How to manage an Evaluation and disseminate its Results

Monitoring & Evaluation Guidelines

WFP

United Nations World Food Programme
Office of Evaluation

How to manage an Evaluation and disseminate its Results

Overview

Introduction. The purpose of this module is to describe the steps and procedures required when managing an evaluation and disseminating its results.

Why is this Module important?

This module is for use after the evaluation team has been selected. It outlines the role and responsibilities of the evaluation manager prior to, during and after the evaluation mission. Following WFP evaluation procedures and standards, it outlines what should happen during the briefing of the evaluation team and the field mission. It explains what an aide-mémoire is and how it should be used at the feedback workshop in order to facilitate information sharing and learning. This module also provides guidance on how the feedback workshop can be arranged and how evaluation findings can be made useful to local and corporate stakeholders.

What does this Module aim to achieve?

This module has the following objectives:

- Describe the role and responsibilities of the evaluation manager prior to and during the evaluation.
- Explain what should happen during the initial briefing of the evaluation team and during the field mission.
- Describe what a feedback workshop and an aide-mémoire are and explain how the feedback workshop can positively influence the evaluation results.
- Explain the procedures related to the drafting and finalisation of an evaluation report and describe what the format for an evaluation report can look like.
- To explain what evaluation results can be used for and provide guidance on how this can be done.

What should be reviewed before starting?

- What is RBM Oriented M&E
- How to Plan an Evaluation
- How to design a Results-Oriented M&E Strategy for EMOPs and PRROs
- How to design a Results-Oriented M&E Strategy for Development Programmes

Section Titles and Content Headings

- **What are the Role and Responsibilities of the Evaluation Manager prior to and during the Evaluation**
  - Introduction
  - What are the Role and Responsibilities of the Evaluation Manager prior to and during the Evaluation
- **Managing the Briefing and the Field Mission**
  - Introduction
  - What happens during the Briefing and the Field Mission
- **The Aide-mémoire and the Feedback Workshop**

What are the Role and Responsibilities of the Evaluation Manager prior to and during the Evaluation

Introduction. The purpose of this section is to clarify the role and responsibilities of the evaluation manager prior to and during the evaluation.

What are the Role and Responsibilities of the Evaluation Manager prior to and during the Evaluation

Prior to the evaluation

Good preparation is key for a successful and useful evaluation. When the TOR has been finalised and the evaluation team has been selected, the evaluation manager should ensure that the following key tasks are carried out prior to the start of the evaluation mission:

- Decide early on whether it is appropriate and necessary to organise an initial briefing of the team leader with headquarter units or the regional office. For instance, it may be beneficial for a first-time team leader to be briefed on relevant policy issues at headquarters or the regional office. On the other hand, a team leader who is familiar with WFP policies could proceed directly to the country.
- Collect relevant background documents (operation progress reports, relevant government policies, evaluation reports, reports by other donors, food security briefs, the Consolidated Appeal Process [CAP], etc.) to be sent to the team prior to departure. Evaluation teams are usually allocated 3 to 5 days for the desk review of background documents depending on the nature, size and scope of the operation to be evaluated. The desk review should be done prior to the field mission.
- Tentatively organise the itinerary. Ensure that sufficient time is available for the team to talk to beneficiaries; ensure that the team will visit a representative sample of operation sites and will meet a good range of key informants. Arrangements should fit with stakeholders' availability. This might imply that meetings are scheduled for the evenings or coincide with a village or group event so as to minimise disruption. Last but not least, enough time must be provided to the team for internal discussion and work (e.g. a joint review of the TOR and work distribution; discussion of key findings, conclusions and recommendations; and preparation for the debriefing workshop).
- Inform key local stakeholders about the mission. When organising the itinerary, the key stakeholders to be interviewed should be well briefed on the purposes and work programme of the evaluation and should receive a copy or summary of the TOR.
- Make sure that the logistics (transport, meeting arrangements, etc.) are set up in advance of the team's arrival.
- Assign local staff or recruit interpreters to accompany the team to the field. Ideally, each team member should be paired with someone who speaks the local language and can act as a translator.
- Ensure that there is broad staff availability at the country office for the half-day pre-mission briefing session and that staff spend time with the team, as required.
- Organise the evaluation wrap-up well in advance, ensuring – where possible – that a feedback workshop is arranged and that a good range of stakeholders will attend, including the government if possible.

