tunisia \(French\)](#)

[Final Evaluation of Private Sector Development Joint Programme in Vietnam](#)

**Good Examples of Participatory Multi-Joint Programmes Country Evaluation Reports**

[Colombia Multi-Joint Programmes Country Participatory Evaluation \(Spanish\)](#)

[The Philippines Multi-Joint Programmes Country Participatory Evaluation](#)

[Morocco Multi-Joint Programmes Country Participatory Evaluation \(French\)](#)

## 6. MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

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The United Nations Norms and Standards for Evaluation require the establishment of a formal document for management response. An analysis of good practices across UN agencies reveals the following:

- ✓ The document should be in a matrix format, requiring feedback to each recommendation (accepted, partially accepted or rejected) as well as a list of actions that the responsible unit(s) commits to taking within a fixed period of time.
- ✓ Responses should include a narrative component.
- ✓ To ensure relevance, management response and follow-up actions should be completed within a specific time-frame after release of the evaluation report and the responsible unit for taking action should be clearly assigned.

### **Checklist 7: Steps for Preparation and Finalization of Management Response Plans (MRPs) in Joint Evaluations**

These steps may be adapted to each specific situation, as well as the arrangements that each joint evaluation has set up.

#### **STEP ONE**

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- The evaluation manager informs recommendation recipients of all concerned organizations of findings and recommendations in the evaluation.

## STEP TWO

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- The recommendation recipients decide whether a joint management response or separate management responses are needed.

## STEP THREE

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- The recommendation recipients, either jointly or separately, assign responsibilities for response and follow-up actions and appoint a focal point to act as Chair of a MRP Task Team.

## STEP FOUR

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- Chair of the MRP Task Team coordinates discussion and input for MRP.

## STEP FIVE

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- Review and finalization of MRPs.

## STEP SIX

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- The MRP Task Team Chair discloses final MRP as agreed and appropriate to all stakeholders.

## STEP SEVEN

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- The Chair of the MRP Task Team follows up on progress and reports on implementation of agreed follow-up plans.

**Table 3: Success Factors for Effective Follow-up and Response to Joint Evaluation Recommendations**

### SUCCESS FACTORS

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Good evaluation planning and the implementation of evaluations of high quality.

The involvement of relevant stakeholders throughout the evaluation process, which increases the perceived relevance and stakeholders' ownership of evaluations.

The involvement of relevant stakeholders throughout the evaluation process, which increases the perceived relevance and stakeholders' ownership of evaluations.

An organizational culture that values evaluation, emphasizes the need for change and ensures that evaluation recommendations are relevant and timely for the organizational agenda. This in turn requires senior management buy-in and linking evaluation follow-up to a broader results-based performance agenda.

While ensuring that evaluation recommendations are 'owned' and accepted by the different stakeholders, it is important to strike an appropriate balance between promoting the ownership of evaluation findings and recommendations and maintaining the independence of the evaluation.

## Good Practice Example of Monitoring Plans for Management Responses

Monitoring plans are the tool to keep track of the implementation of joint evaluation recommendations in the MRPs. Recommendations and follow-up actions shall be monitored and periodically reported through them (typically twice a year, but a different reporting frame can also be agreed by the MRP Task Team).

Please see the following example of an MRP for joint evaluations:

1. [CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND - Interim Review, Management Response Matrix](#)

Update to the Management Response Plan to the CERF Five-Year Evaluation

## Checklist 8: Good Practices in Ensuring Follow-up and Implementation of Joint Evaluation Recommendations

### TIPS FOR ENHANCING FOLLOW-UP TO AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS IN A JOINT EVALUATION

- The evaluation should identify one or two agencies that will take the lead in creating a management response matrix, and conducting the follow-up to the implementation of recommendations.
- Agreement should be reached on the terms of reference for the Chair and members of the MRP Task Team, clarifying the roles of each in the process. (See example below).
- A matrix with all recommendations should be created within the first month after the completion of the joint evaluation.
- Organizations to which recommendations have been provided should identify a focal person that will coordinate the follow-up to the implementation of recommendations for that organization.



- ❑ Organizations to which recommendations have been provided should develop appropriate follow-up and actions within three months of the finalization of the evaluation report.
- ❑ Organizations to which recommendations have been provided should deliver a response to evaluation recommendations within three months of the completion of the evaluation report.
- ❑ Responses on the status of the implementation of recommendations should be precise and concise, and based on evidence.

## Checklist 9: Knowledge Management for Joint Evaluations

This checklist is aimed at providing guidance to joint evaluation managers to invest in knowledge management throughout the joint evaluation process.

According to UNEG, “Knowledge management is a collaborative learning process through which insights and experiences are exchanged, analysed, and put into practice. The knowledge management process is aimed at incentivizing action and achieving impact through a deeper understanding of relevant issues, strengthened institutional and programme results, and influence on policy-making and global debates.” “Knowledge management for evaluation is the application of this learning process to the general practice of evaluation. It addresses various aspects of evaluation, including effective methodologies, quality assurance frameworks, evaluation findings and recommendations, thematic analyses, management processes, and institutional performance and capacity.”

Knowledge management for evaluation encompasses, on the one hand, the dissemination and use of evaluation findings and, on the other, communication and process use during the evaluation process. Process use refers to the “individual changes in thinking and behaviour, and programme or organizational changes in procedures and culture, that occur among those involved in evaluation as a result of the learning that occurs during the evaluation process” (Patton, 1997)

Source: [www.unevaluation.org](http://www.unevaluation.org); ‘Utilization-Focused Evaluation’ 3rd Edition. (Patton, 1997, Sage Publications).

