

**Appendix 10**  
**Model Evaluation Plan Outline**

## Model Evaluation Plan Outline

### Introduction

The Evaluation Plan establishes the written plan for conducting a general program evaluation. The evaluator should prepare an Evaluation Plan and obtain the program manager's written approval of it before investing any of the study's resources in the actual evaluation. The program manager should have it reviewed by the evaluation quality assurance team (see Appendix 7) before approving it.

The plan provides the manager and the evaluator a mutually agreed-upon understanding of how the evaluation will be performed and what its output will be. As such, it provides the program manager with an important tool for monitoring the evaluator's progress and managing the project.

In practice, the Evaluation Plan is often developed directly from the evaluator's proposal; therefore, the outline in this appendix has many similarities with the model outline for an evaluation statement of work in Appendix 8. The principal difference in the two is their perspective: the statement of work reflects what the manager wants the evaluator to propose to do. The Evaluation Plan reflects the actual performance plan after the manager and the evaluator have reached agreement on:

- Any changes in the manager's requirements since the statement of work was prepared
- The answers to any questions the manager or the evaluator has at the outset of the project
- A performance schedule based on the actual start date for the study
- Dates for delivery of any assistance required from EERE
- The resolution of any other issues that either party has regarding the required and proposed statements of work.

The model Evaluation Plan outline in this appendix is typical but not inflexible. Its elements may be grouped differently or placed in a different order. If an evaluation study will perform only part of a complete evaluation (see, for example, the attachment to Appendix 8), elements can be omitted. However, each of the elements in this model outline that are noted with an asterisk (\*) should be included in an Evaluation Plan, regardless of its scope.

## Outline for a Typical Evaluation Plan<sup>1</sup>

### 9. Table of Contents

#### List of Tables and Figures

#### 1. \*Introduction

#### 2. \*Program Background

This section should provide the following:

- \*Provide an overview of the program, including its objectives, and the activities and outputs designed to produce its outcomes. Include detail on those activities and outputs that the study should evaluate.
- \*Describe the decisions about the program for which the evaluation will provide input.
- \*List any program materials that can contribute to the evaluation of the program. Describe their availability.

#### 3. \*Objectives

- \*Describe the objectives of the evaluation. Tie them to the decisions to be made about the program.
- \*Describe the type of evaluation(s) needed to satisfy the objective(s).

#### 4. Logic Model

- Provide the current logic model of the program. (If the evaluator must develop this, as part of the evaluation, this section can be omitted, but the Work Plan should include a task to develop a logic model.)

#### 5. \*Evaluation Questions

- \*List the general questions that need to be asked in order to meet the objectives of the study.
- \*List the specific questions to be answered in order to answer the general questions.
- If a logic model has been provided, the general and specific questions must relate to inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, or external influences that are depicted in the logic model.
- If the evaluator will develop the logic model, the general and specific questions must be related to its inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, or external influences.

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<sup>1</sup> Items with an asterisk (\*) should be included in the Evaluation Plan.

## 6. Overview of Evaluation Approach

Provide an “executive summary” of the research design (if appropriate), data collection approach, and analytical approach. This might include a workflow diagram.

## 7. \*Work Plan

This section describes the steps by which the evaluator will satisfy the evaluation objectives. It describes the work elements, the research design (if appropriate), the data collection plan, the analysis plan, the deliverables, the evaluator’s expectations for assistance from EERE, and a schedule for performance.

The evaluator should reference steps in the Work Plan in making its work progress reports.

### 7.1 \*Work Structure

This section describes the task structure for the work to be performed. This is the part of the Evaluation Plan against which the program manager should track and manage the evaluator’s performance and compensation.

The following is a typical task structure. Individual studies may vary from this, according to their work requirements and the program manager’s preference for tracking contract work. Tables and diagrams are encouraged to clarify or simplify elements of the work structure.

- Task 1: Project Management
  - \*Specify a Project Initiation Meeting, including requirements for minutes of the meeting.
  - \*Develop the Project Evaluation Plan. (This element is *in* the Evaluation Plan so that it may be reported as completion of a project requirement.)
  - \*Specify the requirements for progress reporting.
  - \*Specify the frequency of meetings between the project manager and the evaluator for project progress and management.
- Task 2: Develop the Research Plan
  - \*Describe the overall approach to the research if this has not been described in a prior section, such as Section 5 of this outline.
  - If an impact evaluation is being performed, describe the research design for developing valid and generalizable findings. Discuss the internal and external validity and the relative defensibility of the design.
- Task 3: Data Collection Plan

(The actual data collection steps may be separate tasks or part of an overall data collection plan.)

- \*Specify what data will be collected to answer the general and specific questions.
  - \*Specify the type of data collection activity, e.g., a survey.
  - \*Specify the population and how the subjects will be selected for data collection.
  - If data will be collected by a sample, specify the source of population data that will constitute the sample frame.
  - If data will be collected by a sample, specify how many respondents will be contacted and the design statistical precision, if random selection procedures will be used.
  - If OMB clearance is required, the effort for this may be included in the Data Collection Plan or be a separate task.
- Task 4: Data Analysis Plan
 

(This element describes how the evaluation findings will be produced from the collected data. If several different analytical methods will be used, they may be separate tasks or part of an overall analysis plan.)

    - \*Specify the analysis approach.
    - \*Specify what findings the analysis(es) will produce.
  - Task 5: Reporting
    - \*List the draft and final deliverables needed to satisfy the evaluation objectives.
    - Provide a preliminary outline(s) of the principal report(s).
    - Specify the number of copies of each deliverable to be provided, and the stakeholders who will receive the copies.
    - \*Specify the content, and frequency of the progress reports.
    - Specify the raw or cleaned data that must be delivered to EERE.

## 7.2 Assistance to Be Provided by EERE

List any assistance that will be provided to the evaluator by EERE. In some evaluation plans, this assistance may be detailed in the individual tasks for which it is needed.

## 7.3 \*Schedule

The schedule should include the following milestones:

- \*Project initiation meeting and due date for any minutes required for this meeting.
- Beginning and end of major data-collection activities.
- \*All draft and final deliverable reports and data, including routine progress reports.

- Dates for progress meetings.
- Date for a presentation(s) of the final report, if required.
- The schedule might be presented in a Gantt chart or other type of diagram.

#### **8. \*Quality Assurance Procedure**

- \*Describe the quality assurance procedures that the evaluator will employ to establish confidence in the findings. These procedures should cover data collection, analysis, and reporting.
- \*Specify when peer reviews will be conducted, the time allotted to these reviews (in order to remain on schedule), and who will conduct them.

#### **9. \*Organization and Management**

- \*Specify EERE's and the evaluator's principal contacts for the study.
- Specify the task leaders for the principal tasks.
- Specify the expected number of trips for project management if these are not specified in Task 1.
- The evaluator's staff assignments may be listed if the program manager desires it and if they will differ from the evaluator's proposal.

#### **10. Appendices (if any)**

For example:

- Successful questionnaires from related studies to serve as models for the evaluation.
- Layout of the population database that will be used as the source of a sample or census.
- Lists and contact information for program staff who will be interviewed.