

WHO EVALUATION OFFICE



Evaluation Report Writing Guidance

CHECKLIST

- ✓ The report adheres to the WHO Style Guide (Version 5).
- ✓ The report is presented in Word format, Calibri font size 10/11.
- ✓ Documents have been proofread before submission.
- ✓ The contents page and lists of tables, figures and references are formatted correctly and updated.
- ✓ Tables, graphs, illustrations are provided in OCR-compatible or editable formats for WHO copyediting.
- ✓ The report adheres to respective WHO clearances (see below).
- ✓ Harvard referencing is applied and footnotes are strictly used to clarify information in the text.

WHO style and clearances

The following information gives a brief overview of general WHO style rules. Please refer to the WHO Style Guide provided with the Terms of Reference for detailed guidance.

REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES

WHO uses the Harvard referencing system. Footnotes should be kept to a minimum and only used to provide additional detail or explanation of unfamiliar terms in the text, denoted by superscript Arabic numerals.

- ⇒ **Spelling:** WHO uses a mix of British and North American spelling conventions. The general rule is to follow the first spelling listed in the Oxford English Dictionary, with exceptions made for established usage within WHO and international nomenclature standards. Medical terms follow British spelling conventions.
- ⇒ **Dashes:** WHO uses the hyphen and en dash. Hyphens are used to connect closely linked words, particularly in compound words. The en dash is used for parenthetical expressions, indicating number ranges, showing close relationships between nouns and denoting periods of time.
- ⇒ **Currencies:** Where an abbreviation is a letter or letters, or a combination of letter(s) and symbol, give a non-breaking space between the abbreviation and the amount (US\$ 6000). Where a symbol is used to represent the monetary unit, give no space between the symbol and the amount (€200, £19.95). To differentiate between currencies with identical names, use appropriate adjectives (100 Australian dollars or 100 US dollars). Avoid use

HARVARD REFERENCING EXAMPLE: In-text citation for a report published by WHO in 2023

The World Health Organization (2023) states that global health initiatives have significantly reduced mortality rates. OR Global health initiatives have significantly reduced mortality rates (WHO, 2023).

Reference list entry: WHO Report (Print or Online)

World Health Organization (2023) *Global health report 2023: progress and challenges*. Geneva: WHO.

WHO Website: World Health Organization (2024) 'COVID-19 updates and prevention strategies'. Available at: <https://www.who.int/covid19-updates> (Accessed: 12 February 2025). If WHO document has DOI, include it instead of URL.

• **References should be numbered in the text with a hyperlink to that citation in the reference list.**

of three-letter currency codes (EUR, GBP, USD, etc.).

⇒ **Numbers – In Text:** Use words for numbers from zero to nine and figures for 10 and above. Write out numbers that start a sentence if rephrasing is not possible.

- **Figures, Tables, and Units:** Use figures for groups, ranges, and with units of measurement. For numbers over four digits, use a non-breaking space instead of a comma (e.g., 275 000). In tables, apply the space rule to figures with more than three digits.
- **Large numbers:** Combine numerals and words for large numbers (e.g., "3 million" instead of "3 000 000").
- **Fractions:** Write non-decimal fractions in words (e.g., "two thirds") and avoid hyphenation.
- **Specific contexts:** Use a non-breaking space between figures and units (e.g., "3 km" or "US\$ 3 million").

- **Ranges:** Use either words (e.g., "from...to" or "between...and") or an **en rule** (e.g., "16–18 October") to express ranges. Do not mix words with en rules (e.g., "from 16–18" is incorrect). Use words for ranges with negative numbers. Ensure numbers in a range are consistent (e.g., "60–70 million").
- **Units of measurement:** When using **full unit names**, give the unit after the second number (e.g., "28 to 49 live births"). When using **abbreviations or symbols**, repeat the unit with prepositions (e.g., "15 km and 18 km"). With an en rule, give the unit once after

the second number (e.g., "0.15–0.20 g").



Maps: All maps used in WHO and external publications should follow UN practice regarding the representation of international boundaries. Maps must be based on the template map of the world or regions from WHO or UN sources, without modification. If a map is used from another source in the report, it must be cleared by WHO Office of the Legal Counsel (LEG). In this instance, please consult the evaluation manager

APPROVED MAP SOURCES

[Global Health Observatory](#) and [UN Geospatial, Location Data](#) WHO or UN copyright notice and disclaimer for maps should be included as a footnote under each map. **WHO follows the terminology used by the UN, particularly regarding the names of Member States.** Guidance on the correct names for Member States, countries, areas, or territories is available in the *WHO style guide*.

⇒ **Country Data:** All data sources should be referenced from official/reliable sources. WHO has internal clearance procedures for national/country data used (for example, achievement of SDG indicators). In such cases, please contact the Evaluation Manager for further guidance.

⇒ **WHO financial data:** Use of WHO financial data – programme budget, costs, and for donors – must adhere to WHO reporting rules and practice. Please contact the Evaluation Manager for further guidance.

⇒ **Figures:** Include graphs, drawings, and similar elements and need to be provided in editable formats. They should be **numbered with Arabic numerals and titled above the figure and**

accompanied by a reference below, including data sources if reproduced from another publication (with permission).



