Possible Structure and Notes for an Evaluation Terms of Reference

1. <u>Introduction</u>

This should succinctly give the background to the intervention to be evaluated, including:

- What the programme/project set out to do (in very broad terms)
- Core objectives and expected outcomes,
- Where it is being implemented,
- When it started,
- Who/how it is/was being implemented (including the involvement of other partners if applicable),

Other information that may be of importance to help an uninformed reader appreciate the programme/project to be evaluated. For example, any key events (including reviews and/or earlier evaluations) that have taken place since the programme/project started.

2. <u>The Purpose</u>

This should clearly state for whom the evaluation is being undertaken and how the resultant information will/might be used. (It is commonly the case that evaluations are undertaken to help inform future programming and/or decision-making with regard to the allocation of resources).

3. <u>The Scope</u>

This needs to be very clear and within reasonable boundaries. In the case of complex programmes, it is unlikely that everything can be answered. Consider defining an overarching issue for which you want an answer. You might also want to limit the evaluation to some period of time and/or a specific aspect or a specific theme.

Basically, what are the questions/issues for which you most need answers (taking account of the available budget and time for the evaluation)?

In addition, at what level is the evaluation to be focused? For examples, do you want an evaluation at the level of performance or the level of impact, or some other level?

Caution: It is easy to make the scope too broad and this causes difficulties down the road.

Having decided the scope, specify the evaluation criteria. Then associated with the evaluation criteria, name the key questions for which you would like answers. These questions can be refined later. You may also later choose to drop some questions and add others.

4. Methodology

In broad terms, briefly outline the envisioned elements of the methodology, though giving space for evaluators to propose alternatives. Keep in mind the available time and budget when considering a possible methodology. Also keep in mind the likelihood, or not, of certain types of information being available and/or the realism of being able to generate particular information.

5. Outputs

It is important to specify what precisely the evaluators are expected to produce by way of a report. A relatively short report with a good Executive Summary is desirable. Certain types of information can easily be moved to appendices.

6. Evaluation Team and Selection Criteria

The naming of the desired expertise helps you reflect upon the realism of what you are setting out to do.

7. Timeframe

Specify when it is expected that the evaluation will take place and the desired date for completion

8. Management Arrangements

It is good to state how the evaluation will be managed, conveying to the evaluators the person(s) to whom they will report.