During the evaluation

- Negotiate and agree to modifications of the TOR and itinerary, if necessary.
- Meet regularly with the team to ensure that the work is on track.
- Assess the team and team leader's performances and, if necessary, take action.
- Facilitate the work of the evaluation team.
- Ensure that the team spends appropriate time with key staff.
- Act as a link between the team and the various agencies involved.
- Arrange and facilitate the necessary authorisations and logistics for fieldwork.
- If required, provide advice to the team on WFP policy issues.
- Provide other information, but do not seek to manipulate the opinion of the team.
- Identify additional key informants, when necessary.
- Ensure that the team communicates regularly with country office staff. Evaluations are an excellent learning opportunity, and evaluation managers and country office staff should be in regular touch with the team. The evaluation manager in a country office is usually not a full team member, but should plan to accompany the team to the field, time permitting.
- Facilitate the discussion of evaluation findings among stakeholders.

Managing the Briefing and the Field Mission

Introduction. This section explains what should happen during the initial briefing of the evaluation team and during the field mission. It describes key issues that the evaluation manager must ensure are taken into account once the team has come together.

What happens during the Briefing and the Field Mission

Stage 1: Assigning Roles and Responsibilities

Since the initial briefing in the country is typically the first time that the evaluation team meets, enough time should be provided for the team members to meet each other, review the TOR and agree the tasks for each team member. The team leader must ensure that all aspects of the TOR are covered according to each team member's experience and knowledge. The evaluation manager should ascertain that this has been done, and that team members understand precisely what is required of them.

Stage 2: Revision of the TOR

At this time, or at the latest during the initial briefing days, the TOR may be modified by the entire team. Any later changes to the TOR must be agreed by the evaluation manager.

It is important that both the team and the evaluation manager reach agreement on the evaluation's scope, objectives, questions and key outputs. The team leader must develop further the method outlined in the TOR and present a short method and issues paper to the evaluation manager prior to the start of the mission.

The evaluation methods outline should contain:

- Proposed method(s) for the evaluation;
- Proposed distribution of responsibilities to team members (to be finalised during briefing);
- Proposed key informants (key agencies and partners to be visited – the country office should also contribute to this);
- An indicative time schedule for mission activities;
- Criteria for a representative selection of areas to be visited (based on this, the county office would propose project areas and types to visit).

Once the evaluation manager has agreed to the proposed data collection methods, the evaluation itinerary will need to be reviewed and adapted. For instance, if the methods require that 1 team member spends his or her entire time undertaking rapid rural appraisal exercises in a number of sample communities, separate from the rest of the team, this must be reflected in the TOR and arranged for.

If the project design is not based on a logical framework approach, it may be advisable for the evaluation manager to include, as an output in the TOR, the preparation of a logical framework by the team leader, prior to the mission. This presents a starting point for the discussion and helps the team to establish the underlying hypothesis.

Stage 3: Workshop(s) for Country Office Staff and the Evaluation Team

It is recommended that the mission start with a half-day briefing workshop for country office staff. During this session the team can clarify and check the purpose, scope and key issues of the evaluation, who the key informants for the issues are and the credibility of the logical framework. A number of frequent short feedback sessions may be planned throughout the mission in order to prevent later surprises.

Stage 4: The field Mission

Typically, the mission spends the first few days in the capital, interviewing key stakeholders and informants located there, such as WFP staff, government, donors, United Nations agencies and NGOs. If necessary, some of these meetings can also be scheduled for the last week of the mission.

During the field mission, the team leader is responsible for the day-to-day management of the evaluation, while the country office provides the necessary support to ensure that the team is able to complete its itinerary.

Administrative records are likely to be the first source of data consulted by an evaluation team, and should be compiled by the implementing agency in advance of the arrival of the team. Situation reports (SITREPs), Food Availability Status Reports (FASREPs), Country Office Reports (COR) and other relevant progress reports enable the team to build up a picture of events as they evolve. Design documents, Memoranda and Letters of Understanding, operation plans and other such documents provide the framework for analysing objectives, mandates and the fulfilment of responsibilities. Minutes of meetings provide data on what decisions have been made, when and on what basis.

