
TEMPLATE FOR TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR PROJECT AND PROGRAMME EVALUATIONS

This template is to be used to assist the development of Terms of Reference for Project/ Programme Evaluations. It is designed to comply with the concepts and terminology present in the WWF Standards of Conservation Project and Programme Management (the latest version of this document may be found on Connect at [Home](#) > [Documents](#) > [Network Standards](#) > [Programmes](#) > [0. WWF Standards of Project and Programme Management - Overview](#)

SUMMARY GUIDELINE FOR DEVELOPING TERMS OF REFERENCE

If done properly and openly, projects are implemented in a context of learning and sharing. The continuous analysis of results by the project team allows for adaptive management, which greatly enhances the probability of success for any project. In addition, evaluations provide a formal feedback mechanism which can give further opportunities for learning, and may lead to the re-design of the project.

Usually evaluations are designed to assess a project against its own stated goals and objectives (known as the “effectiveness” of the project). Other assessment criteria are normally included in addition (see below). Evaluations can be conducted at various phases of the project cycle - mid-term, at the end of a project phase, or sometimes after the end of a project. They can be conducted either internally or externally. Internal evaluations and audits, which are done by project team members and close partners, have the advantages of being relatively easy and cheap to conduct and that the people involved in the assessment can make direct use of the findings. External evaluations and audits, which are done by outside parties, have the advantage of providing an outside and unbiased perspective to the project team.

For an evaluation process to be objective, it needs to achieve a balanced analysis, to recognise bias, and to reconcile the perspectives of different stakeholders. In general, evaluations should address five fundamental criteria: quality and relevance of design, effectiveness, efficiency of implementation, impact and potential for sustainability. Other criteria can be added as appropriate, but it is important not to be overambitious.

Evaluations are conducted with a view to:

- enhancing project impact.
- developing recommendations for further developments of the project or the guidance of similar projects in the future
- providing an analysis of accountability with respect to the use of project funds
- drawing key lessons learned to contribute to organizational learning
- enhancing WWF's credibility and transparency

The Terms of Reference for an evaluation (also referred to as the scope of work) will articulate the scope and limitations of the evaluation. Good ToR provide the basis for a good evaluation. They define the evaluation framework, and act as a point of reference throughout the process. They should be tight, explicit, and focused. The ToR provide a clear mandate for the evaluation team, specifically defining what is being evaluated and why, how the evaluation will be conducted, and the expected outputs.

The scope of the evaluation (and the formulation of the ToR) will vary depending on a variety of factors (such as scale of the project, known successes/ failures/ contextual changes, time since inception of the project, the anticipated future for the project, the budget for the evaluation etc.) It is

critical that the Terms of Reference for the evaluation are prioritised in response to the precise project situation, and to help the evaluation team focus on the essential issues.

The initial draft of the ToR is usually the responsibility of the project supervisor. It is important that the ToR are developed consultatively, together with the project team and the donors so that their key concerns are addressed, and also with the evaluation team to allow for their input into the evaluation design and methodology, including its feasibility within the budget and time available.

The Terms of Reference should, at a minimum, cover the elements listed below.

TEMPLATE FOR TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Project Background and Context

Provide a brief description of the project and the surrounding context (up to 1 page of narrative). Include critical aspects of the biodiversity, policy, social, and economic context of the project. Identify major stakeholders and their interests and concerns. Detailed background information (e.g. project action plan/ logical framework) can be included in an annex.

Provide also the following key information:

Project Location	Specify the region, country, or landscape as appropriate. State also the Global 200 ecoregion (where relevant)
Project Name	
Project reference number	
Project budget	State the total budget for this donor (noting the contract currency and exchange rate used). Also state the global (total) budget for this project.
Donor(s)/ funding sources	State all donors and (where applicable) the precise funding sources.
Project duration	State the project duration and the evaluation period (if different)
Implementing agency and partners	State which organization(s) are implementing the project
Project executant	

2. Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

Explain clearly why the evaluation is being done, what triggered it and how it will be used. This should provide the broad orientation, which is then further elaborated in the scope of the evaluation.

3. Audience for the Evaluation

Who is commissioning the evaluation; who is expected to act on the results; how the evaluation will be used and the results disseminated.

(Usually the main target audiences are project teams and donors).

4. Evaluation Issues and Key Questions – Evaluation Matrix

This section should detail more fully the scope of the evaluation, building on the purpose and objectives above. The evaluation criteria (i.e. the questions to be answered) should be clearly identified.

