

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Preparing for the Evaluation

GUIDELINES AND TOOLS
FOR PRE-EVALUATION PLANNING

Written by:

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Version 1.0



Since 1943, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has held the privilege of serving the poor and disadvantaged overseas. Without regard to race, creed, or nationality, CRS provides emergency relief in the wake of natural and man-made disasters. Through development projects in fields such as education, peace and justice, agriculture, microfinance, health and HIV/AIDS, CRS works to uphold human dignity and promote better standards of living. CRS also works throughout the United States to expand the knowledge and action of Catholics and others interested in issues of international peace and justice. Our programs and resources respond to the U.S. Bishops' call to live in solidarity – as one human family – across borders, over oceans, and through differences in language, culture and economic condition.

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Published in February 2006 by:

Catholic Relief Services
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Baltimore, MD 21201-3443
USA

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Washington, DC 20006
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Preparing for an Evaluation has been produced by CRS and the American Red Cross with financial support from Food For Peace grants: CRS Institutional Capacity Building grant (AFP-A-00-03-00015-00) and ARC Institutional Capacity Building Grant (AFP-A-00-00007-00). The views expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the US Agency for International Development or Food for Peace.

Preface

Monitoring and evaluation are core responsibilities of ARC and CRS program managers and help ensure quality in our programming. Preparing for an Evaluation is the first in a series of 10 M&E training and capacity building modules that ARC and CRS have agreed to collaborate on under their respective Institutional Capacity Building Grants. These modules are designed to respond to field-identified needs for specific guidance and tools that did not appear to be available in existing publications. Although examples in the modules focus on Title II programming, the guidance and tools provided have value beyond the food-security realm.

Our intention in writing Preparing for an Evaluation is to provide readers with a document that helps them get the most out of their program evaluation. It focuses on what need to be done before an evaluation to ensure that cost, confusion, and frustration is minimized, for both the field staff whose program is being evaluated and the external evaluator. It offers step by step guidance of the who, what, when, where, and how of preparing for an evaluation, with specific tools to organize information and logistics that have proved useful in a number of settings.

As you use Preparing for an Evaluation in your everyday work, you may have comments or suggestions for improving it. We are very happy to receive feedback that will inform future editions.

Please send any comments or suggestions for improving this edition of Preparing for an Evaluation via e-mail to Alice Willard at Willarda@usa.redcross.org and Guy Sharrock at Sharrock@crs.org.

Acknowledgements

Many of the core analytical concepts and tools in this module are based on the work of Constance McCorkle, the former Senior Technical Advisor on Monitoring and Evaluation for CRS. We wish to also thank Guy Sharrock (CRS/Baltimore), Velida Dzino (CRS/Bosnia), Stephen Nkoka and Jennifer Lentfer (CRS/Malawi), and Patricia McLaughlin (ARC/Washington) for reviewing drafts and/or providing information on key references that we have included. Finally, we would like to acknowledge the work of Tracy Hightower (ARC/Washington) who helped shepherd the document through its final stages.

Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARC	American National Red Cross
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DAP	Development Assistance Proposal
DIP	Detailed Implementation Plan
EM	Evaluation Management Team
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-government Organization
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
SOW	Scope of Work

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Executive Summary

Most donors are clear about the critical role of evaluation in result-based development programming. It is also clear about what elements (indicators, management, finance, annual reports, and resource requests) need to be considered in both a mid-term and final evaluation. Despite these clear expectations, many project administrators “shoot themselves in the foot” by being ill-prepared. Based on their extensive experience with the evaluation of PVO, bilateral, and multilateral funded projects, the co-authors outline a seven step process for pre-evaluation planning:

- Step 1: Evaluation manager identified, empowered, and mentored;
- Step 2: Donor and organizational guidance and expectations clarified for senior management and evaluation manager;
- Step 3: Evaluation scope of work and evaluation preparation work plan drafted;
- Step 4: Evaluation leader and team identified/contracted and evaluation SOW finalized;
- Step 5: Project documentation organized; and
- Step 6: Evaluation logistics planned.

Section One describes each of the seven pre-evaluation steps in terms of:

- Why the project needs the planning step,
- What needs to be produced during that planning step,
- Who will produce it, where, when, and
- How steps will be accomplished through specific activities.

Section Two estimates how much time key actors should allow for each step in an evaluation and presents four options for managing the activities. Useful references, tools, and checklists are grouped in Annexes I and II.

Purpose of the Module

The concept of evaluation is central to project planning and execution. Projects are either in a state of preparing to be evaluated or actually being evaluated for 20 to 25 percent of the project life cycle. Yet many project managers and technical staff do not have a clear idea of how to prepare for evaluations.

This module will clearly outline the steps involved in preparing for an evaluation for a development project or grant in a private voluntary organization. It will be useful to individuals who manage and those who execute evaluations of both donor and privately funded projects. Both evaluation managers and individuals responsible for carrying out evaluations (see Table 2) must accomplish certain steps to do their jobs. The seven-step pre-evaluation process outlined in this module will facilitate the evaluation process. Pre-evaluation steps (Table 1) must be put in place before the evaluation starts. Some pre-evaluation steps are a normal part of a good project management system. Others are specific to the evaluation and simply help plan and run an evaluation more smoothly. Although many pre-evaluation steps can be done after the evaluation starts, this is not

ideal because it (a) increases the duration of the evaluation and, therefore, increases costs; (b) decreases the speed with which an evaluation team can produce its final report; and (c) increases likelihood of tensions/frustrations building with key partners and between the project staff and evaluation team.

Table 1. Seven-Step pre-evaluation process

Steps	Activity	Outputs	
		General Management	Specific to evaluation
Step 1	Evaluation manager identified, empowered, and mentored	Capacity Building	
Step 2	Donor and organizational guidance and expectations clarified for senior management and evaluation manager	X	
Step 3	Evaluation scope of work (SOW) and evaluation preparation work plan drafted		X
Step 4	Evaluation leader and team identified/contracted and evaluation SOW finalized	Capacity Building	X
Step 5	Project documentation organized	X	
Step 6	Project information organized	X	
Step 7	Evaluation logistics planned		X

Table 2. Project Staff Involved in Pre-Evaluation Process

Staff	Definition	In-Country
1. Evaluation Management Team (EM)*	...	
Evaluation Manager	Internal person from country office (project or non-project related) designated to manage the evaluation	X
Evaluation Management Team	Evaluation manager and any internal staff that are officially co-opted to backstop management of the evaluation	X
2. Project Staff (Proj)		
Project Manager	Manager of the project being evaluated	X
Senior Project Technical Staff	Senior technical staff supporting the project being evaluated	Ag, Health, HIV/AIDS specialists, etc.
3. Management	Senior management at country level responsible for the project being evaluated	X
4. Headquarters and Regional Technical Advisors (HQReg)	Food for Peace, Child Survival, M&E Advisors, etc.	X

*The abbreviations in this table are used to identify this individual's participation in the GANTT Chart for Pre-evaluation Planning (Annex II, Tool I).

SECTION ONE: RECOMMENDED PRE-EVALUATION STEPS

1.0. Step 1: Internal evaluation leadership identified, empowered, and mentored

Why, What, Who, Where, and When?

One of the most common problems with PVO evaluations is the senior management's failure to delineate clear internal responsibility for managing the evaluation. This is thus the logical first step of any pre-evaluation process. Many programs wait until they are drafting the SOW and the evaluation work plan (Step 3) or even until organizing the project information (Step 6), to clearly establish internal leadership.

The result of Step 1 should be the formal designation of an in-country "evaluation manager" and a clear understanding of the roles for all individuals working on the project evaluation.

Evaluation managers are often (but not always) the project manager, the head of programming, or head of M&E for the PVO's country program. They need a clear understanding of the process—or a commitment to learning the process. The evaluation manager is responsible for ensuring that specific pre-evaluation products (core project documents, updated information on indicators) are presented in a timely manner. On a large project, the project manager may be assisted by one or two other persons who are assigned responsibility for key functions in the pre-evaluation and evaluation process.

How?

Working with regional and headquarters-based M&E specialists, senior country-level management must identify an in-country evaluation manager. In the process, the headquarters or regional M&E advisor (backstopped by the senior technical program advisor for this category of programming within the PVO) should identify any critical areas where the manager is weak. This enables the headquarters and regional teams to identify what types of mentoring and backstopping the manager may need. Once an evaluation manager is clearly designated, he or she becomes the engine driving all other steps.

2.0. Step 2: Donor and organizational guidance and expectations clarified for senior management and evaluation manager

Why, What, Who, Where, and When?

Even experienced evaluation managers (and PVO country representatives) need to be familiar with the donor's program-specific guidance for the projects being evaluated. If project staff members are not familiar with this guidance, they may design an evaluation (and an evaluation SOW) that overlooks a key agency requirement. To avoid this, Step 2 proposes:

- A **briefing book**¹ that organizes the donor guidance, examples of best practice, and internal guidance that evaluation managers, senior management at the country level, and the evaluation team used to design the evaluation; and
- An in-country **management debriefing** to review the briefing book and proposed pre-evaluation planning process.

How?

2.1. Generic donor guidance: As part of their standard guidance for proposal writing, most donors provide a brief explanation of what they expect in a mid-term or final evaluation as well as for routine M&E (see Annex I, A.1 and A.2). Some grant categories require a final quantitative survey that is separate and distinct from the final external evaluation.² Others expect the evaluators to facilitate some independent data collection to cross-check the project's M&E system but do not require an independent quantitative survey. An evaluation manager's best source of information on donors' expectations for an evaluation is the original guidance that was used to write the proposal.³ Since donors may change their requirements and expectations, this original guidance should be compared with the current guidance, which is often available on the donor's web site (see Annex I for examples). A wise evaluation manager should always double check with the donor -- either directly or indirectly through the headquarters or regional advisors who oversee programs within a PVO--to find out which elements are key and how to harmonize old and new requirements. Many donors require reviewing the SOW before the evaluation, which should be worked into the timeframe.

2.2. M&E plan in the approved proposal and any donor-approved revisions: Always review (and photocopy) the M&E plan in the approved project proposal and any formal amendment of the proposal. Be aware of all the commitments to M&E. If any major changes were approved, the evaluation manager should photocopy all correspondence concerning the request for and approval of these changes. If the project developed a separate M&E Plan⁴ or M&E manual for the entire project (or for specific sub-components, such as the baseline survey), the evaluation manager should include these in the guidance briefing book.

