

Annexes to ROM Handbook

Version 6.3

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Annex 1: List of Monitoring Questions

1. Relevance → Are we doing the right things?

1.1 Does the intervention constitute an adequate response to the current **needs and rights** of the target groups / end beneficiaries?

1.2 Is the intervention adapted to the present institutional, human and financial **capacities** of the partner government and/or other key stakeholder(s) with a role in implementation?

1.3 Is the choice of IP/method of implementations¹ proving to be appropriate?

1.4 Do all key stakeholders demonstrate effective commitment to the objectives of the intervention (i.e. **ownership**)?

2. Coordination, complementarity and EU added value

2.1 Is the intervention likely to benefit or is benefiting from any **complementarity/synergies** with other interventions funded by the EU and other entities (donors, public and private)?

2.2 Is the intervention (still) reflecting and benefiting from adequate **EU added value**?

3. Intervention Logic, Monitoring & Learning → Can we monitor results and learn?

3.1 To what extent does the intervention, as currently designed and implemented, take into account **past experiences** in the sector, good practices and lessons learned from previous interventions?

3.2 What is the current **quality of the intervention logic**? Are planned output and outcomes coherent and feasible, and have key assumptions and risks been clearly identified?

3.3 Is the horizontal logic of the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) adequate? I.e. choice of **indicators**, data availability, baseline data, target values and relevant disaggregation.

3.4 Does the intervention have an adequate **internal monitoring system**?

¹Term used to describe the entity that implements EU funds. There are three types: direct, indirect and shared management.

3.5 Are there any **lessons learned and good practices** that would be useful to share beyond the intervention context?

4. Efficiency → Are we doing things well?

4.1 Are the **implementation mechanisms** proving to be appropriate to achieve planned outputs and contribute to outcomes?

4.2 Are the **inputs / resources** provided by the various stakeholders (still) adequate for achieving the planned results?

4.3 Has the intervention encountered any **delays** and was the planning revised accordingly?

4.4 Is **spending** in line with the budget?

5. Effectiveness → is it working?

5.1 Are the **outputs** being achieved with the **expected quality**?

5.2 Are the expected **outcomes** likely to be achieved?

5.3 To what extent are results **inclusive** i.e. ensuring the fair distribution of effects across different groups of the population?

5.4 Does the intervention effectively **influence** the partner's relevant policy and interventions?

5.5 Is the intervention having any **unintended positive or negative effects**? Were the negative effects considered for possible (risk) mitigation?

6. Sustainability – Will the benefits last?

6.1 Are key stakeholders attaining the **necessary capacities**² (incl. institutional, human and financial) to ensure the continued flow of benefits/services?

6.2 Is access to the benefits generated by the intervention **affordable** for target groups over the long term?

²In the case of NEAR, refer to 'Addressing capacity development in planning/programming, monitoring and evaluation. A Guidance note'. December 2017.

6.3 Has the **private sector** been sufficiently involved with a view to contributing to the sustainability of the intervention?

6.4 Does the proposed intervention increase **resilience** to shocks and pressure (by addressing specific dimensions of fragility and their root causes)?

7. Cross cutting issues

7.1 What is the contribution of this intervention to achieving **gender equality and human rights outcomes**?

7.2 To which extent does the intervention adhere to the working principles of the **rights-based approach**?

7.3 How is the intervention dealing with **environmental constraints and opportunities**?

7.4 To what extent does the intervention contribute to EU **climate change** commitments?

7.5 Is the intervention inadvertently worsening conflict risks, conflict dynamics, violence, lack of human security and other **dimensions of fragility**?

8. Communication and visibility

8.1 Is the application of the EU requirement and published guidelines on **communication and visibility** benefitting the EU image in the country/region?

Annex 2: MQ guidance for standard ROM reviews

1. Relevance → Are we doing the right things?

***Better regulation:** Relevance looks at the relationship between the needs and problems in society and the objectives of the intervention. Things change over time - certain objectives may be met or superseded; needs and problems change, new ones arise.*

***OECD-DAC (2020):** the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries' global, country, and partner-institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.*

1.1 Does the intervention constitute an adequate response to the current **needs and rights** of the target groups / end beneficiaries?