The team should meet an adequate and representative sample of beneficiaries and stakeholders. Avoid the mistake of trying to visit too many sites at the cost of not allowing the team enough time in each site to interview and apply the various evaluation methods. Another option is to visit the same site twice for confirmation, more in-depth contact and analysis (e.g. developing an evaluation case study).

During the mission, the participation of country office staff and government partners as observers is encouraged, as this provides ample opportunity for learning. However, care should be taken to avoid arriving in the field, and in particular in communities, with a team that is too big. Teams and observers that have more than 5 members should consider splitting up during community visits or visiting separate communities. Smaller teams should also split up at times, as this allows more in-depth information gathering and independent probing by the team.

When interviewing agency staff, it is worth remembering that personnel, in particular those working in EMOPs, often have a high degree of involvement and engagement in their work, and that they have tried their best in difficult circumstances. Interviews should therefore be conducted in the spirit of shared learning, with acknowledgement of the need to understand why mistakes may have occurred, rather than a judgemental approach.

Stage 5: Special issues during Missions in EMOP or post-EMOP Settings

If the evaluation is planned in an emergency or post-emergency setting, the team should be fully briefed on the following issues (where relevant):

- Restricted access – evaluators may find their access to people and places severely constrained (by roadblocks, attacks on aid convoys, damaged infrastructure, etc.). The evaluation teams should take account of these constraints in their assessment and planned activities.
- Human rights abuses – the population being assisted (particularly women and children) may be subject to a range of abuses. The evaluation should consider the security situation and the protection needs of the affected population, i.e. whether the operation has taken such issues sufficiently into account.
- Psycho-social trauma – the affected populations may have experienced severe trauma, much more than might be apparent to an outsider. Care must be taken to empathise with people's experiences, whatever group (government, rebel, civilian, men, women, etc.) they belong to, and the subject matter must be dealt with in a sensitive manner.
- Objectivity – conflict and tension may lead to such intensity of feeling and such polarisation of views among different affected groups that the search for "truth" may never be successful. The veracity of information can never be taken for granted, and triangulation is a vital

principle in data collection and analysis.

The Aide-mémoire and the Feedback Workshop

Introduction. This section describes what a feedback workshop and an aide-mémoire are. It highlights the importance of both, and explains how the feedback workshop can positively influence the evaluation results.

The Aide-mémoire and the Feedback Workshop

On return from the field, the team should have at least 1 additional week in the country. During this week, the team members may need to interview additional key informants, undertake additional data review and analysis, meet to discuss the findings and implications of the field visit and start writing these up. In addition, they should produce an aide-mémoire and prepare a feedback workshop.

The vehicle for sharing the tentative conclusions and recommendations at the feedback workshop is the aide-mémoire. An aide-mémoire is a maximum of 5 pages long and contains the key findings, conclusions and recommendations of the mission. It is usually drafted by the team leader, with inputs from team members.

At the feedback workshop, the aide-mémoire should be discussed with all the stakeholders. The workshop is important for the evaluation results because it is an opportunity for both the team and the workshop participants to gain new insights about the operation evaluated. Stakeholders should therefore be encouraged to participate actively in this knowledge-sharing event. In addition, their reactions and comments should be used by the evaluation team to assess, and possibly revise, the evaluation's findings.

The following are the advantages of a workshop:

- It brings together a reflective forum at which to review key components of the operation or programme being evaluated and to learn from this exercise.
- It may facilitate stakeholder ownership and acceptance of the evaluation findings and recommendations.
- It may allow the evaluation team to work out recommendations and identify lessons, jointly with stakeholders.

The country office is responsible for logistical arrangements, while the team leader (in consultation with the country office) is responsible for the workshop design and the preparation of necessary materials. If funding is available, the workshop may use the services of a skilled external facilitator.