¹ The guidance briefing book's table of contents should be dated because it is a "living document" that is likely to evolve in the course of the evaluation. In addition, a title page helps identify the document when it is archived in the PVO's in-country library (after a final evaluation) or project documentation center (after a mid-term). Only one hard copy of the guidance book per evaluation is necessary. The team might also eventually want to prepare an electronic version that they archive on the program hard drive or distribute to the external team.

² Not all grants require independent surveys. Smaller development grants and emergency programs often expect the same team that conducts the evaluation to facilitate some sort of independent verification of key project impacts. This is not the case on other grants such as USAID Title II or Child Survival grants, which require independent surveys that feed into the external evaluation.

³ This guidance is usually filed once the proposal is submitted in case it is needed to respond to donor requests for revision before final approval.

⁴ Many granting agencies require recipients to submit a revised indicator tracking table once they have completed their baseline survey. Some projects submit a revised M&E plan as well.

2.3. Other donor-sanctioned guidance on specific evaluation activities: Many donor agencies post helpful guidance on key evaluation functions such as sampling and the preparation of evaluation SOWs. Some of these are available on the technical support websites for particular grant categories (Annex I). The headquarters and regional PVO offices can contribute to this guidance by developing simple bibliographies that identify key references for the major types of programming that they supervise.

2.4. Internal PVO guidance on evaluation and examples of format: Many PVO operations manuals discuss evaluation. Evaluation managers must check with their regional and headquarters M&E and technical advisors to ensure that they comply with any internal guidance. These manuals are highly useful to the external evaluators because they often explain the PVO's evaluation philosophy and culture.⁵ The final word on guidance should come from the donor in the case of externally funded projects and from the PVO in the case of internally funded projects.

It is also important at this stage to include examples of how the report should be organized into subsections that correspond with the donor and PVO-specific requirements for reporting. This detailed format (of subsections) can be spelled out in the scope of work and help project and non-PVO management as well as evaluation team members to harmonize their analysis and writeup from day one. If each consultant on the team follows this format (or any revisions of the format that the team agrees to) and standard pre-agreed upon writing styles (font size, subheading style, etc.) the team can avoid weeks of revisions in the final editing phase of the report.

2.5. Management debriefing and sensitization on agency guidance and evaluation: Activities 2.1-2.4 are usually executed by the evaluation manager (Table 2). Before moving on to Step 3, however, it is critical that senior management at country level (which oversees the project) be briefed on evaluation planning.⁶ Senior in-country management's commitment to the pre-evaluation is critical for creating a productive, non-threatening environment for the evaluation. It is equally critical for good follow up on the evaluation's recommendations. In-country management must be on board early, which requires that they be informed so they can participate and "own" the Scope of Work (developed in Step 3).

This management briefing should discuss the evaluation requirements, and the suggested timetable for moving through the other pre-evaluation steps (Steps 3-7). Given the critical importance of headquarters ensuring that the field staff has all the information that they need to prepare a solid scope of work, it is a good idea for senior in-country management to summarize the outcome of this meeting in a memo to the headquarters and regional staff who oversee the project and ask for comments.

⁵ See for example: J. Aubel. n.d. Participatory Program Evaluation Manual: Involving Program Stakeholders in the Evaluation Process. Baltimore: CRS.

⁶ This activity is similar to Phase I: Pre-planning Meetings (Evaluation Coordinating Group) in Aubel n.d.:1).

3.0. Step 3: Scope of work (SOW) and evaluation work plan drafted

Why, What, Who, Where, and When?

Writing the SOW (and getting it approved) is a time-consuming task that is frequently neglected and must be built into the pre-evaluation planning process. A great deal of guidance already exists on how to write an evaluation scope of work (SOW). Rather than regurgitate this information, this module simply provides the appropriate references for these resources (see 3.1 below).

The result of Step 3 should be a draft scope of work for the entire evaluation and an evaluation work plan that includes critical dates for producing (and distributing) the major pre-evaluation outputs (see GANTT chart, Tool 1 in Annex II).

A good scope of work includes:

- A brief overview of the program--its objectives, activities, and any anticipated delays in the execution of key activities;
- The objectives of the evaluation (as defined by the agency guidance identified in Step 2);
- Suggested technical expertise needed for the evaluation team, their individual responsibilities, and any physical constraints to consider in recruiting for these positions;⁷
- Major issues and questions the team should address;
- A list of key documents and information the country team will provide;
- A time table; and
- The format for the final report.

In the interest of efficiency, the evaluation manager usually prepares the first draft of the evaluation SOW and work plan. This draft should then be reviewed by entire project team and partners. The final revision will not occur until Step 4 since it requires input from the external evaluation team leader. The roles and responsibility matrix (Tool 1, Annex II) is a tool that helps projects identify the key persons who will be responsible for the major pre-evaluation activities.

Although the generic guidance that donors have developed to help projects with formulating evaluation scopes of work is useful, it is not without limitations. Often it is weak in offering guidance on issues such as partner capacity building and project management, identifying who will provide critical documents to the team and when, and in spelling out the role of national partners in data collection, analysis, and pre-evaluation preparation.

⁷ If field conditions are isolated and require overnight village stays under rigorous field conditions, it is useful to underscore this in the SOW so prospective evaluators anticipate the situation.

How?

3.1. Program-specific SOW guidance: Given the demonstrated importance of SOWs, many donor-funded programs have developed program-specific SOW guidance (see Bonnard 2002 for Title II food security).⁸ For more generic types of evaluations, it is useful to consult one of the standard management guides to evaluation.⁹ Agency-specific guidance on SOWs should be classified in the guidance briefing book described in Step 2.

3.2. Draft Scope of Work/terms of reference and evaluation work plan: Once the evaluation manager has the information provided in 2.1 and 2.2, he/she should be able to develop a draft SOW. The SOW should clearly identify the individuals responsible for providing the project documents and information described in Steps 5 and 6 and the timeline for completion of these documents and information.

One critical decision must be made at this stage is whether the PVO should identify someone from outside the organization to lead the evaluation or whether it should use someone “internal” who is not funded by the project or by another program. *Internal* evaluators are persons associated with the PVO executing the project. *External* evaluators are individuals or organizations not associated with the PVO or the project. If the decision is made to use an external consultant, another decision has to be made about whether that person should be hired from within the region or the country or from the donor country. Many factors need to be considered including (a) donor expectations, (b) the project team’s experience, and (c) the kind of expertise available within the region and in the country. Experience shows that there are definite pros and cons to both internal and external evaluators and that a “*well balanced combination*” of both internal and external consultants is usually ideal (Box 1).¹⁰ Whether the evaluation team is internal or external, the project team still needs to conduct the pre-evaluation planning or add that to the evaluation team leader’s defined responsibilities.

⁸ Although there is no equivalent of the Bonnard publication on either the Child Survival or the CORE websites, the Child Survival Website includes detailed information on survey design and evaluation (see Annex I, A.2).

⁹ See, for example, Gosling and Edwards (1996: 48-49); Gosling and Edwards (2001: 51-53); UNICEF (2000: 23-25, Box IV-2: Suggested Contents of the Terms of Reference) (www.unicef.org/resevalmande4r.htm); and Patton (1997).

¹⁰ See also, Mercy Corps 2004: 42-45.

Box 1. Advantages and disadvantages of “insiders” and “outsiders” in planning, monitoring, review, or evaluation

	Insiders	Outsiders
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Staff, managers and partners -Individuals and groups (e.g., mothers) affected by the work -Non-beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Staff from an agency affiliated with another program -External consultants with specialist expertise in technical field, or specialist in understanding of country or region
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Know the organization -Know the program -Understand organizational behavior and attitudes -Known to staff -Less threatening -Greater chance of adopting recommendations -Less expensive -Build internal planning, monitoring, evaluation capability -Contribute to program capacity building -Familiar with context -Know constraints -Trained in evaluation -Experienced in other evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Objective -No organizational bias -Fresh perspectives -Broad experience -More easily hired for longer periods of time -Can serve as an outside expert -Not part of power structure -Can bring in additional resources -Trained in evaluation -Experienced in other evaluations -Brings status to the evaluation
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Objectivity may be questioned -Organizational structure may constrain participation -Known to staff -Personal agenda may be questioned -May not accept the assumptions of the organization -Acceptability by outsiders (credibility) Donors may require an external evaluator -May have difficulty avoiding bias -Not dedicated solely to the evaluation task (other duties and responsibilities impinge) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -May not know organizations -May not know of constraints affecting recommendations -May be perceived as an adversary -Could be expensive -May need time-consuming contract negotiations -Follow up on recommendations not always there -Operating in an unfamiliar environment -May leave the program -May miss out on important insights
When is it useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Any rights-based program where rights holders have right to participate -Social development programs -Where an aim is to enable groups to develop organizational capacity -Where active participation of different groups is essential for success of the work -Where there is an opportunity to do so 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To gain a particular type of expertise when needed -To take a more objective view from someone who does not have vested interest in the program or organization -To gain a wider view of the project or program -To give a donor requested specific information about the program

Source: Gosling and Edwards 2003: 23, modified for this document to reflect internal PVO capacities.

3.3. SOW and work plan review with major actors to be involved in the evaluation: Once the draft SOW and evaluation work plan have been completed, the evaluation manager needs to facilitate review of these documents by the full project team and major partners (e.g., national PVO partners, government, donor representatives). For this participation to be informed, the meeting needs to start by reviewing the donor’s basic guidance, regulation and norms. A review of basic terms and concepts is also

useful.¹¹ Some manuals recommend using an “evaluation stakeholder analysis” (Annex II, Tool 11) to help orient the workshop discussions of information needs and the specific questions that they need to anticipate in the SOW. At this juncture, it is always important to review the differences between a mid-term and a final evaluation as well as basic concepts and terms such as impact and monitoring indicators. This review can also “minimize any anxieties about being ‘judged’ by an outsider” (Gosling and Edwards 1996: 21).

4.0. Step 4: Evaluation leader and team identified/contracted and evaluation SOW finalized

What, Why, Where, Who, and When?

