**Quality Checklist for Decentralized Evaluation Inception Report**

**[title of the Decentralized evaluation]**

**Version April 2021**

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| Overall | |
| **General** | **Comments/status** |
| **Length**:   * The report should not exceed 15,000 words (excluding Annexes and Table of Contents). An additional 15 percent length is allowed for deliverables written in French or Spanish.   **Accessibility:**   * The report is written in a clear and accessible manner * The report clarifies and builds on the terms of reference, extending its evidence base and analysis * The report provides a clear operational plan for how the team will carry out the decentralized evaluation * The report reflects a common understanding between the evaluation team and evaluation manager on expectations and standards * The report demonstrates ownership of the process by the evaluation team |  |
| **Editing** |  |
| * The report is written in line with WFP editing style * Template has been followed and all elements included, including standard text * Table of contents is included and lists tables, graphs, figures and annexes * Maps, visuals, tables and diagrams are used as relevant * Acronyms are spelt out the first time they are used * Paragraphs and pages are numbered electronically * The report is free from grammar, spelling or punctuation errors |  |
| **Cover page** |  |
| * The DEQAS template for IR cover page has been followed (not mandatory for joint evaluations) * The title of the decentralized evaluation is identical to that in the ToR (unless agreed otherwise) * Date and status of the report (draft/final) is indicated on the cover page |  |

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| 1. **Introduction** | | | |
| **Expected content** | **Assessment criteria** | | **Comments/status** |
| * 1. **Evaluation features** | | | |
| * Present briefly the subject, rationale for the evaluation (why needed at this time), objectives (accountability and/or learning, with an indication if more weight is given on one of the two) and expected users * Briefly describe the purpose of the IR (operational plan) and its place within the evaluation process * Indicate on what basis the IR was prepared and by whom * Discuss the appropriateness of analysing gender, equity and wider inclusion issues in the evaluation scope | * Introduction clearly sets the scene for the evaluation, including its subject, rationale, objectives, timing and users * Purpose of the IR is clear and activities supporting its formulation are relevant, demonstrating that adequate research and consultations have taken place | |  |
| * 1. **Context** | | | |
| Overview of the geographical context directly relevant to the evaluation, including:   * General overview (e.g. geography, demography/population, basic macro-economic indicators) * Key indicators on poverty levels, food security (disaggregated by sex, population groups, highlighting regional disparities), vulnerability to climate change-related shocks * As needed, national indicators related to education, health, nutrition, agriculture, relevant to the evaluation subject (e.g. data on literacy rates, primary and secondary school enrolment by sex and percentage of population with at least secondary education) * Elaborate on gender inequality index and wider equity and social inclusion issues in relation to food security, nutrition and other areas relevant to the evaluation subject. This should also include a description of the architecture in the country (policies, strategies) and indicators * National policies, institutional capacities and priorities, including policy gaps relevant to the evaluation subject * Key data and trends related to SDG 2/SDG 17 in the context (region, country subnational/local level) * Humanitarian issues, including migration patterns, humanitarian protection, refugees and IDPs and host community/social tensions * Key external events that led to significant changes in WFP work * Features of international assistance in the area and related work of other humanitarian/ development actors, including long-standing donors/agencies in the country, and levels of resources * Other WFP work in the area | * Contextual information focused, concise and relevant to understand the context for the subject of the evaluation, * Information is explicitly geared to the evaluation subject, rather than being generically presented * Relevant indicators have been identified and trend data used and it is up to date * Data is commented on, not simply illustrated * Good balance between amount of details and synthesis | |  |
| 1. **Subject of the evaluation** | | | |
| **Expected content** | **Assessment criteria** | | **Comments/status** |
| * 1. **[Subject evaluated]** | | | |