An Example of who should attend the Feedback Workshop and how It can be organised

Who should attend?	How to plan and prepare for the workshop
• Concerned working-level country office, government and IP staff, and beneficiaries. As appropriate, donors and United Nations agency representatives may also be invited. Ideally, the decision-makers for the operation should be present, but this is not always feasible when they are senior officials. In such cases, the operation decision-makers should be debriefed through a copy of the aide-mémoire and by technical staff who attend the feedback workshop.	• The date and venue for the workshop should be arranged well in advance in order to enable the maximum number of stakeholders to attend. Beneficiary representatives (women and men) should be invited and encouraged to consult with the people they represent, both before and after the workshop. As soon as they are available, an agenda, list of participants, the TOR and other relevant details should be communicated to all of those invited to attend. • It is advisable to use visualisation techniques, such as Visualisation in Project Planning (VIPP) cards, and moderation techniques, such as group exercises and buzz groups. This will require that the venue be of sufficient size with enough wall space to allow for "break-out" groups to undertake exercises and for group presentations to be posted on the wall for all participants to see. (As a general guide, 15 participants will require a room of at least 80 m2.) • Seating arrangements will have a great influence on the workshop. Formal seating with tables, name cards, microphones, etc. should be avoided as it is likely to constrain interaction, and may even intimidate participants who are unused to such meetings. • Visual aids, such as overhead slides, pre-formatted flip charts and handouts, will provide a focus both for the team's presentation and for discussions with participants. Care should be taken to ensure that all such materials are clearly written and will be readable by all the workshop participants. • If a large number of participants are expected, it may be advisable to employ an experienced facilitator to chair discussions and maximise participation. If the workshop is expected to last more than half a day, refreshments and a meal will be required.

An Example of what an Aide-mémoire can look like

Findings	**Recommendations**
1. **Strategy** ● Formulation and design The PRRO was developed without adequate involvement of staff or counterparts. This weakness has been compounded by the absence of a regular review process. The PRRO document lacks structure and does not provide a good basis for developing annual work plans or monitoring systems and formats. ● Core relief responsibilities 2. **Resettlement and self-reliance** ● IDPs ● Refugees 3. **Registration/verification** 4. **Needs assessments** 5. **Monitoring/reporting** ● Reporting 6. **Reaching the most food-insecure** ● Appropriateness of rations ● Performance in meeting targets 7. **Food for assets** 8. **School feeding** 9. **Meeting Commitments to Women** 10. **Environment** 11. **Management** 12. **Human resources and training** 13. **Effectiveness of logistics systems**	**1.** ● The process of developing PRRO strategies should begin in sub-offices with the conducting of location-specific problem analyses and strategy selections. This should be an open and transparent process involving IPs, district officials, and representatives of internally displaced persons and refugees. The final formulation of strategies should be a consultative process, bringing staff, IPs and national counterparts together for a facilitated workshop. ● The mission is informed that the regional bureau will, in future, assess the process adopted by country offices in formulating PRRO strategies before they are presented to the Executive Board, and the importance of doing so is underlined. ● .... ● ....

Preparing the Evaluation Report

Introduction. This section explains the procedures related to the drafting and finalisation of an evaluation report and illustrates what the format for an evaluation report can look like.

How to prepare the Evaluation Report

The team leader is responsible for collecting inputs from team members from which to prepare the final report. If funding is available, it is recommended that the team leader should remain in the country until he or she has finalised the report. This allows for additional feedback and consultation and ensures that the evaluation report is submitted on time.

The draft report is reviewed and commented on by concerned units and offices (various stakeholders within WFP), and the team leader makes the necessary modifications in response to these comments. Given the complexity of humanitarian assistance operations and the frequent inadequacy of documentation and data, it is vital – for reasons of credibility and competence – that the draft report is shared widely and that adequate time is allowed for the preparation, receipt and consideration of comments.

The evaluation manager may need to negotiate or mediate between the evaluation team and the key stakeholders, especially in the case of an evaluation report that provokes emotional or negative reactions.

Should the second draft not reflect the comments provided, the evaluation manager needs to decide whether the report can be accepted as it is or needs further review. The independent view of the evaluation team must be safeguarded. The team leader has the final say regarding what the evaluation's conclusions and recommendations are. However, if any of the key stakeholders voice strong disagreement such disagreement should be added to the evaluation report and, possibly, included as a management response from the country office.