These form the basis for an evaluation matrix, which is useful to include as an annex.

Below is presented a generic set of criteria and questions as guidance. It is not presented as a comprehensive list, but should provide a sound basis. **There are too many specific requirements in this section for a single evaluation.** Tasks and requirements/ questions should be prioritised,

modified and added in response to the precise project situation and to help the evaluation team focus on the essential issues.

4.1 Quality and Relevance of Design

Assess the continuing appropriateness and relevance of the Design. The project context, threats and opportunities may have changed during the course of the project. Assess what adjustments have been made and what others might be necessary. In particular:

- To what extent does the project respond to priority issues?
- To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid?
- Is the project team planning the most appropriate strategies?
- Are there any major risks or ‘killer assumptions’ that are currently not being taken into account?
- What is the value of the intervention in relation to WWF’s Global Conservation Programme, to national priorities, etc.?
- Do stakeholders care about the project and believe it makes sense?

4.2 Effectiveness

Assess the major achievements of the project to date in relation to its stated objectives and intended results. As far as possible this should be a systematic assessment of progress based on monitoring data for the planned Goal, Objectives and Strategic Activities. (Data already collected by the project’s monitoring and reporting systems should provide much of the basic information).

- Focus on the higher level results.
- Assess what has been achieved, the likelihood of future achievements, and the significance/strategic importance of the achievements
- Refer to quantitative assessments as far as possible
- Include also qualitative evidence e.g. opinions on the project’s effectiveness based on impressions and interviews with target groups, partners, government, etc.

Describe any major failures of the project to date, explaining why they have occurred.

Describe any unforeseen impacts (whether positive or negative).

Identify any exceptional experiences that should be highlighted e.g. case-studies, stories, best practice

4.3 Efficiency of Planning and Implementation

Assess to what extent resources are being used economically to deliver the project.

Are plans being used, implemented and adapted as necessary? For example:

- Is the overall project action plan used and up to date?
- What % of activities in the workplan is being delivered?
- Is financial spend in line with plan?
- Is monitoring data being collected as planned, stored and used to inform future plans

Assess other programme management factors important for delivery, such as:

- Capacity gaps (these could be in the project team, other internal functions such as HR or Finance, or external organisations as appropriate).
- Working relationships within the team
- Working relationships with partners, stakeholders and donors
- Learning processes such as self-evaluation, coordination and exchange with related projects.
- Internal and external communication.

4.4 Impact

To what extent is the project contributing to a long-term positive effect on people and nature? How is WWF making a difference?

Normally this should assess to what extent the project is achieving its Vision and Goal. It can be combined with Section 4.2 Effectiveness if it makes sense to do so.

4.5 Potential for sustainability, replication and magnification

Assess the key factors affecting **sustainability** of the project, such as:

- What is the social and political environment/ acceptance of the project?
- Will the project contribute to lasting benefits? Which organisations could/ will ensure continuity of project activities in the project area?
- Is there evidence of organisations/partners/communities that have copied, upscaled or replicated project activities beyond the immediate project area. Is such replication or magnification likely?

Assess whether the programme be considered as delivering **value for money** for its present scope/ scale of impact (it is recognised this will be a somewhat subjective view)?

- What are the cost implications for scaling up impact?
- Are there savings that could be made without compromising delivery?

Assess and make recommendations on the key **strategic options** for the future of the project i.e. exit strategy, scale down, replication, scale-up, continuation, major modifications to strategy

- Comment on any existing plans
- Make recommendations in addition

5. Methodology

Provide specific suggestions for data collection methods to be used (e.g. field observations, interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, participatory methodologies, etc.). Note the possible geographic scope of the sampling and any cultural conditions that may affect the methodology. Lists of key informants and important background documents are attached as Annexes 2 and 3.

N.B. Direct observation is critical for gathering evidence and opinion. However for most WWF evaluations, the evaluation team will not collect primary data on populations, threats or socio-economic status. Therefore the precision of the evaluation results will depend to a large extent on the quality of the monitoring data already collected by the project.

6. Profile of the Evaluation Team.

Detail The specific skills or characteristics needed in the evaluator or evaluation team, e.g. technical knowledge, familiarity with the country / culture, language proficiency, evaluation experience, facilitation and interviewing skills, etc. Define the structure of the team, including roles and responsibilities.

7. Outputs and Deliverables

List of key deliverables and deadlines (e.g. workplan, briefings, draft report, final report). The required format for the evaluation report is attached as Annex 4.

