

Outline Terms of Reference for Evaluation Steering Committees

All evaluations under the national Evaluation Plan are a partnership between at least a custodian department and DPME, and potentially other departments. A coordination mechanism is needed to oversee the evaluation, which is a Steering Committee, which takes the responsibility for ensuring the quality of the evaluation and approving evaluation reports. This outline provides the general guideline for the terms of reference of Steering Committees, which should be adapted for specific evaluations.

Steering Committees may cover more than one evaluation, and for some evaluations, a technical or management group may also need to be established to liaise with the service provider on an ongoing basis and deal with technical detail, such as considering research instruments. A separate TOR is available for this if needed.

1 Objective of the Steering Committee

To oversee and take decisions on the overall evaluation process.

2 Specific tasks

- 2.1 Approve the Project Plan for the evaluation.
- 2.2 Recommend approval of the TORs for the evaluation.
- 2.3 Approve peer reviewers.
- 2.4 Evaluate proposals and provide the assessment of these on functionality criteria to the commissioning department(s), recommending those who pass the minimum standard. The commissioning department will then complete the selection process.
- 2.5 During the inception phase review the proposal by the service provider and recommend changes.
- 2.6 Review the inception report, consider comments from peer reviewers, recommend changes if needed, and approve the inception report.
- 2.7 Approve the data collection instruments and tools where applicable.
- 2.8 Provide technical inputs, support and advice to the service provider on an on-going basis.
- 2.9 Provide feedback on draft reports, including comments from peer reviewers to the service provider, and a workshop with stakeholders if appropriate.
- 2.10 Approval of the final report as a satisfactory evaluation report that fulfils the agreed inception report.
- 2.11 Recommend approval or not of specific recommendations emerging from the report. Departments then produce a management response which will indicate any concerns they have around content, and will then work with DPME on developing an Improvement Plan and on communicating the results of the evaluation.

3 Members

In general the Steering Group should not exceed 10 members. This may be exceeded if several departments are involved. The quorum should be the custodian department, DPME and some partner departments involved.

Members	Includes
Custodian department	Programme staff (+- 3 members including the programme manager, or component managers) Evaluation specialist
DPME	Outcome Facilitator and/or Outcome Manager Evaluation Specialist
Other partner national departments	Programme staff In some cases evaluation specialist
Provincial departments	In some cases with concurrent functions implementation staff could be invited who can advise on practical implementation issues
Treasury	Where possible the budget analyst dealing with this topic should be a part of the evaluation
Donors of evaluations or of interventions	If relevant

Members	Includes
Other key stakeholders	Some evaluations may have partners such as UN organisations, business and business organisation, Institutes, etc.
Academic/sector expert	In some cases it may be useful to have a relevant academic covering the sector, or methodology, to supplement the peer reviewers

4 Roles

In general the custodian department should chair the Steering Committee, represented by a senior programme person, either the programme manager or in some cases a more senior Chief Director or DDG. In some cases where there are several departments, they may wish DPME to chair, in which case the Outcome Facilitator should chair.

DPME Evaluation and Research Unit will normally provide the secretariat.

Role	Tasks
Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair steering group meetings Ensure a formal letter and other communication goes to relevant provincial departments or other stakeholders to ask for support and access for the service provider Brief principals and ensure that the emerging findings and implications are shared in appropriate management forums Read and comment on time on all products of the evaluators Possibly convening a workshop of stakeholders to consider the findings.
Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide secretariat for the Steering Group. This entails: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consulting with the chair to draft meeting agendas Producing minutes of meetings (which should be issued within 2 days) and ensuring these are signed Production and monitoring of the Project Plan If commissioning, provide financial reports to the Steering Group Circulate agendas and key reports at least 3 days before meetings Where commissioning, contract and make payments to the service provider based on recommendations from the steering group as well as satisfaction of deliverables. Ensure that the evaluation follows the evaluation policy framework and guidelines Read and comment on time on all products of the evaluators Pay for peer reviews, workshops, and travel costs for content experts brought in to assist.
Commissioning organisation (may be custodian department, DPME or other organisation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract and make payments to the service provider, based on recommendations from the steering committee and approval of deliverables by the Steering Group. Provide financial reports to the Steering Committee
Other members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend Steering Committees Brief principals and ensure that the emerging findings and implications are shared in appropriate management forums Read and comment on time on all products of the evaluators
Academic/sector experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend Steering Committees Read and comment on time on all products of the evaluators, providing in depth feedback on content/methodology

4 Meetings

The Steering Committee will meet as needed for the assignment. Key meetings based on milestones in the project plan are likely to include:

- 1) To approve ToRs for the evaluation;
- 2) To recommend to bid adjudication committees service providers who pass the functionality test;
- 3) To review and approve inception reports;
- 4) To agree comments on the draft report;
- 5) To approve the final report;
- 6) To recommend approval of recommendations emerging from the final report;
- 7) To approve the Improvement Plan.



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Date: 27/06/2012