| This section should provide a comprehensive description of the evaluation subject, including:   * The nature of the evaluation subject (intervention/activity, thematic area, transfer modality, pilot project) * An illustration of the logic of the intervention and its key assumptions (based on an assessment of the logical framework, theory of change). If such tool are not available, they should be reconstructed at inception phase * Building on the relevant section of the ToR expands on the analysis of: * The geographic scope of the evaluation subject * Relevant dates: approval date; start date; end date; budget revisions; duration of intervention * More recent data on the activities that fall within the scope of the evaluation (disaggregated by sex/ age/ year) * A quantitative overview of performance including outcome and output targets achievement rate, as feasible with available data * Brief comments on the performance data. For example, any discrepancy between target achievement rate and budget implementation for the same outcome * Main partners (government; NGOs; UN agencies; private sector; other) * Resources (planned, revised and actual, by year and cumulative, percentage funded of total requirements) and key donors * Other relevant preceding/ concurrent activities/ interventions * Any amendments to initial design * Gender equality and women’s empowerment, equity and wider inclusion dimensions that the intervention sought to address, through which strategies and for which targets/results * Assessment of whether quality gender, equity and wider inclusion analyses were undertaken and whether this analysis was properly integrated in programme design. If there was no analysis to inform the programme, this fact should be mentioned * References past evaluations/reviews related to the subject. If none, say so * Maps/graphs for illustration | * All the expected content is included, and information is relevant, complete and important to understand the subject of the evaluation * Tables/graphs are used to illustrate the subject * Soundness of logical framework assessed. If reconstructed, it has been discussed and agreed with the evaluation commissioner * Highlights relevant issues from past evaluations and reviews that are relevant to the evaluation * GEWE, equity and wider inclusion dimensions are explained and whether programme design was informed by a gender analysis * Differences between original design and implementation are explained if appropriate | |  |
| * 1. **Scope of the evaluation** | | | |
| * Describe the scope in detail, highlighting any changes or refinements as compared to the scope stated in the ToR * Present the key issues to focus on as identified in the inception phase. These issues should be clearly reflected in the evaluation matrix as operational components or lines of inquiry under the relevant evaluation subquestions * Explain how any evaluability challenge will affect the scope of the evaluation in relation to specific evaluation criteria, questions or subquestions * Geographical coverage of the evaluation is clearly defined | * The specific focus of the evaluation, the period covered, and the geographical coverage of the evaluation are clearly explained * Differences with ToR scope are identified * Allows the collection of GEWE data * Key strategic issues that deserve particular attention are identified and explained * Exclusions are described and justified | |  |
| * 1. **Stakeholder analysis** | | | |
| * Building on the related ToR section, add depth by providing necessary and relevant information * For each group of stakeholders, specify concrete agencies or functions, describe their role in the subject of evaluation/ the evaluation itself and analyse the nature of their stake/interest, including what they stand to gain or lose from the results of the evaluation * Ensure that the stakeholder analysis is responsive to gender, equity and inclusion issues * Integrate beneficiaries’ perspectives, disaggregated in a way that reflects diversity * Identify the principal types of stakeholders e.g. duty-bearers, rights-holders * Define how stakeholders will be involved, with consideration of the most appropriate method for each group | * Builds on the stakeholder analysis conducted at the ToR stage * All relevant stakeholders have been identified (by category or function) * Identifies the key actors that have a stake in the evaluation and explains their specific interests and relative power to influence the evaluation process or the use of the evaluation * Relevant analytical tools applied * Considerations regarding beneficiaries’ perspectives are included and disaggregated in a way that reflects diversity and gender-responsiveness, with a focus to accountability to affected populations * Stakeholders’ analysis is coherent with the proposed methodology and evaluation matrix | |  |
| **3. Evaluation approach, methodology and ethical considerations** | | | |
| **Expected content** | **Assessment criteria** | | **Comments/status** |
| **3.1. Evaluability assessment** | | | |
| * Overview of the evaluability assessment | * Challenges and opportunities are highlighted * Description of how the assessment has informed the delimitation of the evaluation scope and the choice of methods for data collection and analysis | |  |
| **3.2. Methodological approach** | | | |
| In the framework of the approach outlined in the ToR, this section should include:   * An overview of the evaluability assessment, highlighting challenges and opportunities and describing how the assessment has informed the choice of methods for data collection and analysis. The detailed evaluability assessment, including detailed analysis of data availability should be presented in annex * Evaluation questions to be addressed. Justication provided if they vary from ToR * Overall approach to data collection, synthesis, analysis and validation of findings * A discussion on how data will be collected and analysed, including a clear description of the evaluation matrix, and how it will be used * Discussion of any implications of evaluability challenges in relation to specific evaluation criteria, questions or subquestions; data gaps highlighted; mitigation measures identified. * A clear statement of how gender, equity and wider inclusion issues will be addressed in the methodology * If not already clearly indicated in the ToR, a specification about whether or not a set of lessons will be required in the ER * If relevant, specification about how the analysis will be conducted against international humanitarian principles | * The methodology section covers the minimum expected content.   