The output of this step should be that the internal or external team leader, as described by the evaluation manager in the scope of work (with input from the program team), is actually hired or seconded¹² (if he/she is internal) and the evaluation SOW is finalized.¹³

Good team leaders should have demonstrated experience evaluating this type of project or experience with a similar type of project outside their own organization. This background is important to ensure that the evaluation meets donor expectations. They must also have the demonstrated ability to manage and synthesize the input and participation of the core evaluation team as well as various government, PVO partner, and donor teams in the evaluation. Each of these individuals or groups has a different goal or agenda for the mission. The team leader’s job is to structure the participation of these different individuals so that each core team member can satisfy some of their personal goals for participation while still working toward the common goal of a constructive evaluation. Good communication skills (both verbal and written) are essential.

The task of identifying the specific qualifications needed in the team leader and core evaluation team members is normally carried out during Step 3 as part of the development of the scope of work. The PVO’s headquarters and regional M&E specialists and senior in-country management should cooperate to choose the team leader. The evaluation checklist and evaluation stakeholder analysis are useful tools for orienting this preparation process (Annex II, Tools 11 and 12).

¹¹ Especially important are: the differences between a mid-term and final evaluation and between evaluation and monitoring. Other important concepts include the difference between process/monitoring and impact indicators (See Mercy Corps 2004: 45 and 19-22).

¹² The term identifies members of the evaluation team that are affiliated with the PVO but outside the project who are seconded (lent) to the evaluation team.

¹³ Gosling and Edwards 1996: 20-21; Mattesich 2003: 63.

How?

4.1. Identify a pool of suitable candidates: The process of identifying (and hiring, when candidates from outside the organization are involved) the team leader starts with networking to identify a pool of appropriate candidates for the team leader and technical specialists' positions. The best sources of information are usually headquarter and regional offices and other PVOs that execute similar projects in the same country.

Once candidates are identified, they should be sent the draft SOW and asked to submit their resumes. Ask for a writing sample at that time. If they don't provide a trusted source for a referral or reference, always verify their role on an assignment if they were not the lead author/team leader.

4.2. Choose the evaluation team leader: Many evaluation guides offer practical tips for interviewing candidates for the team leader position¹⁴ and for managing consultants.¹⁵ Interviewing is usually done by the headquarters or regional office for international external candidates and by the national PVO office for national candidates. It is important to be sensitive to whether the candidate is familiar with that particular category of project. If not, they must be dedicated to learning what they need to perform the task. A good team leader will be results-oriented and very concerned about management objectives and about how the evaluation results will be used.

Too much emphasis on methodology—in particular quantitative methodologies—may mean that the candidate would be better suited to design and execute an evaluation survey. Also, note the candidate's travel schedule and make sure he/she will have enough time to complete the assignment, especially writing the draft evaluation report and leaving it behind in-country for review prior to the evaluator's departure. Asking questions is a sign of interest and dedication to understanding the project's needs and donor requirements.

4.3. Finalize the evaluation SOW: Once the final candidate for the evaluation team leader position has been selected, the evaluation manager should work with the newly hired/seconded team leader to review and revise the draft scope of work that was prepared in Step 3. It is always wise to circulate this revised scope of work to any headquarters, regional, or national donor representatives, who will be interviewed and/or who will review the final product, before it is finalized. Be careful, however, before adding new questions or topics to the official scope of work that may unnecessarily complicate it. Never forget that donor staff may not be familiar with the original versus revised guidance, so it is always wise to attach it.

¹⁴ Many project evaluations include only one external evaluator who is usually the evaluation team leader. Although a large evaluation may include several external and internal consultants, the team leader's position is the most critical since he/she is responsible for writing the final report.

¹⁵ See Tool 8, "Using Consultants," Gosling and Edwards 2004: 262-273.

4.4. Finalize the SOW for other evaluation team members (optional) and hire/second other team members: Most evaluations use the main evaluation SOW as the basis for contracting the external evaluators or budgeting the time of any internal staff. Some team leaders like to develop short, one-page job outlines (e.g., an individual's SOW) for each and every internal and external position on the team, including any government or donor officials that participate. This is done to ensure that everyone is clear about their role and any written deliverables they must produce, in what format, and by what date. In the case of internal staff, this provides a formal mechanism for ensuring that senior managers shift their responsibilities so that they have sufficient time to complete their evaluation work properly--i.e. that their participation on the team is not just another add-on to their existing duties.

Both the team and the individual scopes of work should clearly express the requirement that members of the evaluation team report to the evaluation team leader, not to the evaluation manager or senior in-country management. Failure to clarify this chain of command up front can lead to confusion in the field and can destroy team synergy that would produce well-written and well-thought-out reports.

5.0. Step 5: Project documentation organized

Why, What, Who, Where, and When?

One of the best indicators of a project's "management process and efficiency" (two areas that most evaluations consider) is the project's published reports. Participants know this but usually do not realize the consequences of not organizing their project documents ahead of time. It is common for the evaluator to arrive and find a mound of project documents in the evaluation manager's office or to discover that documents have been boxed up and shipped to the team leader ahead of time. Evaluators only need to know that these materials exist. They do not need--nor do they want--to see (or read) every single document.

A good pre-evaluation process should therefore produce:

- A "core documentation briefing book" that includes a comprehensive project bibliography, and
- An organized system for project documentation (or explanation of the project documentation center if one already exists).

If a project documentation center (with clearly labeled boxes for specific categories of documents) doesn't exist, the pre-evaluation process is an excellent opportunity to create one. The technology for a basic documentation center is not complicated (e.g., magazine boxes), but should not be delegated to a secretary. This step requires a vested professional staff member to categorize the information effectively.

If documentation is well organized, the evaluation team can start work more quickly. If it is not organized, the evaluators will waste time determining what documents they need, and the project staff will also waste time trying to compile these documents.

How?

5.1. Project bibliography: The steps for building a solid bibliography (under the supervision of the project manager) are simple.

1. The project manager should work with the M&E specialist to develop a list of core project documents by category of document (Box 2).¹⁶
2. The project manager should ask all technical supervisors to provide a list of their technical reports, training manuals, and any other reports from major partners.

To streamline the process, provide each person who is responsible for a section of the bibliography with a standard bibliography format (author, year of publication, title, place of publication, publisher) (Tool 2, Annex II) and examples of actual bibliographic references using this format before they begin working on the bibliography. Emphasize that following this format, even if it seems to provide obvious information, will save time in the end.

One person on the team (usually the project coordinator) should be given the tasks of bibliography that is broken down by category (i.e., not simply alphabetized) and ensuring that everyone follows the standard bibliographic format.

5.2. Core documentation briefing books: The evaluation management team should produce a “core documentation briefing book” for each member of the evaluation team. This briefing book should include only the most important documents that the entire team needs to consider (e.g., the approved proposal, any official amendments to the proposal, annual reports, any relevant surveys or previous evaluation reports) (Box 2). One section should include a dated version of the project bibliography. Another section should be labeled “logistics and team SOW” and include a list of key telephone numbers, email addresses, and office addresses as well as the final scope of work.

6.0. Step 6: Project information organized

Why, What, Who, Where, and When?

Most projects have annual figures on key issues such as training and IEC outreach as well as multiple reports that describe different aspects of the project’s administration, financial systems, and key partnerships. An ambitious evaluator may try to bring this information together into simple summary tables that describe the evolution of the project’s organization and activities over time. However, it is not realistic to expect them to do this for each major subcomponent. First, they do not have the time. Second, staff may not be available to assist the process during the time that the consultant is available.

¹⁶ Sample categories might include: Project Proposal, Letters of Transfer and any Amendments; Annual, Quarterly, and Monthly reports (on the whole project); M&E Documents (Plans, Training manuals, etc.); Mid-term Surveys and Evaluation Reports; Final Surveys and Evaluation Reports; NGO and Donor Supervision Reports; Other Relevant Project Documents; Relevant Partner Reports/Documents.

Box 2. Pre-evaluation documentation organization for the final evaluation of the CRS/Malawi USAID Title II-funded Development Assistance Program (2004)

Project bibliography and documentation system (in numbered boxes and folders)

1. Preplanning Exercises
 - 1.1. *Vulnerability Mapping of Zones*
 - 1.2. *Commissioned Technical Background Papers*
2. CADECOM Strategic Planning Exercises and Capacity Assessments and Existing/Ongoing projects that the DAP followed and Memoranda of Understanding
3. RRA/PRA—Preplanning Studies
4. Regional and headquarters, and USAID Supervision/Trip Reports
5. Development Assistance Proposal (DAP), Review and Inception Exercises, and Transfer Authorizations (TAs)
6. Baseline Surveys
7. Monitoring and Evaluation Documents including Training Manuals
8. Mid-term and Final Evaluations including Final Evaluation Survey
9. CRS/CADECOM Joint Training Exercises for DSU and CADECOM Staff
10. CADECOM/CRS Partnership Collaboration Documents
11. Terms of Reference for and Minutes of the DAP Advisory Board Meetings
12. Key Technical Partners (MOUs, special reports on partnership [not documented in proceedings of partnership meetings in section 14 or 10])
13. USAID Strategy Papers for Malawi
14. Minutes of Quarterly Review Meetings with Major Partners
15. M&E Reports and Training Materials for the Project and the Country Programme
16. M&E Guidance (USAID Title II)
17. General Documents on CRS Activities in the Country
18. Quarterly Reports
19. Special Technical Reports (including surveys), Planning Documents, Surveys: Agriculture
20. Special Technical Reports (including surveys), Planning Documents, Surveys: M&E
21. Special Technical Reports (including surveys), Planning Documents: Safety Net
22. Special Technical Reports (including surveys), Planning Documents: Health

Core documentation briefing book

1. Table of Contents
2. DAP Approved Proposal
3. Baseline Survey Report
4. Annual Reports to USAID (Revised M&E plan was attached to the first Report)
5. Mid-term Evaluation Final Report
6. Mid-term Evaluation Recommendations Summary (separate from report)
7. Final Survey Report
8. Project Bibliography
9. Scope of Work for the Evaluation

A better strategy is to talk with the prospective evaluator about what types of summary information they need and to present it in a project activity briefing book.¹⁷ A project activity briefing book should include separate sections on (Box 2):

- Project administrative history and organization;
- Financial systems;

¹⁷ This model was developed by Africare over a five-year period based on its experience with the mid-term evaluations of its Title II food security programs in Mali, Uganda, Chad, and Niger and final evaluations in Niger, Burkina, and Uganda.

- Project monitoring and evaluation systems and indicator updates;
- The project's technical components;
- Community/activity matrices;
- Maps; and
- A table of contents identified by date completed.

