

## **Guide for Misereor partner organisations on commissioning external evaluations locally**

Greetings from Aachen, Germany!

For many years our partner organisations in Africa, Asia and Latin America have been drawing benefit from evaluations. They provide important occasions and opportunities for reflecting on, reviewing and further improving the work done in the projects and programmes.

As part of our efforts to assess outcomes, impacts and success more systematically, Misereor expects its project partners to commission regular evaluations of projects that are implemented with Misereor support. To ensure that these evaluations are also accepted by our donors and supervisory bodies as part of our reporting obligations, certain points must be observed.

We have therefore produced this guide, which we would ask you to observe when you are about to prepare an evaluation. It comprises:

- information for partner organisations on commissioning external evaluations, and
- tips for partner organisations on drafting agreements with expert consultants.

On completion, please forward the evaluation report to Misereor.

If you have any questions about your evaluation, please do not hesitate to contact us (evaluation@misereor.de).

With our best wishes and kind regards,

### Enclosures:

- 1a) Information for Misereor Partner Organisations on Commissioning External Evaluations Locally
- 1b) Recommended Structure for the Terms of Reference of Evaluations
- 2a) Tips for Misereor Partner Organisations on drafting Agreements with Expert Consultants
- 2b) Specimen Agreement for the Assignment of an Expert Consultant

## **Information for Misereor Partner Organisations on Commissioning External Evaluations Locally**

Misereor expects its project partners to commission external evaluations of their work at appropriate intervals. The reports on these evaluations are important to Misereor in that they enable us to assess and document the success of project work and to meet our own reporting and accountability obligations. The evaluations commissioned by our partner organisations must therefore fulfil certain criteria, which are outlined below.

### **What is an independent evaluation?**

#### **Selecting the expert consultant**

An independent evaluation requires the perspective of an independent expert consultant. We would ask you to identify and enter into an agreement with this person yourself, bearing in mind the following:

1. The person must have the professional/technical expertise necessary to analyse and assess the project.
2. The person must have the methodological know-how necessary to carry out the evaluation.  
*In terms of the two points above, the suitability of the potential expert consultant is best judged by referring to the written curriculum vitae and, if possible, by conducting a personal interview.*
3. The person must not have close links to the project or the legal holder of the project. The following are therefore excluded:
  - Employees or former employees of the legal holder, their direct relatives and spouses,
  - Members of supervisory bodies of the legal holder of the project, their direct relatives and spouses,
  - Persons who provided advisory etc. inputs during project implementation,
  - Persons who are in some other way dependent on the project or the legal holder.Expert consultants who have had previous contact with the project exclusively within the context of evaluations may be commissioned.

#### **Evaluation methodology**

Generally, Misereor recommends that a participatory procedure be adopted, i.e. project staff and beneficiaries should be included in the collection and assessment of data. This does not prejudice the independent nature of the evaluation. Self-evaluations can also be accepted as long as these are conducted in collaboration with an independent expert consultant who provides the independent external perspective and documents this in a separate or supplementary report.

#### **Evaluation report**

For each evaluation, a report must be produced that is wholly or partly written by the independent expert consultant, and for which he/she accepts responsibility.

#### **Contents of the evaluation (terms of reference)**

The evaluation must, at any rate, address the following aspects mentioned in the DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD):  
*DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance*  
([http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,2340,en\\_2649\\_34435\\_2086550\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,2340,en_2649_34435_2086550_1_1_1_1,00.html))

- Relevance – are we doing the right things?
- Outcomes and impacts – what has actually changed for the target groups as a result of the project?
- Effectiveness – are we achieving the project objectives?
- Efficiency – are the project objectives being achieved cost-efficiently?
- Sustainability – are the achievements sustainable in the longer run?

The enclosed specimen evaluation format ('Recommended Structure for the Terms of Reference of Evaluations') provides further assistance. Within this framework, the questions should be formulated so as to provide you with valuable information for further and improved project work.