The methodological approach:   * + - Is coherent, logical and comprehensive and explains how it will mitigate limitations to validity and reliability of the findings and overall credibility of the evaluation     - Has proposed methods and evaluation criteria that are gender and equity sensitive     - Has methods and a sampling frame described that are appropriate to consult with different groups/types of stakeholders within the affected population     - Has modifications from the ToR that are presented and justified * The report specifies how gender, equity and wider inclusion issues will be addressed * If not clearly indicated in the ToR, the IR specifies whether or not a set of lessons will be required in the ER | |  |
| **3.3. Data collection methods** | | | |
| * Provide detailed overview of the data collection methods building on the preliminary methodology guide in the ToR. Explain and justify how the methodology is modified from that presented in the ToR * Explicitly link chosen methods to the evaluation matrix and ensure they are informed by stakeholder analysis as well as by an analysis of the reliability and completeness of the data collected during the design and inception phases (secondary data, M&E information, previous evaluations, etc.) * Explain how data gaps will be filled and how information will be collected, analysed and used to answer all the subquestions * Define the nature of data information collection methods and field instruments (to be included in annex). Highlight their comparative advantage, inherent constraints and solutions * Description of how methods and sampling address diversity of stakeholders * Provide information on selection of intervention sites to be visited during fieldwork and geographic coverage and explain the sampling. Provide information about the number of beneficiaries and key partners or stakeholders in each site. * Ensure methods proposed are in response to gender, equity and wider inclusion issues. Ensure data collected is disaggregated by gender; provide an explanation if this is not possible * Clearly articulate that gender, equity and wider inclusion issues will be considered in findings, conclusions and recommendations (as appropriate) including unanticipated effects | * The data collection methods are described in detail, within the overall approach described in the previous section * Choices for data collection methods are adequate given data needs, budget and time constraints * Choices are justified and limitations explained * Chosen methods are explicitly linked to the evaluation matrix and informed by the stakeholder analysis * Reasonable/accurate assessment of data situation demonstrates that the team has adequately gathered and consulted data during the inception phase * Methods described are appropriate to consult with different types of stakeholders * Field tools are included in annex * Sampling methods are robust and impartial and limitations to impartiality, if any, are addressed * The analysis informs the selection of areas to be visited during the mission, according to a sound rationale * Considerations of how the data collection methods will address gender, equity and wider inclusion issues and be undertaken in a gender-sensitive manner are explained. Limitations of the approach are explained | |  |
| **3.4. Data analysis** | | | |
| * Describe methods for quantitative and qualitative data analysis, cleaning and triangulation to ensure validity and reliability | * Data cleaning, analysis and triangulation is described in detail to ensure validity and realibility * Choices are adequate and justified and limitations are explained * Chosen methods are coherent with overall methodological approach * Analytical framework for data analysis is included | |  |
| **3.5. Ethical considerations** | | | |
| * Include standard text * Describe ethical issues and which safeguards and measures will be put in place by evaluation phase * If the ToR had identified or anticipated any ethical issues, discuss them explicitly | * Standard text used * Ethical issues, safeguards and measures are discussed in a way that demonstrates clear understanding of specific risks arising in the context of the evaluation | |  |
| **3.6. Risks and assumptions** | | | |
| * Highlight any potential risk to efficient and safe conduct of the evaluation process. Include potential conflict of interest, logistic complications, safety issues, availability of data, data protection, timing of field visits, etc * Indicate how the evaluation team will mitigate/prevent these risks * Specify the support that the team assumes it will receive from the commissioning office | * The expected content is covered and discussed in a way that demonstrates clear understanding of any potential risk and its implications for the evaluation * The support needs of the team are clearly spelled out and are realistic in view of the time and budget available | |  |
| **3.7. Quality assurance** | | | |
