

Explanatory Notes to the Common Evaluation Question & recommendations on MTE reporting

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Objectives of explanatory notes

Most programmes well advanced in preparing MTE and answering Evaluation Questions (EQ) but...

...information is needed with respect to

- **Use and purpose of EQs**
- **Specific explanations regarding content of EQs**
- **Clarifications regarding structure of the MTE-report**
- **Practical examples**

→ Provide additional explanations and practical examples

→ Based on existing guidance material

Content

- 1. Introduction: The regulatory framework for the MTE**
- 2. The purpose and use of Evaluation Questions**
- 3. Answering the EQs in the context of the MTE**
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Introduction: The regulatory framework for the MTE



European Evaluation Network
for Rural Development

- Article 86 (4) of Reg. 1698/2005 : ongoing evaluation takes form of a **separate mid-term evaluation report**
- A **full evaluation** of measures and programmes has to take place in 2010.
- The MTE shall provide **answers to ALL common and programme specific EQ** (provided that the respective measures have been activated).
- The MTE report has to be **submitted by 31/12/2010.**



The purpose and use of Evaluation Questions

At programme level

- ✓ **Help** MAs to fulfill their tasks
- ✓ **Ensure** that RD programmes ask for **programme impacts**
- ✓ **Are** a key tool to steer the evaluation and to **ensure a good evaluation quality**

- 1) examine the progress
- 2) improve the quality of RDP
- 3) propose changes.

Not just implementation-related information at output / result level.

Steer evaluation (ToR) and give it the right focus.

The purpose and use of Evaluation Questions

At EU level

- ✓ **Ensure comparability across all programmes**
- ✓ **Avoid fragmentation of evaluation cultures**
- ✓ **Foster proliferation of comparable approaches**

Even where rural contexts, the needs, the programmes, implementations systems and evaluation methods are different

Common reference point

Precondition for know-how transfer in evaluation

The purpose and use of Evaluation Questions

For Policy makers at EU, national and regional levels

- ✓ **Summarize** complex evaluation findings in a policy-oriented way
- ✓ Provide **input** for strategic decisions (e.g. programme adaptations)

...provided that answers are available at the right time and in the right form.

Past experiences when synthesizing EQs at EU level

- ✓ **A lack of common interpretation of EQs made comparability difficult.**
- ✓ **Sometimes answers were not sufficiently evidence-based.**
- ✓ **Evaluation Questions were not fully covered or no programme-specific EQs were formulated.**

Although very detailed judgment criteria, indicators and glossary had been provided.

...and cross-references to the analysis part were missing.

...while at the same time the CEQs were experienced as top-down.

Answering the EQs in the context of the MTE

- **Common Evaluation Questions**

- 51 EQ for axis 1
- 51 EQs for axis 2
- 27 EQs for axis 3
- 8 EQs for axis 4
- 19 Horizontal EQs

- **Programme Specific Evaluation Questions**

- Reflect programme-specific objectives

- **Key terms**

- Should ensure common understanding within a programme...
- ...but only few terms provided centrally at EU level
- Must be defined at programme level

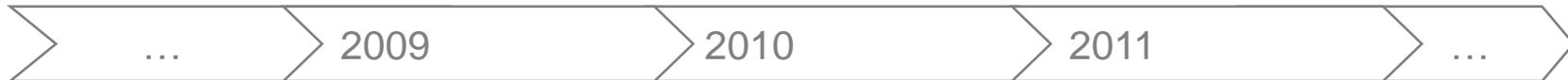
A total of 156 CEQ to be answered in the context of MTE and Ex-post (if measures activated)

To be answered according to the same logic as CEQ

Require more work at programme level than in former period.



Working Steps related to EQs in the context of MTE



PREPARATION

Review Common & Specific Evaluation Questions

Establishing the steering group

Drafting the Terms of Reference

IMPLEMENTATION

Structuring: Prepare tool and methodology to answer EQs

Observing: identify available and relevant information sources.

Analysing: of information with a view to answer EQs

Judging: draft answer to EQs and MTE Report

DISSEMINATION

Dissemination of **Evaluation Results** through various means (presentations, contributions to publications, articles, websites..)

→ The common and programme specific evaluation questions are collected and qualitative information needed for answering each evaluation question is identified

→ Evaluators draft evaluation report incl. information regarding the approach for answering EQs into Chapter 4 (Methodology) and Chapter 6 (Answers to EQs)



Structure of the MTE-Report

See **CMEF Guidance Note B, chapter 7**

1	<p>Executive summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Main findings of the evaluation– Conclusions and recommendations
2	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Purpose of the report– Structure of the report
3	<p>The Evaluation Context</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Brief contextual information about the programme: related national policies, social and economic needs motivating assistance, identification of beneficiaries or other target groups– Description of the evaluation process: recapitulation of the terms of reference, purpose and scope of the evaluation– Brief outline of previous evaluations related to the programme

Are there further indications regarding the structure of the report?

Does the evaluation context refer to the measure or the programme?



Structure of the MTE-Report

4	<p>Methodological Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Explanation of the evaluation design and the methods used– Description of key terms of programme-specific and the common evaluation questions, judgment criteria, target levels.– Sources of data, techniques for data collection (questionnaires, interviews; size and selection criteria for samples ...); information about how the indicators are calculated in order to assess the quality and reliability of the data and identify possible biases.– Techniques for replying to the evaluation questions and arriving at conclusions.– Problems or limitations of the methodological approach.
5	<p>Description of Programme, Measures, and Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Programme implementation: actors involved, institutional context– Composition of the programme; description of priorities and measures 15– Intervention logic of single measure– Budget foreseen for the entire programming period– Uptake and budget actually spent

Should the methods be described at measure or at programme-level?

Will the Commission provide further definitions for terms like "competitiveness", "sustainable land management" or "quality of life"?



Structure of the MTE-Report

6	<p>Answers to Evaluation Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Analysis and discussion of indicator(s) with respect to judgment criteria and target levels referred to by evaluation questions.– Analysis and discussion of quantitative and qualitative information from public statistics, specific surveys/enquiries, or other sources.– Answers to the evaluation question
7	<p>Conclusions and Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Coherence between the measures applied and the objectives pursued; balance between the different measures within a programme.– Degree of achieving programme-specific objectives as well as objectives set out in the national strategy and the Community Strategy.– Recommendations based on evaluation findings, including possible proposals for the adaptation of programmes.

How extensive should EQ be answered? In a separate chapter? How long?

Should all common evaluation questions be dealt within the MTE?

Do horizontal evaluation questions apply to all axes?

Recommendations

- **Cover the content and structure** of the evaluation report as outlined in the Indicative outline of an evaluation report according to CMEF Guidance note B (chapter 7).
- **Provide answers to all common and programme specific evaluation questions** (provided that the measures were activated)
- **Give evidence based answers** which clearly relate to defined judgment criteria and indicators.
- **Indicate where limitations of information sources** impede a reliable answer or where evaluation questions are not applicable due to other reasons.

Recommendations

- **Describe in detail the methods and techniques** used for data and information collection and processing. Explain the shortcomings.
- **Specify the methods** for assessment of results and impacts. Address methodological problems (net effects, multiple intervening factors etc.).
- **Establish transparency concerning information sources** by describing in detail the sources used (documentation, respondents, literature, list of contacted persons etc).
- **Explain the logic for the selection of samples** and give indications regarding limitations concerning the representativeness of the evaluation sample.

Thank you for your attention!