

## Evaluation of Commission's external cooperation with partner countries through the organisations of the UN family

Concerning these criteria, the evaluation report is:	Unacceptable	Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent
<b>1. Meeting needs:</b> Does the evaluation adequately address the information needs of the commissioning body and fit the terms of reference?			<b>X</b>		
<b>2. Relevant scope:</b> Is the rationale of the policy examined and its set of outputs, results and outcomes/impacts examined fully, including both intended and unexpected policy interactions and consequences?				<b>X</b>	
<b>3. Defensible design:</b> Is the evaluation design appropriate and adequate to ensure that the full set of findings, along with methodological limitations, is made accessible for answering the main evaluation questions?			<b>X</b>		
<b>4. Reliable data:</b> To what extent are the primary and secondary data selected adequate? Are they sufficiently reliable for their intended use?			<b>X</b>		
<b>5. Sound analysis:</b> Is the quantitative and qualitative information appropriately and systematically analysed according to the state of the art so that evaluation questions are answered in a valid way?			<b>X</b>		
<b>6. Credible findings:</b> Do findings follow logically from, and are they justified by, the data analysis and interpretations based on carefully described assumptions and rationale?				<b>X</b>	
<b>7. Validity of the conclusions:</b> Does the report provide clear conclusions? Are conclusions based on credible findings?				<b>X</b>	
<b>8. Usefulness of the recommendations:</b> Are recommendations fair, unbiased by personal or stakeholders' views, and sufficiently detailed to be operationally applicable?				<b>X</b>	
<b>9. Clearly reported:</b> Does the report clearly describe the policy being evaluated, including its context and purpose, together with the procedures and findings of the evaluation, so that information provided can easily be understood?				<b>X</b>	
<b>The overall quality rating of the report is considered</b>				<b>X</b>	

## **Final Report**

### **Observations and Judgement**

**Taking into account the complexity of EC funds channelling through the UN bodies, the overall quality of the report is considered: Very Good**

Overall, the evaluation meets the requirements of the ToRs. It provides credible findings and well substantiated conclusions. Prioritized, operational and useful recommendations have been presented in order to provide guidance and to assist in decision-making procedures of EC services. Summarising, the quality criteria that reach a good mark are the accomplishment of the needs addressed, the defensible design, the reliable data and the sound analysis. Finally, the quality criteria that reach a very good mark are the relevance of the scope, the credibility of the findings, the validity of conclusions, the usefulness of recommendations and the clearness of the report.

- 1. Meeting needs: Good** The evaluation adequately addresses the information needs of the commissioning body and also responds to the ToRs and in particular to the evaluation questions in a comprehensive way. It has been able to evaluate an aid modality consisting of delivering aid through the UN agencies despite the existing challenges such as the accuracy of available information, the existing limited knowledge of the financial flows and the variety of sectors, countries and different UN bodies.
- 2. Relevant scope: Very Good** The evaluation was conceived primarily as a detailing analysis of the channeling of funds of EC to the UN bodies, covering all geographical regions of the Commission cooperation with partner countries except for countries under the mandate of DG Enlargement and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development countries and providing indications to redefinition of the general channeling framework, consolidation of cooperation and clarification of accountability, administrative and visibility issues. Moreover, identification and financial mapping of 1,688 contracts through both the Commission and UN databases clarified issues. The evaluation took an interest in interrelations with other EC policies, other donors' interventions and the partner governments' policies.
- 3. Defensible design: Good** The evaluation design is appropriate and adequate. The evaluation was carried out using the standard methodology of evaluation questions, judgement criteria and indicators and following the standard phasing of desk, field and final synthesis steps. Data and information has been collected from reliable sources and have been cross checked (e.g. interviews with ROM regional teams) – various evaluation tools have been used such as the analysis of legal documents, strategy documents, relevant international documentation, project documents, statistics, interviews both to headquarters' staff and delegation's staff as well as to partners, focus group, case study, project visits, ROM reports study, working groups at country level, and pyramidal focus groups at HQ level with EC and UN representatives. However one limitation of the evaluation is the restricted sample of case studies analysed to assess the impact in relation with the wide scope and diversity of operations characteristics this modality.
- 4. Reliable data: Good** The final report and its annexes, as well as the inventory note and its annex show that all the scattered information available in different data bases and

documents has been gathered and systematised. Efforts have been made to collect primary and secondary data (quantitative and qualitative). Limitations pertaining to reliability of data or to data collection tools (e.g. difficulties of retrieving information from Commission databases, not continuity of information among the staff dealing with the issues analysed) are made explicit.