Substantive issues are at the discretion of the team leader but should not contradict current WFP policy. In cases where this is unavoidable, the team's reason for not reflecting policy must be clearly stated.

When the final report is presented, the evaluation manager has a quality control function. The evaluation manager should review critically the contents, compliance with the terms of reference (TOR), relevance and accuracy of the report.

As a matter of principle, reports for all evaluations should include an executive summary. This summary should contain the main findings, recommendations and lessons of the mission. Evaluation reports that have been managed by the country office are not submitted to the Executive Board, but should be submitted to OEDE. The evaluation findings may also be disseminated as an advocacy tool. This can be done through press releases, press interviews and radio and television coverage.

An Example of an Evaluation Report Outline for an Emergency Operations (EMOP)

Executive summary

- Introduction
- Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation
- Methodology used

Historical background to the EMOP

Food security

Food-assisted operations

Repatriation operation (if applicable)

Internally displaced persons (if applicable)

Demobilization of soldiers (if applicable)

Vulnerable group assistance

- Supplementary food assistance
- Institutional feeding
- Training activities

FFW activities

- Participatory approach
- Improving living conditions

The gender component of the programme

Logistics

Security

Conclusions

Recommendations

Lessons

An Example of an Evaluation Report Outline for a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO)

Executive summary

- Introduction
- Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation
- Methodology used

Background to the PRRO

Overview of the WFP response

- Institutional arrangements
- Food management

- Local purchases
- The return of refugees and displaced persons
- Health and nutrition
- Gender issues
- Environmental impact
- Relations with the host population
- Repatriation process

WFP assistance to returnees

- Repatriation package
- Socio-economic conditions in the resettlement area
- Institutional aspects
- Gender issues
- Food purchases
- Distribution and logistics
- Overall developmental considerations

Conclusions

Recommendations

Lessons

An Example of an Evaluation Report Outline for a Country Programme (CP)

Executive summary

- Introduction
- Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation
- Methodology used

Rationale for WFP food aid

Overview of the CP

Assessment of the CP (with particular attention to the following issues: targeting, co-ordination, partnerships, appropriateness of food aid, meeting Commitments to Women targets, monitoring and accountability, effectiveness and efficiency)

Applying the Enabling Development policy

Conclusions

Recommendations (these can be put at the end of the report in a separate section, or can be highlighted as they occur throughout the text of the report)

Lessons (if applicable)

Using Results and learning from Evaluations

Introduction. This section explains what evaluation results can be used for and provides guidance on how this can be done.

The Potential of technically adequate and useful Evaluations

The greatest value of evaluations lies in their immediate use, application and, where appropriate, influence over future programmes and policies, locally as well as corporately. An evaluation can be used for:

- Improving management.
- Changing/modifying the existing operation strategy, including the outputs to be produced.
- Improving monitoring.
- Improving/modifying/adding partnerships and partner inputs.
- Assisting in decision-making -- whether or not to proceed.
- Providing inputs for policy-making.
- Providing guidance/advice/lessons for the design or redesign of the next phase of an operation.
- Providing information for advocacy and fund-raising.
- Updating information on the livelihoods of WFP beneficiaries.
- Providing independent assessment of the results being achieved.

Using and learning from Evaluation Results

In the past, the use of evaluation results has been criticized because findings have not been turned into action and evaluation reports have simply been shelved.

To ensure that this does not happen, evaluation results should be disseminated widely to all concerned stakeholders, immediately after the evaluation.

As well as circulating the report, it is very effective to hold discussion groups, workshops or even retreats at which to discuss the findings and implications of an evaluation. Such events can provide an opportunity to discuss the design of the next phase of an operation.

If evaluations are to serve their purpose, decisions must be made about which recommendations to act on, who should implement those actions and when the actions should be taken. To enhance the usefulness of evaluations, a recommendation tracking matrix (RTM) has been developed by WFP's Office of Evaluation (OEDE).

The RTM mechanism allows evaluation stakeholders to track the implementation of evaluation recommendations and provides management with an opportunity to reflect critically on those recommendations. Although the RTM has been developed as a tool for the Executive Board, country offices are encouraged to use it for their own evaluations.