How?

6.1. Project administrative history and organization:

6.1.a. Project chronology and history: A project chronology is a useful tool for helping project planners understand and explain the major factors that affected the project's evolution. It is especially useful if the management staffing has changed or if there have been major changes in the project organization (Tool 3, Annex II).

6.1.b. Staffing patterns and turnover: Evaluators must know when staff was hired for key positions and when they left. This can either be combined with the project chronology or presented in a separate table (Tool 3, Annex II).

6.1.c. Training: Most development projects spend a high percentage of their funds on training staff and beneficiaries. The evaluators need summary data on this funding, from the beginning of the project to the most recent expenses. Without this information, evaluators either waste a considerable amount of time trying to pull this data from annual reports or miss any real analysis of your inputs into training.

Care must be taken to describe the training for the different levels of major actors. Major actors include the PVO that is coordinating the project and the PVO national partners, which tend to execute most ARC and CRS-funded programs, and government partners at different levels (Tool 4, Annex II). Levels of staff that are trained among these actors include: high-level administrators and senior non-project staff that oversee the projects but do not bear direct responsibility for execution; managers and supervisors with direct responsibility for key activities; and extension staff and beneficiaries. Even the beneficiary categories can be broken down into traditional and group leaders and by gender and age, if these categories are relevant to the project.

Additional information that can be helpful in describing how participants are trained--i.e., training manuals and pre- or post-tests--should also be organized. A simple one-page description of where this information is located in the project files (or documentation center – created in Step 5) is always helpful.

6.1.d. Partner coordination and executive board meetings: Many projects pride themselves on their strong collaboration with national partners. However, these projects must document how they manage this collaboration, what types of collaboration are taking place, and what, if any, impact this collaboration has had on the partner's internal capacity. The project documentation center should include boxes or files that contain the hard copy of all meeting announcements or proceedings of partnership coordination and

executive board meetings. Summary tables for meetings that present the dates, agenda, and attendees from different partners are very useful (Tool 5, Annex II).

6.1.e. Institutional capacity- building: If one of the project’s goals is to build the institutional capacity of one or more national partner (as is often the case with ARC and CRS projects), the team members need to determine how they can document whether this type of capacity-building has taken place (Tool 6, Annex II). A good rule of thumb is to consider (a) what type of information is needed to answer this question; (b) how this information can be presented in a report; and (c) which institution has this information. If a national affiliate has this information, this agency needs to be brought on board in the SOW planning process so that its role in pre-evaluation data collection and analysis can be clearly described in the scope of work.

6.2. Financial systems and accounting: Even though an evaluation is not an audit, an evaluation is often asked to:

- Assess the efficiency of a project’s administrative and financial systems;
- Compare actual expenditure patterns with those in the project proposal; and
- Analyze the cost effectiveness of the program.¹⁸

This type of assessment is very different from a financial audit or an audit of the commodity management system, which is covered by internal audits and special USAID administrative supervision reports.

Teams should anticipate (and prepare as part of the pre-evaluation process):

- A one-page description of the project’s financial systems and how it operates;
- A table that describes the dates of any internal or external audit;
- A table that compares the actual expenditures with those identified in the proposal or any approved project amendment;
- A table that compares the different levels of expenditure—for example, how much was devoted to administrative support in the central coordinating unit, how much to administration in the decentralized project execution units, and how much to field training and execution; and
- A separate budget analysis (for each collaborating partner) if any key activities are executed through national partners.

6.3. Monitoring and evaluation systems: Most large-scale projects use standard indicators to monitor their progress. Typically, they will also include annual or mid-term and final (or life of activity) targets for each indicator. For this reason, the most critical outputs of any pre-evaluation exercise are these updates of the official indicators, along with information on how they are calculated.

6.3.a. Indicator update: Many donor-funded projects monitor their progress by providing the donor with information on a number of impact and process or monitoring

¹⁸ See Tool 4, “Cost-effectiveness analysis,” p. 235-261. See also Gosling and Edwards 2003 for useful tips on how to incorporate consideration of cost-effectiveness into project assessments.

indicators. If the project does not have pre-agreed indicators in its proposal, the evaluation management team can work with the evaluators to develop an appropriate list.¹⁹ In this situation, the project implementation team needs to develop a provisional list of indicators before the arrival of the evaluators. This information should be updated (for the project as a whole and for specific sites,²⁰ if relevant) in the form requested by the donor at least one month before the evaluators arrive to integrate their results into the technical activity updates (activity 6.4 below).

6.3.b. Indicator methodology update: During the process of updating the indicators, the M&E specialist should prepare a table that describes the actual (as opposed to the projected) methodologies for collecting and analyzing the data for the main project indicators (Tool 7, Annex II) and provides an explanation for any changes since the original proposal.

6.4. Technical sector/component updates: Each technical supervisor needs to provide a separate list of activities (including training activities) and investments that are designed to achieve specific intermediary results or targets. This subsection should include summary tables that describe the project activities to date for these sub-components. If this information is ready when the evaluation starts, the evaluator can concentrate on his/her own interviews and not lose time in routine data collection.

6.5. Village/community/activity matrices: Many communities receive more than one project intervention. An evaluation therefore needs some basis for determining exactly how many communities (or sub-communities) have been affected, and in what way. This same information provides the basis for an evaluator's choice of which sites to visit. One useful tool for categorizing interventions is a village matrix, which indicates which villages (vertical axis) received which activities (horizontal axis) (Annex II, Tool 8). A simple X can be used to note which communities benefited from which intervention. The same matrix can be used to note:

- The year a particular category of intervention started in that village (year must be noted by activity for each community); or
- The field agents' perceptions of how successful a particular intervention has been (A to C with A being highest).²¹

¹⁹ For guidance on how to do this, see Gosling and Edwards 2004: 222-234. Roche (1999: 43-44) for a discussion on indicator dilemma; i.e., the importance of "looking beyond predetermined indicators" in order to capture expected as well as unexpected results and the broader impact of a project on peoples' lives.

²⁰ Most M&E data can be disaggregated by site as well as by national PVO partner. Although the donor may not wish this disaggregated data to appear on the official indicator performance tracking table or logframe, it is useful to the evaluation. It is especially important because it allows the evaluator to determine if there are any major differences between sites or between partners.

²¹ This system was used to rank activities on the final evaluation of the CRS/Malawi Title II Development Assistance Program. The evaluators used this ranking to determine which villages they wanted to visit. This additional step of ranking enabled the evaluators to visit both successful and less successful interventions. The co-authors are divided about the utility of ranking the village matrices since this type of pre-evaluation ranking might prejudice the evaluators.

6.6. Maps: A good map showing the location of the project within the country is an important part of any evaluation because it situates the project for the donor. A second more detailed map is needed to show specific sites where the project intervenes. In most cases, the site maps that were included in the proposal are out of date or no longer relevant by the mid-term evaluation. All maps--plus any additional background maps that the evaluation management wants the team to consider--should be prepared well ahead of the evaluator's visit to avoid costly delays in commissioning new or redrawing old maps.

7.0. Step 7: Evaluation Logistics Planned

Why, What, Who, Where, and When?

Armies move on their stomachs (and in their cars) and so do evaluation teams. If logistics are poorly thought out and funded, even the best evaluation design fails. The result of the seventh, and final, evaluation step should be a detailed, clearly coordinated, logistics plan.

How?

7.1. Logistics plan: The output of the final pre-planning step of an evaluation requires detailed logistical planning. Critical pre-planning must:

- Negotiate preliminary dates and objectives of the site visits with local NGO, government, and village-level leaders,²² with finalization of the time and date one to two weeks before the evaluation team arrives at the project site;
- Identify dates when district level officials will be notified by the evaluators of the timeline for visits to specific villages;
- Develop a one-page announcement of the visit that includes an announcement of both the anticipated dates they will be at specific locations and the names of the individuals on the evaluation team (in the local language) that can be signed by a representative of the project's host ministry; and;
- Organize food, transportation, office space, computing and printing facilities, and lodging for the team.

7.2. Evaluation logistician identified: The evaluation manager, with backing from senior management at the country-level, should designate one person as the evaluation logistician. If the data collection and analysis are up-to-date, the logistician might be able to combine this function with another technical or M&E function on the evaluation management team. However, this dual role is difficult if the person is expected to participate actively in field interviews, analysis, and updating indicators.

²² For additional guidance on organizing project visits, see Tool 9, "Programme or Project Visits," Gosling and Edwards 2004: 274-280.

SECTION TWO: SCHEDULING DEMANDS AND OPTIONS

The GANTT chart described in Tool 1, Annex II shows the approximate sequence of tasks for all staff involved with a pre-evaluation. The associated timeline is an approximation. The actual time requirements to complete those tasks will vary based on whether or not an intensive or extensive pre-evaluation will take place.

1.0. Person days required to produce the pre-evaluation outputs

Estimates of the time needed for pre-evaluation tasks will vary from project to project. Moreover, the person days can be spread out over a longer period of time leading up to the evaluation. In our experience, the estimated person days (rounded off to the nearest half day) for pre-evaluation planning of a typical Title II program is as follows (Tool 1, Annex II):

- Fifteen person days for the internal **evaluation manager (EM²³);²⁴**
- Nineteen person days for **the project manager and senior project technical staff** (including the M&E specialist), estimated here at six persons working approximately 3.25 days each to update the indicators, documentation, and activities for the technical and administrative activities that they oversee;
- Four person days for the senior management at country level (**Mgt**) responsible for the project/program being evaluated (country representative and heading of programming); and
- Four person days for the regional and headquarters M&E and technical advisors (**HQReg**).

These estimates assume that the project monitoring and evaluation system works and that most project documents exist and are catalogued at the project site or coordination office. If a great deal of staff turnover has taken place or if project files are extremely incomplete for any reason, the amount of time needed to complete these tasks will increase. If the staff can dedicate time to this organization and planning in the course of routine work, the time can also correspondingly decrease. Make no mistake; however, this is a serious investment of staff time but one that has multiple uses for project management beyond the evaluation itself (see Table 2).

Once the evaluation team leader is identified and hired (Step 4), he/she should be involved in preplanning. The level of involvement can be increased or decreased depending on the presence/absence of internal leadership for the pre-evaluation process in-country. This involvement—and the team leader’s role in routine pre-evaluation organization—should be carefully spelled out in the scope of work before final contracting takes place.