## Recommended Structure for the Terms of Reference of Evaluations

*The Terms of Reference (ToRs) set out the evaluation objectives and are agreed between all parties involved in the task to be performed by the evaluation team. In order to ensure that an evaluation fulfils the expectations of all stakeholders, it is necessary that the ToRs are formulated as clearly and precisely as possible. The following information and explanations may be of help in this task.*

*The Terms of Reference **should be formulated individually for each evaluation** in order to ensure that they are appropriate to the individual project setting and the evaluation objectives.*

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### 1. Introduction

This section should describe the project/programme to be evaluated and outline the history of the evaluation (Who initiated the evaluation? Why was it initiated?). If relevant, some general background information on the region and sector can be included.

### 2. Objectives of the evaluation

This section should state as precisely as possible the proposed objectives of the evaluation. This is especially important for the evaluation team, as the evaluation objectives critically affect exactly what information is to be collected and the collection methods to be applied.

### 3. Key issues

We recommend that the key issues to be addressed in the evaluation are formulated as concrete questions that are expected to be answered by the evaluation.

When drawing up the list of questions, the DAC criteria<sup>2</sup> for evaluations have to be taken into account: relevance, impact (*for Misereor "effects" or "outcomes and impacts"*), effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. The following table includes a description/explanation of each criterion complete with example questions. These key questions should be tailored to the requirements of the individual evaluation (i.e. they can be modified, formulated more precisely, or omitted).

**Relevance:** The extent to which the project is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, the organisation responsible for the project and the donor organisation. It is useful to consider the following questions:

- To what extent is the intervention important for the target group (for example, does it focus on an important problem/bottleneck)?
- To what extent are the initial objectives of the project still appropriate?
- Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the project goals and objectives (coherence of the planned chain of causality)?

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<sup>2</sup> See: [http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,2340,en\\_2649\\_34435\\_2086550\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,2340,en_2649_34435_2086550_1_1_1_1,00.html)

**Outcomes and impacts:** The positive and negative changes produced by a project, directly or indirectly. This involves the main outcomes and impacts resulting from the project. The evaluation should be concerned with both intended and unintended outcomes and impacts.

It is useful to consider the following questions:

- What real difference has the project made to the beneficiaries in terms of social, economic, political, cultural, and ecological changes, taking into account the gender dimension?
- How many people have been affected?
- Which other factors contributed to the changes that were generated, and to what extent can the changes be attributed to the project activities (plausibility)?
- Has the real chain of causality been consistent with the chain of causality established at the planning stage? If not, what were the differences?

**Effectiveness:** A measure of the extent to which a project achieves its objectives, i.e. a comparison of the intended outcome with the observed outcome (see 'Outcomes and impacts' above). It is useful to consider the following questions:

- To what extent were the objectives achieved or are likely to be achieved?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
- Were the initial objectives realistic?

**Efficiency:** Efficiency measures the qualitative and quantitative outputs in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the project uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired outcomes and impacts.

There is general agreement about the difficulty of making such comparisons. It is useful to consider the following questions:

- Were the effects achieved at reasonable costs?
- Was the project implemented in an economically justifiable way under the given circumstances? Are there any benchmarks to support the answers?
- Were the objectives achieved on time?
- Have effective management and administration systems been in place and was there a suitable PME system?

**Sustainability:** Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of a project are likely to continue after funding has been withdrawn. Benefits need to be environmentally as well as economically, technically and socially sustainable. It is useful to consider the following questions:

- To what extent are the benefits of the project likely to continue once donor funding has ceased?
- What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the (programme or) project?

If relevant to the context and the project, we recommend that questions on cross-sectoral issues to be answered by the evaluation should also be included, for example relating to gender, human rights, stakeholder participation, peace-building and civic conflict transformation, good governance, civil society involvement, HIV/Aids, health and the environment.

#### 4. Methodology

It is important to bear in mind that a project not only affects a single homogeneous target group, but different groups with different interests and perspectives. Generally, a set of varied and adapted methods is adopted (usually applying a gender-sensitive approach) that focuses on quantitative and qualitative aspects in the following steps in the evaluation:

- Prior to the field visit: a review of the documents, preparation of interview guidelines, quantitative survey, ...
- During the field visit: start-up workshop, document review, participant observation, quantitative survey, in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, contextual analysis, key informant interviews, debriefing workshop, ...