While learning can usually be generated from the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation, it may help to go one step beyond and identify lessons that can be learned. In their simplest form, lessons enable us to avoid reinventing the wheel or constantly falling into the same traps. A lesson differs from a finding or a recommendation in that it is applicable to a generic situation rather than to a specific circumstance.

An Example of an Recommendation Tracking Matrix and how It can be used

The RTM requires a precise management response to evaluation recommendations.

When the evaluation report has been finalised, the evaluation manager should transfer its recommendations to the RTM and identify the unit responsible for responding to and taking action on each recommendation. For accountability reasons, it is important that the responsible unit is identified as specifically as possible (at least by unit, and preferably by sub-unit, e.g. country office finance unit). The momentum of the evaluation should be maintained by circulating the RTM immediately for management responses and planned follow-up action.

Evaluation recommendation (January 2000)	**Management response**	**Action officer/unit**	**Review of action taken (September 2000)**
1. Increase the involvement of **NGOs** in country X's **CP** design and implementation	This is agreed to be a weak point of the current **CP**; prior to the preparation of the next **CP**, the country office will identify ways of ensuring greater involvement of **NGOs**; a plan of action will be included in the upcoming **CSO**	Country Office Programme Unit	As per the **CSO**, the country office organises a series of workshops to ensure the involvement of interested/relevant parties (including **NGOs**) in the design of the **CP**
2.			
etc...			
CP = Country Programme **CSO** = Country Strategy Outline **NGO** = non-governmental organization			

An Example of how Evaluation Findings can be turned into Lessons

It is important to note that, at the operational level, the most useful outcome of the evaluation will be its recommendations. The learning, or lesson, that can be drawn from findings and recommendations is most useful if applied to future situations and shared with others (i.e. inform policy-makers, apply to project design elsewhere). Evaluators and evaluation stakeholders are therefore encouraged to identify lessons, as well as recommendations, that may have a wider application in WFP and to identify the appropriate end-users of such learning (e.g. relevant technical or logistical units at headquarters). End-users may also be found at the national level – in particular if the lesson identified has a bearing on national policy-making or the work of other donors and agencies.

Learning output	Definition	Application	Example
Finding	A factual statement	Situation-specific	No training on gender issues has been provided; only 10% of FFW has gone to female beneficiaries
Conclusion	A synthesis of findings	Derived from a specific situation, but may also be applicable to a class of situations	Gender concerns have not been taken into account throughout the execution of the operation
Recommendation	A prescriptive statement	Prescribed for a specific situation, but may also be applicable to a class of situations	Training on gender issues should be provided to all WFP and IP partner staff
Lesson	An instructive generalisation based on a learning experience	Generic – not situation-specific if applied corporately	Unless staff and IPs are sensitised and trained on gender concerns, an operation will not address gender concerns and equal and fair access to WFP resources appropriately
FFW = food for work **IP** = implementing partner			

Module Summary

What has been covered in this module?

The role and responsibilities of the evaluation manager prior to, during and after the evaluation mission were covered in this module, reflecting WFP's policy on evaluation. The module explained what should happen during the briefing of the evaluation team and the field mission. It also described the function and usefulness of the feedback workshop and the aide-mémoire and their importance for the evaluation results, and it provided guidance on what an aide-mémoire can look like, as well as on how a workshop can be arranged. How evaluation findings can be made useful to key local, as well as corporate, stakeholders was also explained.

What additional resources are available?

For further information the following modules and resources might be useful:

- How to plan a Baseline Study
- Choosing Methods and Tools for Data Collection
- Going to the Field to collect Monitoring and Evaluation Data
- How to consolidate, process and analyse Qualitative and Quantitative Data
- Reporting on M&E Data and Information for EMOPs and PRROs
- Reporting on M&E Data and Information for Development Programmes
- How to plan and undertake a Self-evaluation
- How to design a Results-Oriented M&E Strategy for EMOPs and PRROs
- How to design a Results-Oriented M&E Strategy for Development Programmes
- How to Plan an Evaluation
- WFP Participation Tool Kit

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