²³ These abbreviations cross reference to the GANTT chart (Table II, Tool 1).

²⁴ Time budgeted is for one evaluation manager. Some of these functions could be delegated to other members of the evaluation team, should the project opt for a core three-person team.

2.0. Scheduling person days: an intensive vs. an extensive pre-evaluation

Option One: An intensive pre-planning week facilitated by the evaluation manager.

Once management does its homework (Steps 1-3), an evaluation manager, with long-term experience on the project being evaluated, can facilitate most of the other steps within a single week.

Option Two: An intensive pre-planning training exercise facilitated by the evaluation team leader or a member of the PVO's regional or headquarters staff.

If the team is inexperienced or the evaluation manager is new to the project, the evaluation manager might request that:

- The team leader help backstop Steps 5 and 6 of the pre-planning process as part of his/her activities as team leader; or
- A qualified person (with extensive experience in evaluation or that particular category of programming) facilitates all seven stages.

Option Two works well if it is used to build the capacity of the project evaluation manager/senior management at the country level to conduct this and future evaluations. Option Two does not work well if the project evaluation manager is bypassed and merely brought in to execute a scope of work that neither he/she nor the team fully understands nor owns.

Option Three: Two intensive pre-planning periods. A third option is to separate the preparation of Steps 1-4 from Steps 5-7 in order to jump start the hiring process or coordination with multiple partners or execution units. Option Three is usually the best model if a project is being executed through multiple partners since the different partners must (a) first understand the process and develop a core pre-evaluation process; then (b) create their own debriefing book for specific sites. If the partners/national affiliates are unfamiliar with the process, it is critical that someone from the main executing PVO (or the project coordination unit for a consortium) be tasked with facilitating (and harmonizing) the affiliates' preparation, as well as the preparation of the project coordinating unit. One of the most common problems is that the project coordination unit invests heavily in Steps 1-4 but fails to help the affiliates organize steps 5 and 6. Since most of the relevant information on activities and impacts is at the affiliate level, this often results in a situation in which the coordination unit is well organized but little or nothing is known about site-specific activities of the project except what is reported through official indicators.

Option Four: Mainstream pre-evaluation planning. A fourth option is to organize a concentrated pre-planning process for Steps 1-4 and to let project staff incorporate steps 5-7 as part of their normal activity. Although this sounds good in practice, it usually results in panic two to three days before the evaluators arrive.

3.0. Why can't pre-evaluation planning just be part of the evaluation?

It can. The problem is that when these two processes are combined, it slows down the final evaluation unless you build the process of producing the pre-evaluation outputs into the evaluation work plan.

In most cases it is a simple matter:

- Either pay up front (in terms of staff time) to produce the pre-evaluation products; or
- Pay later (in terms of staff time) to produce the pre-evaluation products during the evaluation exercise itself.

If you pay later, you tend to pay much more in terms of staff time and you also have to pay the consultants to supervise these efforts (Table 3). In addition, you run the risk of frustrating your partners who then have to scurry about looking for information while they are hosting the evaluators.

Table 3: Common Problems and Options for Solving Them

Step	Common problem	Options for Solving Them
Step One: Evaluation manager identified, empowered, and mentored,	Project and country PVO team is inexperienced in evaluation and/or recently hired	<p>Option 1: Identify an in-country evaluation manager and use headquarters and regional staff to mentor this individual in performance of key pre-evaluation tasks. Next time it will be easier!</p> <p>Option 2: Take advantage of the evaluation team leader's knowledge to mentor the evaluation manager via email and telephone before the team arrives.</p> <p>Option 3(if delayed until team arrives): The team leader must train the evaluation management team on-site, which typically delays the mission. The associated delays may frustrate partners and staff.</p>
	Team is late in designing final survey	<p>Option 1: Complete survey before evaluators arrive (if one is required) and allow enough time for preparing other information required by Steps 1-7 of pre-evaluation process as well.</p> <p>Option 2: Consider using extra national consultants and technical support from other field programs to speed up data analysis and collection and allow enough time for other pre-evaluation functions.</p> <p>Option 3 (if delayed until team arrives): Efforts to perform both tasks simultaneously typically result in a lower quality final or mid-term survey that does not adequately reflect the project's performance and insufficient pre-evaluation organization of Steps 5 and 6.</p>
Step Two: Donor guidance and expectations clarified	Country representative or evaluation manager thinks that he/she knows everything about evaluation without reviewing guidance and develops the evaluation	<p>Option 1: Headquarters or regional staff should require all projects to document the production of a guidance briefing book and pre-evaluation plan.</p> <p>Option 2 (if delayed until team arrives): Key areas are overlooked in the evaluation preparation of the project staff.</p>

Step	Common problem	Options for Solving Them
	SOW on his/her own with little input from staff	
	The project currently being executed bears little resemblance to the one in the proposal.	<p>Option 1: Provide clear explanations of why the strategy and activities were changed in the SOW (Step 3) and briefing book (Step 6) sections that are most relevant. Provide team with written correspondence in which donor representatives approve/acknowledge changes.</p> <p>Option 2 (if delayed until team arrives): The team spends the first two weeks trying to document why this occurred which leaves them little time for appreciating the project's achievements under the revised model.</p>
Step Three: Draft evaluation SOW and work plan prepared	Project coordination Unit (and field execution staff) does not understand the difference between a mid-term or final survey and the mid-term or final evaluation surveys.	<p>Option 1: Staff training in project evaluation and survey guidance (as part of Activity 3.4 in Step 3) is essential. The work plan for the evaluation (Activity 3.3 and 3.4) should be completely separate from the work plan for the survey.</p> <p>Option 2 (if delayed until team arrives): If staff understanding isn't developed, they will tend to focus on the survey rather than the other types of pre-evaluation planning, especially Steps 5 and 6.</p>
	Pre-evaluation work plan developed but not executed.	<p>Option 1: Clearly define responsibility for specific tasks and task one person (the evaluation manager) with ensuring that tasks are executed in Activities 1.1, 3.3, and 3.4.</p> <p>Option 2 (if delayed until team arrives): Work plans are developed but not executed, which requires the evaluation team to waste time during the first week getting the team ready.</p> <p>Option 3 (if delayed until team arrives): Face up to the delay and amend the SOW for the evaluation team leader to supervise the pre-evaluation preparation via email and to arrive one week in advance.</p>
	Team skipped Steps 1-3 and focused on the SOW and hiring.	<p>Option 1: The evaluation manager will need to train the staff retroactively on guidance and pre-evaluation.</p> <p>Option 2 (if delayed until team arrives): If the evaluation manager doesn't do this, the evaluation team will have to do so once the evaluation starts, a far more expensive and labor-intensive process.</p>
	Core project staff understands the guidance but executing partners do not.	<p>Option 1: If the project is implemented through NGO partners (as CRS and ARC usually are), it is critical for the staff in the executing PVOs to understand the core guidance and rules. Staff should take time to train and familiarize the partners during the process of developing and reviewing the scope of work (Step 3). Proper training of national partners during Step 3 can help NGO partners produce the materials outlined in Steps 5 and 6 in less than a week. In our experience, most national affiliates see this type of pre-evaluation training as an opportunity to develop skills that they can use to develop future projects.</p> <p>Option 2 (if delayed until team arrives): Failure to build a common understanding and lexicon can:</p>

Step	Common problem	Options for Solving Them
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the attitude that the evaluation is just another task being imposed on them by the project coordination unit and • Forces data collection from the PVO partners to overlap with the evaluators' field visits to the PVO partner sites and • Creates ill feelings toward the program coordination unit for not adequately preparing their partners.
Step Four: Evaluation leader and team identified and contracted, and evaluation SOW finalized	Project is having trouble identifying a consultant for one of the external evaluator positions.	<p>Option 1: Widen the search within the country and inform the evaluation team leader about this. Consider bringing in someone from another country program of the same PVO. Do NOT drop the position outlined in the scope of work without telling the team leader (and thereby forcing fewer people on the team to cover more technical sub-components or leaving certain sub-components uncovered).</p> <p>Option 2 (if delay until team arrives): One component of the program gets neglected. If this is a mid-term, this neglect can have very serious long-term consequences for the rest of the project.</p>
	Neither the country representative nor the evaluation manager has communicated directly with the evaluation team leader.	<p>Option 1: This is usually not a problem that can be solved but is instead an indicator (i.e., red flag) that the senior in-country management has not clearly delineated an evaluation manager. A wise headquarters or regional advisor will monitor whether this communication is occurring. If it is not, they should investigate the pre-evaluation planning process and determine whether the team needs help producing the actual outputs in the work plan developed as part of activity 3.3 and 3.4. An elaborate pre-evaluation work plan means nothing if the staff members are unsure about how to implement it.</p> <p>Two options to address this are to: (a) have the external evaluation team leader arrive one week before the other team members to assure a smooth transition and organization review before the full team arrives or (b) outline a formal "distance" pre-evaluation mentoring process as part of the team leader's activities and time allocation.</p> <p>Option 2 (if delayed until team arrives): The external evaluators arrive and neither the in-country management nor project team is prepared.</p>
Step Five: Project documentation organized	Documentation is not prepared when the team arrives.	<p>Option 1: Project manager takes charge of working with technical advisors to develop a classification and organizational system that works for the team. This activity should never be delegated to a secretary or program assistant. It is a core team function.</p> <p>Option 2 (if delayed until team arrives): Ask the team leader to visit at least one week ahead of the other members of the team to facilitate this (and add time for this to the team leader's contract).</p> <p>Option 3 (if delayed until team arrives): Immediately add one week to each team member's contract to allow the project team time to prepare the necessary documentation and activity summaries and hope that this doesn't destroy the budget for the evaluation.</p>