#### 5. Organisation of the mission

This section includes details of:

- The expertise required, the members of the evaluation team and their roles
- The schedule: duration of preparatory activities, dates of the mission, deadline for the (draft) report, debriefing date etc.

#### 6. Report

This section sets out the proposed structure of the report. The following outline, based on past experience, has proven useful for this purpose:

- The first part should describe the project and the project context as a basis for the analytical and evaluative sections that follow. Aspects to be considered:
  - o Project context and framework conditions
  - o Project goals and objectives
  - o Project strategy/approach
  - o Description of project activities. Was there a difference between the planned activities and those actually implemented? Were there any lobbying or networking activities?
  - o Description of target groups. How many were reached through the activities?
  - o Organisational structure; how does project administration work?
  - o Description of the cooperation with MISEREOR
- The next section focuses on the findings related to the questions listed above under 'Key issues'. This is the main section for data presentation and analysis.
- The conclusions follow logically from the findings but are clearly distinguishable from these. The conclusions should provide answers to the main evaluation questions.
- The recommendations follow logically from the conclusions. They should be actor oriented (Who should do what?) and prioritised (What is most important?, What could be improved?).

The report documents the evaluation activities and results and serves as a reference for follow-on activities. It must therefore have a clear structure and be complete. The following questions should be addressed in the Terms of Reference:

- Who will write the report? Who will have overall responsibility?
- How long is the report expected to be?
- What should be included in the report (for example, an executive summary)?
- What are requirements with respect to the reporting format?

## **Tips for Misereor Partner Organisations on drafting Agreements with Expert Consultants**

### **1. Establishing the terms of reference**

The terms of reference are the basis of an evaluation. They provide the criteria for selecting the expert consultant: What qualifications and experience must the expert consultant have in order to achieve the objectives stated in the terms of reference and to address the problems at hand?

We would therefore suggest that you draft the terms of reference right at the beginning (please refer to the enclosed text: *Recommended Structure for Terms of Reference of Evaluations*).

### **2. The agreement to be concluded with the expert consultant**

Before concluding an agreement with an expert consultant, we first of all recommend that you:

- check whether the expert consultant meets the requirements resulting from the terms of reference;
- find out what fees are usually paid for such services in your country (as a basis for negotiation). Please take into account that freelance consultants may demand higher fees than expert consultants who are employed, have secure incomes, and take on such assignments from time to time in addition to their regular jobs;
- calculate, on the basis of the terms of reference, the number of working days the expert consultant will realistically need for preparation, the work in the project (field phase) and producing the report.

In this context, we also recommend that the expert consultant be given adequate time and opportunity to familiarise him/herself with the essential information on the project well before the field phase.

The agreement and the terms of reference, which are an integral part of the agreement, stipulate the services and tasks that you expect the expert consultant to perform, and the remuneration and reimbursement of expenses the expert consultant expects from you.

#### **We recommend that the following points always be included:**

- total number of days of the expert consultant's assignment;
- fee to which s/he will be entitled (either as a per-diem amount or a lump sum);
- reimbursement of expenses incurred by the expert consultant during the assignment (board and lodging while working in the project; travel to and from the project; transport on site – where these costs are not covered by the partner organisation; working materials, if applicable);
- deadline for delivery of the written report;
- a clause stipulating that the expert consultant is responsible for arranging and paying for adequate health and life insurance cover for the duration of the assignment;
- a clause setting out the arrangements that apply if the expert consultant does not perform his/her duties (either at all or only in part) or if the services provided do not satisfy quality requirements.

**Please find enclosed our recommended Specimen Agreement. If you have any queries we will be pleased to help. Thank you for your cooperation.**

# Specimen Agreement for the Assignment of an Expert Consultant

Name and address of [REDACTED]

- hereinafter called "the Party Ordering" -

and

Mr/Ms [REDACTED] (Name)  
(Address)

Phone: [REDACTED], mobile: [REDACTED], e-mail: [REDACTED]

- hereinafter called "the Expert Consultant" -

hereby agree on the following:

## I. Object of the assignment

The Party Ordering entrusts the Expert Consultant with the following evaluation: [REDACTED]  
(please see Terms of Reference [ToR], Annex I for details).