Tables: Present **data in rows and columns**. They should be numbered with Arabic numerals and titled above the table and accompanied by references and footnotes, if applicable, below the table. Use tables rather than graphs for simple data presentations.



Page numbering: Use **lower-case Roman numerals** for the preliminary pages including the foreword or preface, acknowledgements, list of abbreviations and executive summary and contents page. Use **Arabic numerals** for page numbers for the main pages, references, bibliography and annexes.

ACRONYMS

Spell out names like **Ministry of Health**, **countries**, and **WHO regional offices** on first mention, with acronyms in parentheses if needed. Use acronyms alone afterward, but avoid them for **countries** in text (e.g. write *the United States*, not *USA*). Acronyms may be used in tables or graphics if space is tight and clearly explained.

Do not use acronyms for WHO **country offices** in the text.

Avoid acronyms in captions unless previously defined, and never use periods in acronyms (e.g. *MoH*, not *M.o.H.*).

STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION

Length and Accessibility

- Keep the report concise, between **40-60 pages (approximately 20 000–30 000 words)**, ensuring key information is easily accessible. This word limit excludes the annexes.
- Use **annexes** for additional information to avoid overloading the main body of the report.
- Prioritize clarity and usability throughout, making sure the structure and content support quick reference and comprehension.

Gender and human rights

- The report emphasizes the **integration of a gender equality perspective and a human rights-based approach in the design**, implementation, and evaluation processes, using gender-sensitive language and disaggregated data throughout.

Acknowledgments

- The Evaluation Manager will be responsible for drafting this section. To ensure accurate recognition, please provide the names of all individuals who contributed to the evaluation. This section of the report is dedicated to acknowledging the authors and all contributors.

Acronyms

- Provide a **list of acronyms**, ensuring it is **alphabetically ordered** and easily editable.

Table of Contents

- Ensure the table of contents is **correctly formatted** and updated before submission. Include **internal hyperlinks to the relevant sections** in the report.

Executive Summary

- The executive summary should not exceed **six pages** and must be clear, concise, and self-contained, avoiding internal duplication.
- It will be translated and published separately and, therefore, should **summarize the key points of the evaluation** (purpose, methodology, key findings, conclusions, and recommendations) in a way that allows stakeholders to understand the essence without reading the full report.

Introduction/background

- Ensure this section provides **sufficient background and contextual information** for readers unfamiliar with the subject.
- The **purpose, objectives, and scope are clearly defined**, explaining why it was conducted, who needed the information, what was required and how the findings will be used.
- The main **evaluation question are outlined**, justifying what was included and excluded and describes the evaluation criteria and performance standards used.

Evaluation Object

- Clearly define the object of the evaluation, detailing the **logic model, expected results, and key contextual factors** such as social, political, and economic influences. It also describes the **intervention's scale, complexity, components, geographic scope, and target population**.
- The report outlines the **resources allocated and identifies key stakeholders**. It also highlights any significant changes in the intervention's implementation and assesses their implications.

Methodology

- Summarize the **evaluation methodology** succinctly, including the design, theory of change, data collection methods and analysis approaches.
- Technical details can be moved to **annexes** if necessary to keep this section concise.

Findings

- Present the findings in a **clear and organized** manner using subheadings and numbering. Text boxes can be used to highlight specific top-level points.
- **Structure the findings around the evaluation criteria** and ensure they are accessible and easy to follow.
- **Avoid dense blocks of text**; break them down into digestible sections to support the reader's understanding.

Conclusions

- Conclusions should be **clearly structured and based on and reference the findings**. Consider using subheadings to divide themes.
- Focus on **relevance to the evaluation criteria** and avoid lengthy paragraphs by summarizing key points succinctly.

Recommendations

- Ensure **recommendations are feasible, practical, and clearly actionable** to address the identified challenges. Where relevant, include suggested specific timeframes, and/or suggested shorter-term or longer-term time frames.
- **Target the root causes of challenges**, aiming to eliminate or mitigate the underlying issues highlighted in the findings.
- **Minimize disruptive side effects and avoid introducing new challenges with the proposed solutions.** Be mindful of the organization's constitutional, structural and/or legal frameworks.
- For easier navigation, **group or combine related recommendations under common themes.**
- **Link recommendations directly to relevant findings**, ensuring the rationale for each proposed action is clear (consider using a matrix connecting findings, conclusions, and recommendations).
- **Use visual aids such as bullet points, grids, or numbering** to enhance readability and clarity.

References

- Ensure all sources are properly cited, with **relevant links included** where necessary.

Annexes

- Annexes can be included either in a **single unified report or as a second volume.**
- Generally, annexes should include the evaluation: Terms of Reference, theory of change/results framework (if not included in the body of the report); matrix, including evaluation questions; data collection instruments (e.g., surveys; interview guides); sites visited, or summary data of stakeholders consulted (if relevant); and a reference list/bibliography. In addition, specific annexes can be included as relevant to the report and in consultation with the Evaluation Manager.
- For evaluations that include case studies, these can be added as annexes.

For further information, please contact the Evaluation Office, evaluation@who.int