Step	Common problem	Options for Solving Them
	Bibliographies are only partially developed and do not follow standard reference format.	<p>Option 1: Distribute examples of best practice for bibliographic references and let staff correct the references themselves BEFORE the team arrives. This trains them in proper referencing, which is a tremendous help on annual reports and proposals as well.</p> <p>Option 2 (if delayed until team arrives): The evaluation team loses approximately three days organizing the documentation and typing the bibliographies.</p>
Step Six: Project information organized	Indicators have not been updated.	<p>Option 1: Updating indicators should be a top priority for the entire team. All technical supervisors (even newly hired ones) should be conversant with the methodologies being used to collect and analyze the information that is used to monitor and evaluate their activities.</p> <p>Option 2 (if delayed until team arrives): If this is not completed when the evaluators arrive, it can add at least a week to the in-country exercise and even more to the follow-up writeup which usually requires a contract amendment to extend each team member's contract.</p>
	Staff is not clear on how indicators were calculated in previous years due to staff turnover.	<p>Option 1: This is a common problem that can be solved by clearly spelling this out, for each indicator, before the evaluation team arrives. This problem usually means that the M&E system is overly centralized in one person, which is always dangerous. It is a problem which can be easily corrected at mid-term. If this is not resolved at mid-term, it can create major problems during the project's final evaluation.</p> <p>Option 2 (if delayed until arrives): If nothing is done to solve the problem during pre-evaluation, the final evaluation team will lose about a week trying to decipher the way the major indicators were calculated.</p>
Preparation of the final report	Field staff has difficulty understanding and reading English.	<p>Critical pre-evaluation documents (Step 6) should be prepared in the local language (e.g., Portuguese, French, Khmer, etc.) to facilitate field input.</p> <p>Some national team members may be more comfortable and produce better chapters if they write them in the local language.</p> <p>SOW for the individual consultants (activity 4.4) should be clear about the language of the drafts. The team leaders, however, should be clear from the start that evaluations must be written in the language of the donor.</p>

Annex I. References Cited, Further Reading, and Checklists

A. Useful Websites

A.1. Title II Food Security Programs

Food Aid Technical Assistance Project (FANTA)

Sampling guidelines for Title II baseline, mid-term, and final surveys:

<http://www.fantaproject.org/publications/sampling.shtml>

FANTA Assessments, Monitoring, and Evaluation site:

<http://www.fantaproject.org/focus/monitoring.shtml>

DCHA/FFP web site for MYAP guidelines:

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/ffp/fy06_myap.html

DCHA/FFP web site for non-emergency program reference materials (CSR4 guidelines, Bellmon information; etc.):

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/ffp/nonemergency.html

The website for FAM (Food Aid Management) web is still a wealth of information about the monitoring and evaluation of Title II programs. It has a more easily understandable presentation than the USAID website that facilitates accessing information.

<http://www.foodaid.org/mne3.htm>

A.2. Child Survival

A.2.1. Website for CORE

www.Coregroup.org.

A.2.2. For Child Survival guidance, see: www.childsurvival.com. (See technical support, tools, M&E including M&E checklist and KPC 2000 plus modules including Rapid Catch and KPC field guide). Especially important are the:

- SCF manual
- USAID/DCHA/PVC, PVO CHILD SURVIVAL GRANTS PROGRAM. 2002 (August) Guidelines for a Mid-term Evaluation.
- USAID/GH/HIDN/NUT. CHILD SURVIVAL AND HEALTH GRANTS PROGRAM. 2003 (July) Guidelines for Final Evaluation.

A.3. General M&E

www.ngoconnect.net

www.fantaproject.org/publications

For definitions of key evaluation terms:

www.worldbank.org/oed_approach_summary.html

B. References Cited

Bonnard, Patricia. 2002. Title II Evaluation Scopes of Work. Washington, DC: Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA). Technical Note No. 2. Available: <http://www.fantaproject.org>. Email: fanta@aed.org. (US) Tel: 202 884 8000.

Gosling, Louisa and Mike Edwards. 2003. Toolkits: A practical guide to planning, monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment. London: Save the Children UK. Available: www.savethechildren.org.uk. Or (UK) 44 (0) 20 7703 5400.

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Mattesich, Paul. W. 2003. The Manager's Guide to Program Evaluation: Planning, Contracting, and Managing for Useful Results. Saint Paul, Minnesota: The Wilder Research Center. Available: www.wilder.org/pubs and (US) 1-800-274-6024.

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C. Other Useful Reading

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Barton, Tom. Program Impact Evaluation Process. Module 1-Overview. Companion to: Module 2-M&E Tool Box. Kampala: CARE Uganda (September 1998).

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Annex II: TOOLS

Tool 1: GANTT Chart for Pre-Evaluation Planning (see attached Microsoft Excel document) (Source: ARC DIP Cambodia)

Tool 2: Bibliography Style Sheet (*Source: Pre-evaluation Documentation Organization for the Final Evaluation of the CRS/Malawi USAID Title II Funded Development Assistance Program [2004, excerpts from bibliography, Annex 8] (Cross-references to Box 2)*)

1. Pre-planning Exercises

1.1. Vulnerability Mapping of Zones

Moriniere, L., S. Chimwaza, and E. Weiss. 1996. A Quest for Causality: Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping (VAM). Malawi Baseline 1996. Lilongwe: USAID/FEWS Washington and Associates in Rural Development for the World Food Program, Government of Malawi, and USAID/FEWS.

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1.2. Commissioned Technical Background Papers

Mvula, Peter M. 1998. CRS/Malawi. Health Sector Technical Assessment Final Report. Zomba: University of Malawi, Centre for Social Research (August). (44 pages).

2. CADECOM Strategic Planning Exercises and Capacity Assessments and Existing/Ongoing projects that the DAP followed on to and Memoranda of Understanding

CADECOM, Diocese of Blantyre (CADECOM/Blantyre)²⁵. 1999. Report on the Evaluation of CADECOM Blantyre Integrated Food Security Program. Pilot Phase. June 1998-December 1999. Submitted to CORDAID/NETHERLANDS. Blantyre: CADECOM.

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CADECOM, Diocese of Chikwawa (CADECOM/Chikwawa). 1999. CADECOM. Needs Assessment Report Final Report. Lilongwe (November). Blantyre: CADECOM.

²⁵ Parentheses mean that hereafter and in text reference can be shortened to CADECOM/Blantyre.

3. RRA/PRA—Preplanning Studies

CADECOM/Chikwawa. 1999. Needs Assessment Report. Chikwawa: CADECOM/Chikwawa .

4. Regional and HQ Supervision/Trip Reports

Brockman, Frank. Malawi: 11-19 June 2000.

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5. Development Assistance Proposal (DAP), Review and Inception Exercises

CRS/Malawi. 1998. Development Activity Proposal FY 1999-2003. October 1, 1998. (Original draft with health starting at the same time, revised). Lilongwe: CRS/Malawi.

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DSU M&E Officer. 2000. Baseline Survey Preliminary Report: Agriculture Component. Blantyre: DAP Support Unit.

DSU M&E Officer. 2000. Participatory Rural Appraisal report for the DAP Targeted Villages in Mpinda and Tamani Extension Planning Area, Phalombe. Blantyre: DAP Support Unit.

SSU M&E Officer 2000. Participatory Rural Appraisal report for Kalambo Extension planning area in the DAP Targeted villages. Blantyre: DAP Support unit.

Millennium Consulting Group. 2000. Baseline Survey of Orphans (Chikwawa, Phalombe). Volume 1 Lilongwe: Millennium Consulting Group for CRS.

Tool 3: Project Management and Administration

Tool 3.1. Program Management Milestones

Date	Management Milestone
Sep 1997	Award of ConServe MG
Sep 1997	Acquisition of new FIS
Oct 1997	Development Audit
Nov 1997	First strategic planning meeting, Kenya
Nov 1997-Sep 2000	US-Africa staff exchanges
Dec 1997	Approval of IT upgrading plan. Etc

Source: McCorkle and Chadri 2000.

Tool 3.2. Program Planning and Implementation Milestones

Date	Management Milestone
Nov 1997	Mandate from AWF Board of Trustees for a landscape vision
Nov 1997	AWF US (and pre-MG, Africa) SWOT analysis meetings, in preparation for first strategic planning meeting
Nov 1997	First strategic planning meeting (Nairobi), the “Strategy Development Launch Workshop,” resulting in: -revised mission, vision and values statements -tentative definition of a landscape approach, etc.

Source: McCorkle and Chadri 2000.

Tool 3.3. Original vs. Actual Organigram of Project Administration (project specific)

Tool 3.4. List of key positions hired and rehired by the project

Position	Pre-project position or incumbents?	Person Hired or rehired (if turnover)	Dates
US Program officer	US Msc Environmental studies	US Msc Watershed management	01/00
Program Technical Director	None	US Msc Environmental Studies (internal promotion)	01/99

Source: McCorkle and Chadri 2000.

Note: If several people have held the position, note the dates of employment for each person in the fourth column.

Tool 4: Institutional Impact

Tool 4.1. Organizational Checkup

Organizational Measure	Score						
BOARD							
1. Board members have a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities as providers of overall direction	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Board is capable of carrying out key roles such as PVO policy formulation, fund raising, public relations, financial oversight and lobbying	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Board understands PVO programs and provides appropriate input and redirection	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
MISSION							
4. PVO has clearly articulated mission and goals	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Strategies are aligned with mission	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. PVO has appropriate geographic coverage to support its mission	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
MANAGEMENT STYLE AND SYSTEMS							
7. PVO has an organizational structure with clearly defined lines of authority and responsibility	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
OTHER CATEGORIES OF ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT, ETC.							

Source: (Adapted from the Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool [OCAT]) for the Final Evaluation of the African Wildlife Foundation, McCorkle and Chadri 2000: 107-108).

Tool 4.2.a (alternative). Institutional Impact: Major Foundation and Grant Funding before and after the Project²⁶

Amount	Source and Project	Dates
\$25,000	CSC: Summit Foundation gift for conservation enterprise strategies	1997
\$83,000	Heartlands: Delano Foundation gift for AWF's Amboseli Elephant Research project (AERP) and its International Gorilla Conservation Program (IGCP), etc.	1997

Source: McCorkle and Chadri 2000.

Tool 4.2.b (alternative). Institutional Impact: Evolution of CRS and Non-CRS Facilitated Grant Support for the Blantyre CADECOM, FY97-Present

Dates (beginning-end)	Blantyre	Phalombe	Projects /donor	Activities	Amount ²⁷
	X		CARITAS Germany	Relief	
	X		CARITAS Netherlands	Pilot-Food Sec-Mwanza	
2000-20003	X		CRS (private funding)	Environmental Health Program. Chiladzulu District	

Source: CADECOM/CRS, Phalombe, July 27, 2004. In, McMillan, Brockman, Nordin, and Ndonka 2004.

²⁶ Relevant table if the project funding increased organizational capacity to attract other funds.

²⁷ Amounts not relevant to the evaluation and are not represented here unless deemed relevant by CADECOM/Phalombe. They were useful to the external review team, however, in understanding the CADECOM's wider portfolio.