## II. Details of procedure

- (1) The Expert Consultant's assignment shall start at the point of time he/she begins preparing it. However, the maximum number of days to be devoted to preparatory work shall be [REDACTED], while a maximum of [REDACTED] days shall be spent on the compilation of the report and other final assignment completion work. The Party Ordering and the Expert Consultant shall jointly determine the starting date of the field work phase of up to [REDACTED] days. The Party Ordering shall set the date of the final debriefing meeting following submission of the report.
- (2) The Party Ordering shall provide the Expert Consultant with all available records and documents required for a successful execution of the assignment in due time before the field work phase starts.
- (3) The Expert Consultant shall prepare and provide to the Party Ordering a report (please see ToR Annex I for details). The report shall be written in [REDACTED] and submitted to the Party Ordering by [REDACTED] (deadline). In addition, a revised version may be required by the Party Ordering at a later date.

## III. Duration and termination of the Agreement

- (1) This contractual relationship will end when the written report(s) mentioned above under Article II. (3) has (have) been duly received by the Party Ordering.

## IV. Remuneration and reimbursement of expenses

- (1) The Party Ordering shall pay the Expert Consultant  
a daily fee of ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED] (in words: [REDACTED] / [REDACTED])  
a flat fee<sup>3</sup> of ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED] (in words: [REDACTED] / [REDACTED])

for the preparation, field work, and writing of the report as per account rendered.

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<sup>3</sup> A flat fee may include per-diem and overnight accommodation allowances; where this is the case, it must be explicitly mentioned.

- (2) The Party Ordering shall also pay the Expert Consultant accommodation and per-diem allowances of ( ) .00 (daily allowance) and ( ) .00 (night-lodging allowance) for the duration of the field work. If and to the extent the Expert Consultant enjoyed free board and/or lodging, no per-diem and/or night-lodging allowances will be paid.
- (3) All necessary travel and transport expenses shall be reimbursed on submission of receipts up to an amount of ( ) .00. Other inevitable disbursements (visa fees, expenses for travel prophylaxis, communication expenses, costs of materials and photocopying etc.) shall also be reimbursed on submission of receipts up to an amount of ( ) .00. (However, expenses for insurances of the Expert Consultant shall not be reimbursed). **In exceptional cases**, expenses can be reimbursed on a flat-rate basis.
- (4) The Party Ordering shall advance an amount of up to ( ) .00 towards travel expenses and the fee on request. The residual amount due to the Expert Consultant shall then be disbursed on completion of the assignment as per account rendered.
- (5) The final account shall be rendered as soon as possible after completion of the assignment.
- (6) The two parties agree that all duties and taxes resulting from this Agreement shall be paid by the Expert Consultant.

#### V. Insurance

- (1) The Expert Consultant hereby assures that he/she is in good health and there are no medical objections to a fieldwork assignment in the country of destination.
- (2) The Expert Consultant shall take out at his/her own expense adequate insurance(s) covering in particular all risks to his/her life and health.
- (3) **The Party Ordering shall not be liable for any damage suffered by the Expert Consultant as a result of failure to comply with the aforementioned regulations.**

#### VI. Secrecy / Dissemination of results

- (1) The Expert Consultant is bound to secrecy where such facts as may have come to his/her knowledge in connection with the implementation of this assignment are concerned. The Expert Consultant shall not pass on or disclose any of this information without prior permission of the Party Ordering.

#### VII. Final provisions

- (1) Any alterations or additions to this Agreement shall have to be made in writing in order to be valid.
- (2) The invalidity of any provision of this Agreement shall not affect any other part of it.

.....  
*Place, date*

.....  
*Place, date*

.....  
*For the Party Ordering*

.....  
*The Expert Consultant*