What is the Scope of Work (SoW) checklist?

* This SoW checklist is a step-by-step guide to writing an SoW for commissioning final evaluations.
* SoWs are a crucial component in ensuring that evaluations answer the questions you need to ask about your program, comply with important rules and procedures and are well- planned, budgeted and executed.
* In order to write a strong SoW, it is important to include key information about the intervention, the questions you need answering and the expectations you have about the work you are commissioning. The SoW must be precise, comprehensive, well-structured and concise.
* By providing an easy-to-follow, step-by-step process, this checklist is designed to ensure that your SoW meets all of these objectives.

How to use this SoW checklist

* This SoW checklist is divided into five sections: Overview, Evaluation Details, Deliverables, Annex and Additional Comments.
* Within each section, the checklist suggests an order of different elements that need to be included, though you are free to choose an order that is most appropriate to your SoW.
* As you work through the checklist, track your progress by specifying ‘Yes’, ‘No’ or (where applicable) ‘Partial’ in the right-most column. Note: the checklist prompt (each subsection number) must be fully met for the user to enter ‘Yes’ as the status. When the result is “P ”(Partial), add a comment to explain what is missing.
* The checklist is designed to be flexible and caters to a range of programmatic needs. In the comments provided, you will sometimes see ‘either/or’ options, together with guidance to help you choose the best course of action.

Notes to consider

* The term ‘Scope of Work’ (SoW) - used in this document - is interchangeable with ‘Terms of Reference’ (ToR); both are narrative descriptions of a work requirement. In this instance, the work requirement is a final evaluation.
* “Evaluation team” refers to the team of evaluators that will carry out the evaluation.
* The term “Grant” can be substituted with “Contract”. “Program” can be substituted with "Project.”

List of acronyms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| DAP | Data Analysis Plan |
| FE | Final Evaluation |
| IPTT | Internal Performance Tracking Table |
| LOE | Level of Efforts |
| LOP | Life of Program |
| MC | Mercy Corps |
| PoC | Point of Contact |
| RF | Results Framework[[1]](#footnote-2) |
| RMD | Raw Mean Difference |
| ROI | Return on Investment |
| SoW | Scope of Work |
| SROI | Social Return on Investment |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |

**SECTION 1. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sub-section #** | **Checklist prompt (questions)** | **Status** |
| **1.1** | **At-a-glance Summary Information of the Program** | **Y/N/P** |
| 1.1.1 | SoW specifies program name (grant title) and acronym (if there is one)? |  |
| 1.1.2 | The sector(s) addressed by this program are easily identified in the SOW?  |  |
| 1.1.3 | SoW specifies donor(s), contract/grant agreement/ID number? |  |
| 1.1.4 | SoW specifies country/ies and specific location(s) within the country/ies where program is directly implemented? It should also (a) describe how that changed over the LOP (if it changed) or (b) state that this has not changed during the LOP. |  |
| 1.1.5 | SoW specifies original start/end date and dates of extension(s) if applicable?  |  |
| 1.1.6 | SoW specifies Mercy Corps’ point of contact (PoC) for the evaluation? |  |
| 1.1.7 | SoW lists sub-contractors and key partners? |  |
| 1.1.8 | SoW provides glossary of acronyms**/**abbreviations? |  |
| **1.2** | **Background Information** | **Y/N/P** |
| 1.2.1 | SoW includes brief description of Mercy Corps’ history working in the location(s)? |  |
| 1.2.2 | SoW includes the total estimated population size and description of the locations where the program is directly implemented. Also, it specifies locations outside where the program is directly implemented **if** the program expects to reach people indirectly there.  |  |
| 1.2.3 | SoW describes problem(s) that the program is addressing? |  |
| 1.2.4 | SoW describes assumptions and dependencies on which the program is based? |  |
| 1.2.5 | SoW clearly describes each of the different program’s direct participants (profile) and estimated population size of eligible, direct participants and number actually reached? |  |
| 1.2.6 | SoW contains image (preferred) or table displaying program’s Results Framework (RF)?  |  |
| 1.2.7 | SoW describes the program’s key interventions and key tools/approaches? |  |
| 1.2.8 | SoW describes internal indicators being tracked. Internal indicators can be performance indicators and/or context variables (or SOW includes a statement that no internal indicators are being tracked)? |  |
| 1.2.9 | SoW describes all major changes/shifts to the program intervention package, or states that there were no major changes/shifts at all?  |  |