Tool 5: Sample Table Project-Sponsored Training

Village-Level Training Programs in the ISAN Project Villages of Dogon Douchi and Tanout (HKI/CRS)

Training theme	Dogon Douchi			Tanout	
	Participants	% women	Trainers	Participants	% women
CVD Organizational Skills	232	65	CRS	427	24%
Sustainable agricultural production techniques	80	40	Arrondissement and District-level technical services	80	50%
Tree Nursery Management	18	0		22	36 %
Improved cultivation techniques	80	40		80	50 %
etc.					

Source: CRS, 4 April 2003 in McMillan, Jaharou, Mohamadou, Mariko, and Chano 2003.

Tool 6: Sample Table: Partnership Coordination and Executive Board Meetings

No tool provided. Suggest providing a complete list of meetings, the themes discussed, and number of persons from different partnership categories who attended.

Tool 7: Sample Table: Indicator Calculation Update

Strategic Objective and Performance Indicator	Definition of Indicator/Unity of Measure	Data Source	Method of Collection	Method of Analysis	Frequency of Data Collection
Impact Indicator 1.1.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Monitoring Indicator 1.1.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX

Tool 9: Sample Pre-evaluation Logistics Check List

Evaluation Component	GAP	Gujarat	DMH	Work to be done prior to the evaluation team's arrival
Team composition				x
<i>AmCross (TBD)</i>				
Person x	x	x	x	
Person y	X (NHQ)			
Person x		x		
DMH team (selected)			x	
IRCS PARTICIPATION (TBD)	x	x	x	
IRCS/Patan		x		
IRCS HQ	x	x	x	
IRCS TN	x			
IRCS Orissa			x	
IRCS Gujarat	x		x	
External consultant		?	?	
Timing				
First two weeks in August	x			
October (two – three weeks)		x		
TBD			x	
Techniques				
Develop critical questions	x	x	x	x
Project site/activity map	x	x	x	x
Document Review	x	x	x	
Document collection (logframe, M&E plan, workplans, village activity reports, quarterly reports, annual reports, meeting notes, end of mission briefings, etc.): should be sorted by time produced (earliest to latest)	x	x	x	x
Materials collection (two copies of any training materials, publication, flyer, etc.) developed/adapted during life of project	x	x	x	x
Document/materials bibliography	x	x	x	x
Focus groups		x	x	
Develop focus group questionnaire		x	x	
Determine location for focus groups		x	x	x
Get permission from local authorities		x	x	x
Set up focus group schedule		x	x	x
Organize logistics for focus groups		x	x	x
Conduct focus groups		x	x	
Key informant interviews	x	x	x	
Determine list and contact points for key informant interviews	x	x	x	x
Develop key informant interview protocol	x	x	x	
Set up interview schedule	x	x	x	x
Conduct key informant interviews	x	x	x	
Site visits	x	x	x	
Determine list and contact points for site visits	x	x	x	x
Develop site visit direct observation checklist	x	x	x	
Set up site visit schedule	x	x	x	x
Arrange logistics for site visits	x	x	x	x

Conduct site visits	x	x	x	
Survey/questionnaire				
Random sample survey		x		
Training follow-up questionnaire	x			
Develop instrument	x	x		
Implement instrument	x	x		
Analyze results	x	x		
Participatory methods				
Community mapping followup		x		
Others?			x	
<i>Preliminary Steps</i>				
Permission to conduct evaluation	x	x	x	x
Permission for staff travel	x	x	x	x
Travel arrangements (NHQ plane & hotel)	x	x	x	x
Develop data collection protocols	x	x	x	x
Conduct pre-evaluation visit	x	x	x	x
Donor approval	x			x
Evaluation TOR	x	x	x	x
<i>Evaluation Report & Outreach</i>				
Draft outline of report	x	x	x	x
Determine lead writers for sections	x	x	x	
Develop report-writing schedule	x	x	x	
Determine report review team	x	x	x	
Schedule findings briefing (Delhi)	x	x	x	
Schedule findings briefing (field)	x	x	x	
Finalize report	x	x	x	

Source: Alice Willard, Technical Solutions Unit, NHQ, ARC, Pre-evaluation Planning Mission, designed to support close-out evaluations for three projects in India

Tool 10: Checklist of Evaluation Materials/Information for Evaluations²⁸

This checklist itemizes documents, data, and other kinds of information that international private voluntary organizations (PVOs) that are recipients of USAID grants would be well-advised to collect or compile in preparation for their midterm or final evaluations. Of course, each PVO will want to choose among the items listed, selecting those that are relevant to the activities, outputs, intermediate results (IRs), and strategic objectives (SOs) as set forth in their particular grant. Relevance is defined as being directly or indirectly supported by grant funding, and documented as reasonably attributable to such funding.

Not all PVOs will need to have all the following information available. It will depend on program/project thrusts and specific capacity building and other activities as funded under or leveraged by the grant. On the other hand, this list is by no means comprehensive. Each PVO will think of other items that ought to be included here, especially when it comes to program activities and aims that are not widely shared by other PVOs.

Nevertheless, the items on the checklist have generally proven very useful -- not only for those conducting an evaluation but also for those being evaluated and for ongoing PVO management generally as well as strategic planning for the future. Grantees have reported finding this checklist helpful for:

- new ways to present PVO activities and achievements;
- subsequent evaluations;
- the PVO's next annual report;
- items to include in reports to other donors or to PVO publics, and to display in PVO brochures, websites, and so forth;
- standardization of definitions and procedures across far-flung PVO units;
- construction of useful new institutional databases;
- finer-grained and/or internal-comparative analyses of PVO staffing, programming, and finance;
- consciousness-raising among managers, staff, and partners about the need, value, and means of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and the importance of qualitative as well as quantitative M&E data.

The checklist is offered in this multi-purpose spirit, in hopes that grantees may find it more broadly useful. At the same time, it may be helpful to evaluators as a "tickler" in thinking about the kinds of information they will need to examine. Checklist items are roughly grouped in categories corresponding to the point in the evaluation or the type of information for which they might prove most useful.

²⁸ This tool was originally elaborated by Dr. Constance M. McCorkle, under contract to USAID's Office of Private Voluntary Cooperation, Bureau of Humanitarian Response. It has been re-organized, edited, and updated *gratis* by author McCorkle for inclusion in the present ARC+CRS M&E module. As of 15 August 2005, this revised checklist has now been copyrighted by CMC Consulting, Falls Church VA.

I. START-UP INFORMATION

The following items should be made available to the evaluators as early as possible, even before any preliminary meetings with the PVO. The evaluators can then become familiar with the PVO overall; appreciate the general outlines of the grant in relation to same; and save everyone time needlessly spent in meetings to describe basic background information that is readily available in grant documents.

The PVO

- ___ A master list of acronyms commonly used by the PVO in relation to itself and the grant.
- ___ Annual reports for each of year of grant funding, and the equivalent number of years before that, for the PVO as a whole and the PVO country programs or chapters supported by the grant.
- ___ Public awareness, fundraising, etc. brochures, flyers, and websites distributed by the PVO, as per the same parameters for annual reports above.
- ___ Any strategic or action plans by the PVO, its grantee countries/chapters, or its partners that are relevant to the thrusts of the grant.

The Grant

- ___ The PVO's original grant proposal.
- ___ Results Framework for the grant – ideally as linked to the PVO's overall strategy, as well as to the relevant USAID units' Results Frameworks. (Normally, this is already included in the proposal.)
- ___ The Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) submitted by the PVO upon grant award.
- ___ The corresponding budget.
- ___ Documentation showing USAID approval of any major modifications to SOs and their targets, the DIP, or budget.
- ___ Simple chronograms summarizing major milestone events and changes in management, programming, targets, assumptions, implementation approach, etc. in grant operations to date.
- ___ All required, regular grant reports to USAID.
- ___ Any other reports that may be relevant to grant operations and achievements (internal or external studies and reviews, reports to other donors, etc.). *Note: In*

the case of a final evaluation, it is imperative to provide the midterm evaluation of the grant to read the assessment of action on midterm recommendations.

II. GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

As the evaluation proceeds, more specific information will be needed about the particular activities, outputs, IRs, and SOs of the grant. As a rough rule of thumb, these typically entail the following.

- Creating and strengthening relationships between the PVO and its stipulated grant partners, such as national government agencies; regional, national, or local non-governmental organizations (NGOs); private enterprises; and other entities such as universities, research centers, and networks;
- Building PVO and partner capacities via technical assistance and training;
- Producing and disseminating tools, publications, training materials, etc. for use in said capacity-building and in developmental relief by the PVO, its partners, communities, and other developmental-relief agencies at large.

By and large, the following items reflect data the PVO should already have on hand as a result of initial proposal preparation and ongoing monitoring of grant implementation. Unless otherwise specifically contracted, it is not the evaluators' job to collect and organize these data. Thus, for this and all remaining sections of the checklist, if the PVO has not already established baselines and then monitored for the kinds of "before and after" changes promised in the proposal, it had better do so *ex post*, before the formal evaluation begins.²⁹

Partners

- ___ List of PVO partners supported by or collaborating in the grant;
- ___ List of representatives of PVO partners and their contact information;
- ___ Brochure or other brief sketch about each partner, its thrusts, and general contact information – or a table summarizing such for all partner organizations;
- ___ Copies of any written agreements and budgets drawn up with partners;
- ___ Tables of specific technical or and other kinds of assistance (e.g., financial, material, travel) lent to partners by the PVO (excluding training, below);

²⁹ This can be done simply by organizing the same number of previous years' information to compare with those of the grant period under evaluation. Whenever such data are available on a year-by-year basis, it is best to present them thus to the evaluators, who can then analyze them for trends across time. If no such comparative data are available, then reconstructive/recall techniques may be used.

- ___ List of tangible products resulting from all such assistance to partners;
- ___ List or table of partner contributions to grant-related activities;
- ___ Any available data on how membership size or composition, revenues, range or numbers of activities, staff skills, organizational management and visibility, governance, legal standing, etc. of partner organizations have increased or improved as a result of grant-funded activities (excluding training, below);
- ___ Written summaries, reports, or minutes of meetings, focus groups, etc. previously held by any entity to gather partners' impressions of PVO service delivery, quality, performance, and need-responsiveness.

