REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
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MEDNARODNO RAZVOJNO
SODELOVANJE SLOVENIJE
SLOVENIA'S DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION

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EVALUATION GUIDELINES
OF SLOVENIAN OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The guidelines contain detailed instructions for carrying out evaluations and are based on the Evaluation policy of international development cooperation of Slovenia, which was adopted by the Government decree No. 51100-32 / 2014/4 of 24 December 2014.

GUIDELINE 1: APPLICATION OF THE OECD DAC PRINCIPLES IN SLOVENIAN DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION - HOW TO EVALUATE

Evaluation Principle	MFA Application
Impartiality and independence	• Evaluations undertaken by external experts who are selected through tendering (criteria: quality of proposal, contribution to the development of the evaluation process and practice, price…) • Evaluation service of MFA organised as an operational independent service under the direct supervision of the Director General for international development cooperation and humanitarian assistance
Credibility	• High-level, independent professionals selected for evaluation team • Evaluation report covers both successes and failures • Evaluation reports are made publicly available
Usefulness	• Users of evaluation results consulted during programming of evaluations • Stakeholders have an opportunity to participate throughout the evaluation process • Quality standards and writing instructions for evaluation reports guide the contents, including clear and concise language of evaluation reports • Management response as an action plan, with an obligation to report back on implementation of that action plan • Evaluation reports are widely disseminated
Participation	• Consultative process with partner countries on evaluation timing and ToR preparation, and dissemination of evaluation results • Partner institutions and stakeholders participate in the evaluation
Donor cooperation	• Joint evaluations undertaken as far as possible • Donors informed about upcoming programme evaluations

GUIDELINE 2: EVALUATION CRITERIA AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS IN SLOVENIAN DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION - WHAT TO EVALUATE

Evaluation Criteria	Generic Evaluation Questions	Integrating Cross-cutting Objectives into the Evaluation Questions
Relevance • **Focused on problems and policy priorities** • **The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor.**	• To what extent are the objectives of the programme still valid? • Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives? • Are the activities and outputs of the programme consistent with the intended impacts and effects? • Are the objectives and achievements of the programme consistent with the problems and priorities of stakeholders? • Are the objectives and achievements of the programme consistent with Slovenia's development policy? • Are the objectives and achievements of the programme consistent with the policies of the partner countries?	• Are the commitments of the partner country's national policies and strategies and of the international and regional conventions on the promotion and enjoyment of human rights, gender equality and protecting the environment integrated into programme design and implementation?
Effectiveness • **Focused on evaluating the achievements of the policy/programme/project's immediate objectives** • **A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.**	• To what extent were the objectives achieved/are likely to be achieved? • What major factors influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?	• To what extent have the objectives related to the promotion and enjoyment of human rights been achieved during the implementation of the programme? • To what extent have gender equality and protecting the environment been achieved during the implementation of the programme?
Efficiency • **Focused on value for money, other available resources and sound management** • **A measure of qualitative and quantitative outputs in relation to inputs.**	• Were activities cost-efficient? • How well have the activities transformed the available resources into the intended results, in terms of quantity, quality and time? • Can the cost of the activities be justified by the achievements?	• Have resources been provided and efficiently used for long-term investments in the enabling environment, capacity development etc. for promotion and enjoyment of human rights, for promotion of gender equality,

Evaluation Criteria	Generic Evaluation Questions	Integrating Cross-cutting Objectives into the Evaluation Questions
		reduction of inequalities and promotion of protecting the environment?
Impact • **Focused on evaluating the achievement of wider objectives** • **Positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.**	• Has progress been made towards achieving the overall objective(s) of the programme? • Did the programme reduce the poverty of all intended final beneficiaries? OR What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries? • Did the programme impact on the lives of poor women and men through prices, employment, transfers, access, authority, assets or empowerment? • What are the overall impacts of the activity, intended or unintended, long term and short term, positive and negative?	• Are there real and long lasting positive changes in the lives of all the intended beneficiaries in terms of human rights, gender equality and protecting the environment?
Sustainability • **Focused on evaluating the probable continuation of achievements** • **A measure of whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn** • **Environmental and financial sustainability**	• To what extent did the benefits of a policy or programme or project continue after donor funding ceased? • What factors might enhance or inhibit sustainability, including ownership/commitment, economic/financial, institutional, technical, socio-cultural and environmental sustainability aspects?	• What is the probability that the achievements in human rights, gender equality and protecting the environment will be sustained after the policy/programme/project is completed?
Coordination, complementarity, coherence • **focused on evaluating issues beyond development cooperation**	• Has the programme promoted coordination and complementarity? • Have contradictions with other policies prevented the implementation and achievement of the development objectives, or are they mutually reinforcing (synergy)?	• Are other policies consistent with the human rights based approach and cross-cutting objectives and their integration into the programme?