 **2. EVALUATION DETAILS**

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| **Sub-section #** | **Checklist prompt (questions)** | **Status** |
| **2.1** | **Overall Purpose of the Evaluation** | **Y/N/P** |
| 2.1.1 | SoW describes intended audience(s) of the evaluation and a brief description of how each audience will use the results of the evaluation? |  |
| 2.1.2 | SoW states if a) Mercy Corps will be responsible for obtaining that institutional review board (IRB) and/or ethics committee approval or (b) states that consultant/firm must be responsible for that? |  |
| **2.2** | **Evaluation Objectives include: (identified within the SOW as ‘objectives’, ‘goals’ or ‘questions’)** | **Y/N/P** |
| 2.2.1 | Document the extent to which the program followed & completed approved work plans.  |  |
| 2.2.2 | Document if grant/contract-required deliverables were delivered in a timely manner. |  |
| 2.2.3 | Document any unexpected deliverables produced by the program |  |
| 2.2.4 | Document the extent to which Mercy Corps’ staff/personnel, staffing structure, management or procurement practices positively or negatively affected program implementation and spending. |  |
| 2.2.5 | Document the extent to which work plans were consistent with the logic model/RF and any evidence-based learning that the program used to develop or modify strategies, interventions and work plans. |  |
|  |  | **Y/N/P** |
| 2.2.6 | Document the extent to which gender equity & diversity was addressed through the program’s work plans, strategy and in the analysis of data used during implementation  |  |
| 2.2.7 | Document the extent to which localization was addressed in the program? |  |
| 2.2.8 | Document the extent to which the program’s performance targets were met (i.e. not been met, met or exceeded) grouped per the results framework and program interventions |  |
| 2.2.9 | Document if the assumptions were appropriate and if they were held (or not) throughout program duration. For each that did not hold, what was the effect on program implementation and outcomes? |  |
| 2.2.10 | Document any key contextual changes that have occurred and suggest how this has affected program implementation, outputs, and outcomes and by what magnitude (low, medium, high). |  |
| 2.2.11 | Document if there was any evidence (using quantitative or qualitative data) that the program’s outputs contributed to measured changes in outcome indicators |  |
| 2.2.12 | Document any unintended outcomes (positive or negative) of the program |  |
| 2.2.13 | Document the extent to which learning events were used for adaptive management (i.e. was evidence used to modify/improve the program’s interventions, strategy, targeting, or management.  |  |
| 2.2.14 | Document, to the extent possible, what changes should be made to the program’s interventions, strategy, targeting or management if you receive money to extend the program. |  |
| 2.2.15 | Identify which key interventions show signs of sustainability, and which do not  |  |
| 2.2.16 | If there are evaluation learning questions in the SOW - that are not already encompassed in 2.2.1-2.2.15 objectives in this checklist: (a) they do not duplicate these objectives and (b) they are feasible given the evaluation design and data available |  |
| 2.2.17 | The objectives (and learning questions if applicable) in the SOW are cross-referenced to data source(s) and relevant documents |  |
| **2.3** | **Methodology and Tools: (data collection and sampling, data analysis, data management and compliance)** | **Y/N/P** |
| 2.3.1 | SoW contains (a) a description and justification of the overall evaluation design or (b) states that consultant/firm must propose this) |  |
| 2.3.2 | SoW contains (a) a description and justification of the sampling method, for example; following the baseline sampling method and sharing it, or (b) states that the consultant/firm must propose this? |  |
| 2.3.3 | SoW contains (a) data collection methods and tools (including software) or (b) states that consultant/firm must propose this? |  |
| 2.3.4 | SoW contains (a) data analysis methods and tools (including software) or (b) states that consultant/firm must propose this? |  |
| 2.3.5 | SoW contains (a) data management methods and tools (including software) or (b) states that consultant/firm must propose this? |  |
| 2.3.6. | SoW lists compliance requirements (Mark “Na” unless hiring an external consultant/firm) |  |
| **2.4** | **Evaluation Team Composition** | **Y/N/P** |
| 2.4.1 | SoW provides details on evaluation team composition? |  |
| 2.4.2 | SoW specifies whether certain positions, implementing partners, national counterparts or project participants should be included in the evaluation team? |  |
| **2.5** | **Proposal Submission - mark “NA” to 2.5.1 - 2.5.4 if NOT using this SoW to solicit proposals (i.e. you are doing evaluation internally)**  | **Y/N/P** |
| 2.5.1 | SoW clearly explains how, where and when technical proposal is to be submitted? |  |
| 2.5.2 | SoW clearly explains how, where and when cost proposal is to be submitted? |  |
| 2.5.3 | SoW specifies payment terms and conditions? |  |
| 2.5.4 | SoW lists in detail Mercy Corps’ contributions to the evaluation? |  |