5. **Sound analysis: Good** The report is well balanced in the sense that it is descriptive but also analytical. The analysis of quantitative and qualitative information is appropriately and systematically done (by a three dimensional iterative process – cross checking and comparing the information gathered from different documents during the desk phase; discussing and completing this information during interviews with stakeholders at HQ and country levels; submitting this information to, and testing it with, focus groups of key stakeholders from the EC and the UN at head quarter and at country level), so that the evaluation questions are answered in a valid way. Cause and effects links between the intervention and its consequences are explained thoroughly (e.g. the first evaluation question, where it seeks to reveal the explanatory factors behind the increase in channelled funds over the evaluation period, the fifth question, where it shows the scaling up development aid by the channelling of funds through the UN bodies.) Moreover, the final report systematically refers to the annexes which further develop the basis for the analysis and shows that the report is well-supported.
6. **Credible findings: Very Good** Overall results reflect a reasonable compromise between realities described by data and stated facts. Findings are presented on a very comprehensive way, through out the answers to the evaluation questions.

On the final report, consultants made an effort to demonstrate their findings and conclusions through tables and graphs showing the links between responses to the evaluation questions, judgement criteria and indicators.

Findings are presented with absence of analysis bias (internal validity) since there were many sources examined thoroughly e.g. interviews with the actors involved, focus groups, mapping and findings from the cases studied gave more generalised outcomes (external validity) e.g. visibility of EC interventions among partner countries, other donors interventions and Member States.

7. **Validity of the conclusions: Very Good** Conclusions are clustered in six groups (general channelling framework, added value of channelling for the Commission, for the UN, for the partner countries and conveyed by the Commission, results and impacts on channelling, efficiency of the aid delivery and administrative framework, visibility, and organisational structure), clearly expressed and linked to the findings presented in the previous chapter; expressed in a hierarchical order within each level of assessment. Conclusions provide the basis for the recommendations and each conclusion has a clear corresponding recommendation. (e.g. (a) The visibility of Commissions' interventions: The Commission did not loose visibility of its funding at partner country level vis-à-vis national authorities, EU Member States, other donors and local organisations. Based on that conclusion, it is recommended that EC should focus on the visibility of the partnership, rather than on elements of 'static visibility' at intervention level and visibility should be considered as part of a comprehensive communication strategy at general and country level.; (b) Organisational structure within the EC for providing interventions' information: There is no centralised structure or mechanism within the

Commission for gathering information at intervention or country level in such a way as to allow a comprehensive view of the UN interventions financed by the Commission. It is recommended that the existence within the Commission of an adequate organisational structure could provide a comprehensive view of the funds channelled through UN interventions)

- 8. Usefulness of the recommendations: Very Good** Recommendations are well structured, clearly expressed, useful and pragmatic. They are fair and unbiased. Recommendations provided the necessary strategic and operational guidance on how to best intervene in funding through the UN channel. They are detailed and targeted in order to be useful for EC services. Recommendations are realistic, useful and clearly defined. (e.g. (a) EC could enhance visibility of the partnership with UN bodies by considering visibility as a major tool of a communication strategy at general and country level; (b) EC should strengthen existing structures and create new user friendly information systems which provide decision makers with correct, easily retrieved and updated data on funds channelled through the UN bodies.)
- 9. Clearly reported: Very Good** The final report is presented in a reader-friendly way. The structure is good and the chapters follow logically on each other. It uses plenty of tables and graphs to present the information. Overall comprehensible answers were provided to each of the questions with a summary. The recommendation chapter is adequately presented linking back to the concluding chapter, and the same is done for the findings chapter. The executive summary reflects the overall report. References to the annexes are explicitly indicated. Finally, it is a well balanced report in what concerns the main report and the annexes.

I:\1. Evaluations - ON-GOING\UN Agencies\8. Seminar + Follow up\Quality Grid final report