| * Make sure that mechanisms for ensuring the utility, credibility, impartiality and independence of the evaluation are clear and explicit * Mention quality assurance and build it into the whole process * Spell out requirements for the evaluation team to ensure validity and accuracy of data | The expected content is covered:   * Mechanisms for ensuring the utility (e.g. communication and knowledge management plan in place), credibility (robust methodology, clear mechanisms for minimizing bias (i.e. impartiality), validity (internal QA within the team) and independence (use of external evaluation team) are clear and explicit * DEQAS is mentioned * Standard text used where appropriate | |  |
| **4. Organization of the evaluation** | | | |
| **Expected content** | **Assessment criteria** | | **Comments/status** |
| **4.1. Roles and responsibilities** | | | |
| * Present the composition of the evaluation team, primary role and responsibilities of each team member in line with expertise and ToR requirements (including gender expertise), and the areas to be covered in the matrix * Present a workplan for each team member in line with deliverables agreed and according to roles and responsibilities. Explain how individual inputs will be translated into expected evaluation products * Describe mechanisms for ensuring coordination | * Team expertise matches all competencies required in ToR (including gender) * Roles and responsibilities of evaluation team members are clarified * There is clear complementarity among team members’ skill sets * Tasks to be undertaken and outputs delivered by each team member are clear and in line with consultants’ profiles * Deliverables for each team member are clearly stated with deadlines and match the duration of contract * There is a clear plan to ensure coordination among team members | |  |
| * 1. **Timeline** | | | |
| * Clearly present the timeline, revised if applicable, with associated deliverables * Explain any variations from the ToR * Present a detailed fieldwork schedule (by days, team member, locations, stakeholders, etc) in the annex that enables the commissioning office to organize appointments and arrange logistics | * ­The timeline provides a clear picture of how the evaluation process will unfold including dates for key deliverables * The timeline is realistic given the scope and methodology, and respects the time required for each evaluation phase * The timeline has been agreed with the evaluation manager | |  |
| **5. Issues to be agreed and information required [optional]** | | | |
| * Highlight and explain any issues that have arisen during the inception phase and still require discussion with and/or clarification from the evaluation manager * Make constructive suggestions for addressing these issues, so that they can be resolved easily * Do not re-state constraints to the evaluation that can and should be managed through the evaluation methodology | * Issues highlighted follow logically from the points raised in the report * List of support is clear and has been discussed with WFP evaluation manager before the finalization of the IR * Final version of IR adequately reflects the agreement reached with evaluation manager on these issues | |  |
| **Annexes** | | | |
| **Expected content** | | **Assessment criteria** | **Comments/status** |
| Annexes support and expand on text in the main report. Including:   * Summary ToR * Detailed timeline * Methodology guidance * Evaluation matrix * Data collection tools * Fieldmission schedule * Evaluability assessment * Reconstructed theory of change * Results framework/line of sight * Detailed stakeholder analysis * Updated ERG membership * Communication and knowledge management plan * List of people interviewed * Bibliography * Acronyms | | * All annexes listed are included and numbered * Annexes are referenced, where appropriate in the main report * Not all working documents need to be included |  |

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| **Evaluation matrix** | | |
| **Expected content** | **Assessment criteria** | **Comments/status** |
| The evaluation matrix should provide an overview of how each of the key evaluation questions (taken explicitly or implicitly from the terms of reference), will be addressed. It should include:   * Breakdown of the main questions into an adequate number of subquestions * A set of indicators to measure performance or progress * Links to the relevant parts of the methodology that will contribute to answering the subquestions * Explanation of how the data will be triangulated * Sources of information (specifying whether secondary data will be used and where primary data is needed) * References to the availability and reliability of the data | * The matrix summarizes the evaluation methodology and addresses the evaluation questions taken explicitly or implicitly from the ToR (and further refined as needed) * The subquestions are developed to guide the evaluation team, but are not as detailed as a survey instrument or interview guides. Their number is adequate to keep the evaluation team focused on answering all the main questions and attain depth of analysis (i.e. not too many and not too few) * For each evaluation question, the subquestions, performance or progress indicators and the main sources of information are specified * The matrix clearly demonstrates that triangulation will take place * The evaluation matrix is informed by the stakeholder analysis * The matrix refers to the relevant evaluation criteria * Gender, equity and wider inclusion issues are integrated into the questions and subquestions where relevant |  |