USAID Evaluation Report Requirements

A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 201

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As noted in **ADS 201.3.6.9** and **ADS 201mab**, USAID evaluations must result in an evaluation report that includes all of the relevant required elements specified in this Mandatory Reference. These requirements apply to both internal and external USAID evaluation reports.

As noted in **ADS 201mab**, if the evaluation is conducted by an external party, the drafter of the Statement of Work (SOW) must not reference this Mandatory Reference, but must list in the SOW itself, all of the required elements of an evaluation report from this Mandatory Reference that apply to the final evaluation report deliverable.

Unless stated otherwise, USAID Operating Units (OUs) must ensure that evaluation reports:

1. Identify the evaluation type in the title as either an impact or performance evaluation.

2. State the commissioning OU as well as the purpose of, audience for, and anticipated use(s) of the evaluation.

3. Include an abstract of no more than 500 words briefly describing the evaluation questions, interventions evaluated, methods, and key findings. The abstract should appear on its own page immediately after the evaluation report cover.

4. Include an Executive Summary of two to five pages in length that summarizes key points:

    - Evaluation purpose and utilization;
    - Evaluation questions;
    - Intervention(s) being evaluated;
    - Evaluation methods; and
    - Findings, conclusions, and recommendations (if applicable).

5. State the evaluation questions.

6. Describe what interventions (e.g. a strategy, intermediate result(s), project, activity, or intervention(s)) within an activity is being evaluated; timeline showing dates of implementation; major events impacting implementation intervention(s) being evaluated; award numbers, award dates, funding levels; and implementing partners.

7. Provide brief background information on the interventions evaluated. This should include country and/or sector context; the specific problem or opportunity the

intervention addresses; and, where available, the development hypothesis, theory of change, or simply how the intervention addresses the problem.

8. Identify existing and relevant strategy, project intervention(s), intermediate result(s) or activity documents or performance information sources that were used, including monitoring data.

9. For all evaluation reports, describe the evaluation method(s) for data collection and analysis including sampling strategy, number of days of fieldwork, and evaluation team composition.

For *impact evaluation* reports, also:

- Require that the report explore why the evaluation did nor did not find an impact on the intended results. Among other factors, the response should consider factors related to (a) implementation fidelity and quality and (b) methodological limitations (e.g., underpowered, measurement error, confounding effects, non-compliance with assignment, spillovers, study attrition). This can be phrased as a separate evaluation question or a paragraph requiring that the evaluation explore reasons why an impact was or was not identified.

- Include a detailed description of the method of deriving the comparison (i.e., control) group. If a quasi-experimental method was used, it is required that the report provide an explanation of how the comparison group was formed and the data sources used to identify the comparison group of respondents (e.g., government administrative data list or census or evaluator conducted household survey). If details have already been provided in a previous report, it is sufficient to provide a link to that report or provide the details in an annex.

- Include a statistical balance table showing how comparable the comparison group is to the treatment group on key observable variables. A balance table provides a demonstration of a "credible and rigorously defined counterfactual" as required by ADS 201.3.6.4. If details have already been provided in a previous report, it is sufficient to provide a link to that report or provide the details in an annex.

- Include statistical output tables showing the difference in the effect size between treatment and control groups with standard errors reported. If details have already been provided in a previous report, it is sufficient to provide a link to that report or provide the details in an annex. The body of the report should include a substantive interpretation of the magnitude of estimated effects for key variables or models in an easy-to-understand format.

- Include a statistical table showing the minimum detectable effect size of each of the main outcome variables analyzed. Other analysis can be included in an annex If details have already been provided in a previous report, it is sufficient to provide a link to that report or provide the details in an annex.

- Include a cost analysis of the intervention(s) being studied.

10. Describe strengths and limitations of the evaluation methodology and other factors which affected the evaluation quality.

11. Include evaluation findings and conclusions. If recommendations are included, separate them from findings and conclusions.

12. Address all evaluation questions in the SOW or document approval by USAID for not addressing an evaluation question.

13. Include the following annexes:

- Timeline showing dates of relevant data collection, baseline, and subsequent data collection, if applicable.

- Evaluation statement of work. If the SOW was revised over the course of the evaluation, the evaluation report should include the updated SOW as an annex which describes major changes and reasons for those changes including, where applicable, USAID approval not to address a specific evaluation question.The Contracting Officer's Representative of the evaluation must agree upon, in writing, all modifications to the SOW, whether technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology, or timeline.

- A description of evaluation methods and limitations (if not described in full in the main body of the evaluation report). If details have already been provided in a previous report, it is sufficient to provide a link to that report or provide the details in an annex.

- All data collection and analysis tools used, such as questionnaires, checklists, survey instruments, and discussion guides. Translation into English is at the discretion of the Mission.

- All sources of information—properly identified and listed. If necessary, expand on information listed under #8 above (existing and relevant strategy, project, or activity documents or performance information sources that were used, including monitoring data).

- Any statements of difference submitted regarding significant unresolved differences of opinion by funders, implementers, and/or members of the evaluation team.

- Signed disclosures of conflicts of interest from evaluation team members.

- Summary information about evaluation team members, including qualifications, experience, and role on the team.

14. Align with the **USAID Graphic Standards Manual and Partner Co-Branding Guide** and include enough information on the cover of the evaluation report so that a reader can immediately understand that it is an evaluation and what was evaluated. The evaluation report cover should:

- Include the word "Evaluation" at the top of the title block and center the report title underneath. The title should also include the word "evaluation."

- Include the following statement across the bottom of the cover page: *"This publication was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared independently by* [list authors and organizations involved in the preparation of the report]*."* For an internal evaluation team, use the following statement: *"This publication was produced at the request of* [USAID/Mission or OU] *and prepared by an internal evaluation team comprised of* [list authors and affiliation]."

- Feature one high-quality photograph representative of the strategy, project, activity, or intervention(s) being evaluated and include a brief caption on the inside front cover describing the image with photographer credit.

- State the month and year of report publication (e.g., when final and approved by USAID OU).

- State the individual authors of the report and identify the evaluation team leader.

15. Evaluation reports must also conform to USAID branding requirements (see **ADS 320, Branding and Marking**) and comply with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (see **Section508.gov**).

Please refer to ADS 540 for Agency requirements regarding the submission of evaluation reports to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC), and refer to ADS 579 for Agency requirements regarding the submission of evaluation data to the Development Data Library (DDL). Note that the Contracting/Agreement Officer should ensure that appropriate clauses and provisions are included in awards to require submission of reports and data to USAID repositories.

USAID OUs may use the recommended **USAID Evaluation Report template**.

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