### 1. PROCESS USE AND COMMUNICATION

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- Assess and build programme and organizational readiness for evaluation.
- Identify primary intended uses by establishing the evaluation’s priority purposes. Organize and engage primary intended users.
- Consider and build in process uses if appropriate: learning to learn, developing networks, creating shared understanding, strengthening the project, boosting morale.

- Check that fundamental areas for evaluation inquiry (as identified by users) are being adequately addressed and support intended use.
- Make sure data is gathered with ongoing attention to use and organized and presented with use by primary intended users in mind.
- Make sure intended users understand potential controversies about methods and their implications.
- Simulate use of findings.
- After widely disseminating significant findings to expand influence, follow up with primary intended users to further facilitate and enhance use.

Source: Adapted from 'Essentials of Utilization-Focused Evaluation' (Patton, 2012, Sage Publications).

## 2. USE OF EVALUATION FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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An effective evaluation knowledge tool is:

- Based on an assessment of needs and demand for the product among primary intended users to ensure relevance, effectiveness, usefulness and value of the product.
- Designed for a specific audience, taking into consideration functional needs and technical levels.
- Relevant to decision-making needs.
- Timely.
- Written in clear and easily understandable language.
- Data is presented in a clear manner.
- Based on the evaluation information without any bias.
- When appropriate, developed through a participatory process (or a product of process

use) and validated through a quality assurance process with relevant stakeholders.

- Easily accessible to the primary intended users through most effective and efficient means.
- Consistency in presentation of products to enhance visibility and learning.

Source: Adapted from UNDP, 'Ensuring Quality Control and Policy Coherence: BDP Quality Assurance and Clearance Process', Bureau for Development Policy, May 2007. Available at: [intra.undp.org/bdp/clearance\\_process.htm](http://intra.undp.org/bdp/clearance_process.htm).

## Checklist 10: Checklist on Incorporating Gender in Joint Evaluations

The incorporation of gender equality principles is mandatory for all UN agencies. As such, issues related to gender equality need to be considered when undertaking joint evaluations of any UN intervention. In any evaluation action, the following points need to be considered when checking on the adequate incorporation of gender:

### 1. METHODOLOGY

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- Participatory methods of data collection are used, including women and men and with adequate attention to gender issues.
- The questions and the indicators are gender-sensitive. This will lead to a higher quality of gender analysis and will tend to include more information on benefits (or no benefits) to women and men.

### 2. FOCUS AND ISSUES

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- Besides highlighting women's achievements, focus also on gender relations and on the impact of development activities on gender equality.

- Focus on how gender relations may influence women's capacity to participate to or benefit from the programme/project.
- Partnerships on gender equality and in other areas have been built.

### 3. APPROACH

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- There is capacity and commitment of involved partners to work on changing gender relations (partner and donor organizations).
- Accountability to gender equality policies and strategies is ensured.

### 4. GENDER IN EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

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To ensure that evaluation ToRs adequately include gender, the following should be checked:

- Gender issues are integrated in the evaluation's objectives.
- Precise reference to gender and appropriate evaluation questions to investigate differences in participation, benefits, and results at all levels between women and men are included.
- The demand to assess the benefits for women and men, the results related to gender equality is explicit.
- Institutional approaches and change strategies are included, e.g. furthering factors/obstacles to gender mainstreaming (often interpreted as obstacles to having gender issues addressed).
- The demand to assess changes in gender relations is mentioned.
- As far as possible, the demand to make links between the inclusion of a gender perspective and successful or improved programme/project outputs, outcomes or impact is explicit.

## 5. EVALUATION TEAM

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The choice of an evaluator/evaluation team is essential for the quality of the evaluation. Check that:

- Gender expertise is available in the team.
- The team is composed of women and men evaluators.
- Local expertise has been used (women and men).
- The evaluators have the capacity to identify and collect gender disaggregated information using a mix of different methods, including the capacity to develop gender-sensitive indicators.
- The evaluators have the capacity to analyse data collected in relation to the activities being evaluated in a systematic way.

# ANNEX 1. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR JOINT EVALUATIONS

THE MESSAGE

Considerations for selecting the most suitable medium/ combination of media to convey messages

**METHODOLOGY ISSUES**  
How the results were achieved (including constraints and limitations)

**RECOMMENDATIONS**  
Practical, feasible recommendations directed to the intended users of the report about what actions to take or decisions to make

**FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**  
A synthesis of facts and corresponding data based on evidence and analysis

**LESSONS LEARNED**  
Represent contributions to general knowledge gained through experience, which if shared, would benefit the work of others (i.e. not merely a repetition of common knowledge)

**PURPOSE** Engage? Inform? Divulge? Advocate? Which medium is best suited to the purpose?

**AUDIENCE** Impact of different media on audience, their attitudes and skills (e.g. literacy?)

**TIMEFRAME** Life span of the message, production time, timeframe for dissemination of results?

**RESOURCES** Production and dissemination costs as well as availability of skills, expertise?

THE FORMAT

**PRESS RELEASES**

**AUDIO/VIDEO**  
Radio and TV broadcasts, audio, video tapes

**PRESENTATIONS**  
Meetings, conferences, workshops

**REPORTS**  
Executive summaries, full reports, excerpts, pamphlets

**DATABASES**

**INTERNET**  
Websites, e-mail dissemination

**INFORMAL MEANS**  
Introducing key messages in conferences/meetings where CFRF is discussed

**SURVEYS**  
Monitor stakeholder uptake of results

THE MEDIA

The appropriate format will be determined by various factors, including the purpose, the timing, the audience, resources available, language and how it is expected that the key messages or lessons will be used by a specific stakeholder.