**3. DELIVERABLES**

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| **Sub-section #** | **Checklist prompt (questions)** | **Status** |
| **3.1** | **Inception Report (while having an inception period and report is a MEL best practice, we realize that not all of Mercy Corps final evaluations have this, in which case mark “Na”)** | **Y/N/P/NA** |
| 3.1.1 | SoW specifies an inception report with its’ required formatting (i.e. table of contents, language(s), min & max page count, etc.? |  |
| 3.1.2 | If draft inception reports are required, SoW specifies the number of draft report(s) required and details feedback/comments process?  |  |
| **3.2** | **Final Report** | **Y/N/P** |
| 3.2.1 | SoW specifies table of contents, language(s), min & max page account, and format requirements? |  |
| 3.2.2 | SoW specifies number of draft report(s) required and details feedback/comments process? |  |
| **3.3** | **Data Analysis Plan (DAP) & Datasets Requirements** | **Y/N/P** |
| 3.3.1 | SoW details formatting requirements for the DAP (such as min & max page count and language(s)), and (a) specifies feedback/comments process or (b) states that consultant/firm must propose these details? |  |
| 3.3.2 | SoW specifies the quantitative datasets expected to be delivered to Mercy Corps at the end of the contract: whether they should be cleaned and/or raw, type(s), file format & data security, protection and sharing rules? (or states that consultant/firm must propose these) |  |
| 3.3.3 | SoW specifies how qualitative data is to be delivered to Mercy Corps at the end of the contract? (or states that consultant/firm must propose these) |  |
| 3.3.4 | SoW provides a list of written/descriptive documentation to accompany the datasets? |  |
| **3.4** | **Timeline** | **Y/N/P/NA** |
| 3.4.1 | SoW specifies a) expected duration of evaluation implementation (start to finish) or (b) states that consultant/firm must propose appropriate timeline or provide revised timeline? |  |
| 3.4.2 | SoW states whether work can be done remotely or must be done on-site (or a mixture of the two) and which team members can work remotely or in-person (or a mixture of the two)? |  |
| 3.4.3 | SoW includes (a) the suggested work plan activities with timing (i.e. the timeline) listed under 3.4.4 or (b) requests that firm/consultant propose the (feasible) timing for the activities listed under 3.4.4.? |  |
| 3.4.4 | The SoW includes the following elementsin the timeline (with or without the timing? (see 3.4.3)  |  |
|  | **Kick-off meeting**  |  |
|  | Any other milestones/products between kick-off meeting and inception report are included? |  |
|  | **Inception Report delivery** |  |
|  | Evaluation team submits complete draft of inception report to Mercy Corps PoC |  |
|  | Mercy Corps PoC distributes inception report complete draft to all Mercy Corps reviewers (and all donor reviewers, if required), consolidates feedback and returns this to evaluation team |  |
|  | Evaluation team submits final inception report to Mercy Corps’ PoC having addressed all feedback |  |
|  | Any other milestones/products between inception report & Data Analysis Plan?  |  |
|  | **Data Analysis Plan (DAP) delivery** |  |
|  | Evaluation team submits complete draft of the DATA ANALYSIS PLAN (DAP) to Mercy Corps’ PoC |  |
|  | Mercy Corps’ PoC distributes DAP complete draft to ALL Mercy Corps reviewers (and donor reviewers if, required), consolidates feedback and returns this to evaluation team |  |
|  | Evaluation team submits FINAL DAP to Mercy Corps’ PoC having addressed consolidated all feedback |  |
|  | Any other milestones /products between DAP and draft evaluation report? |  |
|  | **Final Report delivery and presentation**  | **Y/N/P/NA** |
|  | Evaluation team submits complete first draft of final report to Mercy Corps’ PoC |  |
|  | Mercy Corps’ PoC distributes complete first ‘draft’ to ALL Mercy Corps reviewers, consolidates feedback consolidates feedback and returns this to evaluation team |  |
|  | Evaluation team submits complete ‘final draft’ of FE report to MC’s PoC after addressing feedback |  |
|  | Mercy Corps’ PoC distributes complete ‘final draft’ to all Mercy Corps reviewers (identical to draft reviewers) and to donor (if required), consolidates all feedback and returns this to evaluation team |  |
|  | Evaluation team submits ‘final report’ to MC’s PoC after addressing consolidated feedback |  |
|  | Evaluation team conducts a presentation of final evaluation results (if applicable) |  |
|  | **Datasets and documentation delivery** |  |
| All required datasets are submitted to Mercy Corps PoC |  |
| All required code books are submitted to Mercy Corps PoC |  |
| All syntax used for analytic datasets (using statistical software) are submitted to Mercy Corps PoC |  |

**4. ANNEX**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sub-section #** | **Checklist prompt (questions)** | **Status** |
| **4.1** | **Annex** | **Y/N/P/NA** |
| 4.1.1 | If the Results Framework in the main body of the SoW (specified in 1.2.6) is abbreviated, the SoW annex includes the full Results Framework?  |  |
| 4.1.2 | The SoW annex includes the Internal Performance Tracking Table (IPTT)? |  |
| 4.1.3 | All annexed documents are clearly listed, numbered and either included or linked in the annex?  |  |

**5. ADDITIONAL NOTES BY REVIEWER**

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1. At Mercy Corps, the Results Framework (RF) is used as a general term for logic models, logframes and even Theory of Change (ToC). The RF is preferred at Mercy Corps because it is less complex than a program’s ToC and it is how we label and organize our Indicator Performance Tracking Tables (IPTT). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)