GUIDELINE 3: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN EVALUATION

Headings of the ToR	Checklist
Background of evaluation	• what is the policy/programme/project to be evaluated, and in what context • what information on the priority evaluation issues is already available through previous evaluations
Rationale, purpose and priority objectives of the evaluation	• why is the evaluation being conducted, what will the results be used for • why now, to what decision making will the results be applied • who needs the results, who uses them • what are the priority issues of the evaluation
Scope of the evaluation	• what will be excluded from the scope of the evaluation
Issues to be addressed and evaluation questions	• what we want to know, what is the focus of the evaluation • include a manageable number of evaluation questions (max 12) • integrate human rights and cross-cutting objectives in the evaluation issues and questions • leave room to raise emerging issues during evaluation • include evaluation questions on relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability
Methodology	• give adequate methodological guidance, both on data collection and analysis, for qualitative and quantitative data that is adequately disaggregated • encourage the use of alternative sources of data for baseline, indicators etc. if necessary • leave responsibility for further elaboration of the methodology to the evaluators
The evaluation process and time schedule	• define the main phase of the evaluation • ensure a balance between the time allocated for the evaluation and the issues and questions addressed • allocate adequate time to facilitate the integration of human rights and cross-cutting objectives into the evaluation • put adequate emphasis on the inception phase and desk study before field work • allocate adequate time for field work • leave responsibility for defining the details of the work plan to the evaluators • clearly request meetings with the evaluation team and the budget and time for them
Reporting	• define what reports are expected and in what form • require an inception report • include debriefing in the field before the evaluators leave the country • indicate the maximum length of the final report text (30-50 pages) • plan for the involvement of the evaluation team in disseminating the evaluation results
Quality assurance mechanisms	• request to propose and implement a quality assurance system for the evaluation
Expertise required	• expertise of the team leader and the team • expertise in evaluation • balance in sector/theme/country/regional expertise

Headings of the ToR	Checklist
	• expertise in human rights and cross-cutting objectives
Budget	• adequate funding allocated to the evaluation, taking into consideration to the context (e.g. country size and geography, volume and complexity of the policy/programme/project activities)
Mandate	• The evaluation team is entitled and expected to discuss matters relevant to this evaluation with pertinent persons and organisations. However, it is not authorised to make any commitments on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.
Annexes	• main components/outline of an evaluation report • quality of evaluation report

GUIDELINE 4: OUTLINE OF AN EVALUATION REPORT

Main components of an evaluation report

Component	Content
Executive summary	• Providing an overview of the report, highlighting the main findings, conclusions, recommendations (summarised in table format) and any overall lessons.
Introduction	• Explaining the evaluation's rationale, purpose and objectives, scope and main evaluation questions.
Context	• Description of the broader environment and its influence on the performance of the programme.
Programme being evaluated	• Including objectives, implementation strategies, resources for implementation, introduction of the stakeholders and their roles, including both final beneficiaries and the institutions involved.
Findings	• Empirical data, facts, evidence relevant to the indicators of the evaluation questions. The report provides an assessment of the overall progress of implementation, and presents findings by evaluation criteria.
Conclusions	• The evaluator's assessment of the performance of the programme based on the findings in relation to the set evaluation criteria. Conclusions help understand why progress has/have not been made.

Recommendations	• Proposed improvements, changes, action to remedy problems in performance or to capitalise on strengths.
	• Recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions. There should be a clear indication of:
	   o for whom the recommendation is intended (MFA, embassy, other ministries, partner institutions, consultants providing support services, etc.),
	   o who is responsible for implementing the recommendation,
	   o when the recommendation should be implemented (immediate, medium term, long term).

Lessons learned	• Any general conclusions that may have the potential for wider application and use
Annexes	• The ToR • Description of the evaluation methodology used

Component	Content

	• Limitations of the study
	• Lists of information sources e.g. people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.
	• Quality assurance statement produced by the quality mechanism used
	• 1-2 page evaluation brief for communicating the evaluation results, including
	   o the key message of the evaluation
	   o who has benefited and the most important positive results,
	   o any unexpected impacts,
	   o key recommendations and lessons learned.

Quality of evaluation report

Evaluation report contents	Report quality checklist
Executive summary	• contains a clear and representative executive summary of the report • summarises the main findings, conclusions, recommendations in a summary table • presents overall lessons learned The executive summary is the section of the evaluation report that will be read most often, which is why its quality is very important.
Context	• describes the context of the development policy/programme/project • assesses the influence of the context on policy/programme/project performance
Intervention logic	• describes and assesses the intervention's logic (e.g. in the form of a logical framework) or theory • describes and assesses the underlying assumptions and factors affecting the success of the policy/programme/project • takes into account the evolution of the policy/programme/project
Sources of information	• describes the sources of information (documents, interviews, other) used so that the adequacy of the information can be assessed • explains the selection of case studies or any samples • cross-validates the information sources • critically assesses the validity and reliability of the data
Methodology	• is annexed to the report explains and justifies the evaluation methodology and its application, including techniques used for data collection and analysis • explains the limitations and shortcomings, risks and potential biases associated with the evaluation method
Analysis	• presents a clear analysis, covering findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned separately and with a clear logical distinction between them • makes explicit the assumptions that underlie the analysis
Answers to ToR evaluation questions	• answers all the questions detailed in the ToR for the evaluation • covers the requested period and the target groups and socio-

Evaluation report contents	Report quality checklist
	geographical areas linked to the programme • if not, justifications are given
Limitations	• explains any limitations in process, methodology or data, and discusses validity and reliability • indicates any obstructions to a free and open evaluation process which may have influenced the findings • explains any discrepancies between the planned and actual implementation and products of the evaluation
Differences of opinion	• acknowledges unresolved differences of opinion within the evaluation team
Stakeholders comments	• reflects stakeholders' comments on the report and acknowledges any substantive disagreements

GUIDELINE 5: MANAGEMENT RESPONSE ON EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations of the evaluation	Management response Immediate implementation	Development activities
Recommendation	• activity to be implemented • by whom • by when • reporting in progress report by when?	• activity to be implemented • by whom • by when • reporting in progress, report by when?
Recommendation	…	…
Recommendation	…	…

Source for guidelines were Evaluation Manual, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, October 2013 and Summary of Key Norms and Standards, Evaluating Development Co-operation, OECD DAC.

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Abbreviations

DAC – Development Aid Committee
EU – European Union
MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ToR – Terms of Reference