Professional Development, Training, and Learning Events

In the items below, be sure to include workshops, seminars, and conferences as hosted or sponsored by the PVO or its partners using grant funds. These events constitute another type of training/learning event, as does also on-the-job training or mentoring.

- ___ List of types of grant-funded training given to PVO staff (i.e., professional development), partner staff, volunteers and community members, etc. plus number, locale, duration, etc. of training events and their certificate or degree status.
- ___ Charts of all such trainees by all variables the PVO and evaluators deem pertinent, e.g.: institutional affiliation and position title, nationality, gender (required), age, degree level, number of others supervised or to be trained in turn by trainees, etc.
- ___ Table of scholarships to trainees, according to the same variables.
- ___ A generous sampling of course/workshop/etc. training-related announcements, schedules, syllabi, readings, back-at-work action plans, course evaluations, etc. These should be organized in packets by training event or type.
- ___ Data on training outcomes (e.g., pre/post tests) and impacts.

Publications, Manuals, Guides, Toolkits, Websites, Etc.

This whole category refers to materials supported directly or indirectly under the grant and intended for immediate use by the PVO and its partners, but also for sharing with other developmental relief agencies too.

- ___ List of publications, manuals, guides, toolkits generated by the PVO.
- ___ A good sampling of all the foregoing types of materials, for the evaluators to review.

- ___ Data on: e.g., numbers of publications etc. printed; languages in which they were produced; numbers distributed *gratis* or sold, and to whom (in terms of types of individuals or organizations); numbers and types of distribution outlets; users'/readers' opinion of the materials; variety of uses to which recipients put the materials; impacts that resulted as a consequence of use.
- ___ Printout of all grant-supported materials displayed on the PVO's website – and of the website itself, if supported by the grant.
- ___ Tally of hits on web pages or the website, accordingly.
- ___ All the same variables as above for PVO partners for whom institutional sustainability was a mandate under the grant.

III. SPECIFIC PROGRAM INFORMATION

This category is difficult to describe in detail, since PVOs vary widely in the mission thrusts that may be supported by the grant: e.g., agriculture; natural resource management, environment, conservation; microfinance, small and medium enterprise development; health, nutrition; conflict resolution, democracy, governance, civil society; and so forth. Materials for this portion of the checklist will derive mainly from the PVO's own indicator-monitoring system for the grant, as per its approved Results Framework and Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) or Performance Indicator Tracking Plan (PITT). Other possibly useful materials should be discussed with the evaluators.

Typically, most PMP or PITT data are quantitative. These should all have been brought up-to-date by the time the evaluation is to begin. The evaluators can then do their job of verifying the performance data, perhaps amplifying them using various evaluation methodologies or conducting special or more sophisticated data analyses.

Examples of other, more general kinds of quantitative information that are usually wanted in an evaluation include those listed below.³⁰ In the course of their work, evaluators may also ask for other kinds or breakdowns of quantitative data.

- ___ List of all field projects or sub-projects funded or affected by the grant, accompanied by reports or other relevant documents about each.
- ___ Table of numbers of direct, primary grant beneficiaries (aside from direct, secondary beneficiaries such as PVO and partner trainees, above) reached by said field projects, sub-projects, or other activities -- all perforce disaggregated by gender, and other categories as appropriate to the PVO's particular grant.

³⁰ Consult USAID guidance for standard definitions of primary/secondary and direct/indirect beneficiaries. Also consider that there may be unanticipated beneficiaries as a result of spread and multiplier effects.

___ Table of numbers of primary indirect beneficiaries, as above. (With good M&E, this can also include unanticipated as well as anticipated indirect beneficiaries.)

In terms of qualitative information, one type that has proved especially illuminating is "mini-case-studies." These are brief anecdotes of grant-funded experiences that provide particularly telling examples of successes, failures, lessons learned, impacts, spread, and multiplier effects. Such "stories" are most often used to illustrate programmatic outcomes; but they are equally telling for management and other issues (next section). Often, such mini-cases are to be found scattered throughout existing PVO reports and publications. In preparation for the evaluation, the PVO may wish to gather these together in some unified document or format, or even assign staff to write up new ones.³¹

IV. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Grants often provide funds to improve PVO or partners' organizational development with regard to strategic planning, institutional structuring, management of human resources, Board of Trustees functioning, information and communication technology, buildings and equipment, financial or programmatic M&E, and more.

Numerous references, systems, and both qualitative and quantitative tools exist for baselining and then tracking, analyzing, and reporting these aspects of organizational strengthening – some of them created by USAID itself.³² So the following items represent only a sampling of the kind of evaluation information that may be wanted here. Always, these data should be presented in some *pre/post, comparative form*.

- ___ Organigram (i.e., organizational chart) of the PVO.
- ___ General policy guidelines, operating or reporting manuals, etc. for the PVO and its Board of Trustees.
- ___ List of past and present trustees, with brief biographies of each trustee.
- ___ Job announcements and descriptions for new hires recruited/to be recruited under the grant, and actual or sample candidate resumés, respectively.
- ___ Staffing charts accordingly – perforce disaggregated by gender, and also by any other variables of interest under the grant such as: nationality, degree level, years of prior professional experience, contractual category, general job type (e.g.,

³¹ A standardized format funded by USAID/DCHA/FFP and elaborated by FFP cooperating sponsors now exists. Entitled *Success and Learning Story-Writing Template*, it is presented in another module in the present series.

³² Check with your PVO's specialist in organizational development, partnership, or capacity-building for samples of such tools.

- managerial, technical, support, logistic), PVO unit or location, etc.
- ___ Inventories of PVO computers, phone lines, internet access, LANs, software licenses, etc.
 - ___ Inventories for vehicles, buildings, other infrastructure.
 - ___ List of regular and supervisory meetings, site visits, and other kinds of exchanges by PVO headquarters and project staff, with a description of attendee types.
 - ___ Budgets and accounts showing planned versus executed expenditures of grant monies, broken down in various ways to show financial flows to different PVO, partner, or other entities as per their functions and agreements, as outlined in the original (or amended) proposal.
 - ___ All external and internal auditors' reports for the grant itself, up to the time of the evaluation.
 - ___ All the same variables as above for PVO partners targeted for organizational development and strengthening under the grant.

V. SUSTAINABILITY AND M&E SYSTEMS

Sustainability can be (and is) defined and measured in many different ways, from many different perspectives – e.g., environmental, programmatic, economic, financial. But the latter is one of the most fundamental ways in which a PVO's or NGO's institutional sustainability is calculated. This is the focus of the items listed below.

When it comes to M&E, virtually this whole checklist speaks to M&E. So below, only a few additional items are noted that do so very explicitly and that have not been noted in earlier sections of the checklist.

Sustainability

- ___ Business plans or any Board of Trustees notes or other documents (minutes, memoranda) showing financial strategizing and decision making.
- ___ List of PVO donors by name and category (e.g., multi- or bi-lateral agencies, foundations, other PVOs, private enterprises, charitable individuals, etc.), organized into pre- and post-grant sub-lists.
- ___ Tables of annual and then aggregate pre/post PVO revenues -- possibly by category (e.g., grants, charitable contributions, earned income, investment income, membership fees), organized as per donor types above.

- ___ Same as above, but for PVO costs.
- ___ Documents and accounts indicating facilitation or leveraging of increased funding as a direct or indirect result of grant-supported activities.
- ___ All the same variables as above for PVO partners targeted for organizational development/strengthening under the grant.

M&E Systems

- ___ As required by USAID, an updated DIP, showing (1) variance in targets set versus achieved by the time of evaluation, with (2) commentary on the reasons for such variance, for both under- and over-achievement of targets.
- ___ Samples of all data-collection and reporting forms and of data-entry sheets for the PVO and its partners – for both financial and programmatic data.
- ___ One detailed example each of the types of FIS and MIS (financial/management information system) or other data-based reports regularly generated for use by PVO and partner managers.
- ___ Schedule and, if available, flow diagrams for distribution and use of these reports, plus other kinds of information dissemination, e.g., to donors, communities, national or international publics, and the developmental/relief community at large.
- ___ Indication of archiving and retrieval systems for M&E data and reports, whether in electronic and hard copy.

Tool 11: Evaluation Stakeholder Analysis to Identify Information Needs and Specific Evaluation Questions to be Included in an Evaluation Scope of Work

Evaluation stakeholders	Information needs	Specific evaluation questions	Priority high, medium, low
Project Beneficiaries			
OXFAM project manager			
OXFAM field staff			
OXFAM country director			
ODA Project manager (Bangkok)			
ODA country desk (London)			
SAVE project field staff			
SAVE UK			
ODA Social Development Advisors			

Source: Social Impact. n.d. Managing the Project Cycle. A Guide to People-Centered and Results-Oriented Project Management. Workshop Notes. Reston, VA: Social Impact. Pg. 6-17. (Email: info@socialimpact.com; www.socialimpact.com).

Tool 12. Sample Evaluation Checklist for Pre-Planning

Yes/No	Key Points to Consider in Evaluation Pre-Planning
	Participation
	1. An evaluation stakeholder analysis has been completed.
	2. The analysis identifies the information needs of important stakeholders.
	3. The analysis informs who will participate in the evaluation process.
	<i>You are clear about:</i>
	Deciding
	4. Why are you doing the evaluation?
	5. For whom you are doing it.
	6. What is to be reviewed
	7. Who will be involved
	8. How will it be managed?
	9. When it will be done.
	10. What are the resource implications?
	11. How the results will be used.
	Designing
	12. The detailed scope and focus (or terms of reference) of the evaluation
	13. The evaluation methods and tools to be used.
	14. Measurements and indicators to be used.
	15. Methods for recording, disseminating and storing findings.
	Action
	16. What facts and qualitative and quantitative data will be collected?
	17. How the data will be gathered (questioning, observing, reading, etc.).
	18. How data will be analyzed and interpreted.
	19. How to validate analysis and judgments.
	20. The format of the final report and/or presentation.
	Using results
	21. How to agree on recommendations.
	22. How to make changes to recommendations.
	23. How the evaluation will be reviewed.
	24. How to follow up on and support the recommendations.
	25. How to use feedback (or evaluation) to improve future evaluations.

Source: Source: Social Impact. n.d. Managing the Project Cycle. A Guide to People-Centered and Results-Oriented Project Management. Workshop Notes. Reston, VA: Social Impact. Pg. 6-18 (Email: info@socialimpact.com; www.socialimpact.com).