8. Evaluation Timetable

A suggested timetable for the evaluation. To be realistic, a timetable must allocate adequate time for:

- Development of the evaluation design; finalization of the evaluation matrix; sampling strategy
- Development of research instruments (questionnaires, interview guidelines, etc.)
- Review of documentation
- International travel; domestic travel
- Field (or desk) research
- Data analysis (usually half the number of days of the research)
- Meeting with project staff and stakeholders on the initial findings and recommendations
- Preparation of the draft report

- Incorporation of comments and finalization of the evaluation report.

9. Cost

General allocations (not a detailed budget) of resources available for the evaluation (consultant fees, travel, subsistence allowance, etc.).

10. Logistical Support (normally provided by the implementing office).

Support to be provided to the evaluation team and by whom (provision of documentation, scheduling of interviews, local travel, arrangement of accommodation, access to office facilities, etc.).

Annex 1. Evaluation Matrix

The evaluation matrix is an important tool summarizing the evaluation design. First the key questions for the evaluation are defined. These then are broken down into specific research questions. Then for each specific research question, data sources are identified, together with data collection tools or methods appropriate for each data source. It may also be useful to specify indicators by which the specific questions will be evaluated.

Issues	Key Questions	Specific Research Questions	Data Sources	Methods / Tools	(Indicators)
Design					
Effectiveness					
Efficiency					
Impact					
Sustainability					
(other key issues as necessary)					

Annex 2. Key Informants

A list of individuals who should be consulted, together with their contact information and organizational affiliation. The list of individuals/ groups will normally include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Project Team members
- Implementing Partners

- Direct stakeholders such as local community groups, private sector, local and national government agencies. (It may be helpful to consult the original stakeholder analysis for the project).
- Donors
- Senior WWF staff in the implementing office, and perhaps WWF International

Specify also the locations to be visited.

Incorporate the information in the Evaluation Matrix, if that is helpful.

Annex 3. Documents to be Consulted

A list of important documents that the evaluators should read at the outset of the evaluation and before finalizing the evaluation design. This should be limited to the critical information that the evaluation team needs. Data sources and documents may include:

- WWF Standards for Project/ Programme Management
- Project proposal
- Action Plan (e.g. (atest) log frame/ Results Chains)
- (Latest) Annual work plans
- Monitoring data and analysis of that data
- (Latest full year) technical report
- Key outputs produced: research/ surveys conducted, Regulations and policies developed
- Partnership arrangements e.g. agreements of cooperation with local governments
- Newsletters and publicity information
- Output of any organizational learning initiatives
- Other assessments e.g. self-assessments, previous evaluations

Annex 4. Required Format for the Evaluation Report

Title Page, including project title and number, date of report, authors and their affiliations, WWF contact point for the evaluation, etc.

Executive Summary (1-4 pages):

- Brief project description and context
- Purpose and expected use of the evaluation
- Objectives of the evaluation
- Summary of the evaluation methodology
- Principle findings and conclusions, especially relating to project goals / targets
- Key recommendations
- Summary of lessons learned

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Main Report

- Purpose of the evaluation
- Audience for and use of the evaluation
- Objectives of the evaluation

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- Evaluation methodology, including: rationale for choice of methodology, data sources, methods for data collection and analysis, participatory techniques, ethical and equity considerations, major limitations of the methodology
 - Composition of the evaluation team, including any specific roles of team members
 - Project description, including: context, underlying rationale, stakeholders and beneficiaries, conceptual model, results chain or logical framework, and project monitoring system
 - Evaluation findings, documented by evidence:
 - Design: quality and relevance
 - Effectiveness (progress towards objectives and results); contributions of stakeholders; constraints or problems encountered
 - Efficiency of Planning and Implementation
 - Impact; progress towards Vision and Goals (often the impact on biodiversity and livelihoods)
 - Sustainability and replicability of project / programme impacts; capacity built; institutional and stakeholder issues
 - Conclusions: insights into the findings; reasons for successes and failures; innovations
 - Recommendations (based on evidence and insights)
 - Lessons learned with wider relevance and that can be generalized beyond the project

Annexes to the evaluation report:

- Terms of Reference for the evaluation
- Evaluation matrix
- Timetable
- List of individuals interviewed and of stakeholder groups and/or communities consulted
- List of supporting documentation reviewed
- Research instruments: questionnaire, interview guide(s), etc. as appropriate
- Project logical framework
- Specific monitoring data, as appropriate
- Summary tables of progress towards outputs, targets, goals – referring directly to the indicators established for these in the project logframe
- Short biographies of the evaluators.