If the ROM review takes place **at early stage**, the Expert will question the ex-ante adequacy of the design. If it takes place **at a later stage**, the Expert will focus on the persistence of the adequacy at implementation, given changed circumstances, if any.

The Expert should assess whether the response to needs and rights is (still) adequate under three interlinked points of view:

1. Is the intervention (still) addressing the needs and rights of all targeted beneficiaries?
2. Is the intervention (still) addressing the needs and rights in a way that is proportional to their importance / urgency?
3. Is the intervention's strategy (still) the correct response to beneficiaries' needs?

In particular:

- Under 1: The Expert should look at the stakeholder analysis produced at design stage. Is it still valid? Was there sufficient and meaningful stakeholder consultation and engagement or was anybody left behind at design stage, taking into account a gender equality perspective? Specific attention shall be paid to women and children as well as to groups in disadvantaged and/or vulnerable situations (for instance, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, minorities, LGBTI, elderly, migrants and displaced persons). If no sound stakeholder analysis was carried out at design level, it should be highlighted, together with its consequences in design and implementation (i.e. reference to potential lack of/weak responsiveness, lack of/weak ownership and commitment, etc.)
- Under 2:
 - The Expert should question whether national relevant priorities of key stakeholders (as established in relevant documents (plans, strategies, etc.) have been reflected in design and implementation phases, and whether implementation has adapted to changed needs, if any.
 - For institution building interventions, and where relevant, the Expert should highlight whether there are ongoing governance reforms (public administration, rule of law) and whether the (sector) intervention is in line with the reform effort.

- The Expert should question, among other, whether human rights and a gender equality perspective have been identified in the context and problem analysis and addressed in the intervention?
- Under 3: Is there any evidence that the strategy adopted by the intervention is not adequate to address the above needs and rights? And if not, would there be another type of intervention more appropriate?

Target groups and end-beneficiaries should be clearly identified in the ROM analysis.

1.2 Is the intervention adapted to the present institutional, human and financial **capacities** of the partner government and/or other key stakeholder(s) with a role in implementation?

If the ROM review takes place **at early stage**, the Expert will judge whether the capacities in place were adequately assessed at design stage³; and if this assessment is still valid at inception.

If the ROM review takes place **at a later stage**, the Expert should assess whether the capacities in place are still adequate to support the response to needs. The Expert could use the distinction between duty bearers, who have the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil rights, or rights holders, who should have the capacity to know, claim and enjoy their rights.

- For duty bearers: Do they still have the mandate (e.g. existing strategy, capacities and resources (e.g. medium-term expenditure framework, annual budget) to undertake their mission? Do they still have the capacities to plan and implement the intervention in a rights-based and gender-responsive way? If relevant, do they have sufficient capacity to absorb, adapt, and respond to risks and stresses? Can the intervention enhance the capacities of duty bearers to meet the rights of the population and ensure the intervention is gender responsive?
- For rights holders: Are they in a disadvantage and/or vulnerable situation or discriminated against, to what extent, why? Do they have the capacities to claim their rights, to what extent? If relevant, do they have sufficient capacity to absorb, adapt, and respond to risks and stresses? Organisations representing the interests of rights holders: are they included as relevant stakeholders and have they sufficient capacity?

1.3 Is the choice of **IP/method of implementation**⁴ proving to be appropriate?

The choice of IP is often a key determining factor in the success (or not) of an intervention. This choice is assessed and decided during the formulation of the intervention.

The Expert should check:

- Whether they (still) have the capacities⁵ and resources to undertake their mission

³In the case of NEAR ROM contracts, please refer to 'Addressing capacity development in planning/programming, monitoring and evaluation. A Guidance note'. December 2017.

⁴Term used to describe the entity that implements EU funds. There are three types: direct, indirect and shared management.

⁵Ibid. In the case of NEAR, refer to 'Addressing capacity development ...'

- Whether, either at an early stage, or later during the implementation, changes have occurred that may have altered the adequacy of the choice of partner and modality. If the choice proves inappropriate, explain why and what has changed.

1.4 Do all key stakeholders demonstrate effective commitment to the objectives of the intervention (i.e. **ownership**)?

The Expert should assess the degree of ownership by the key stakeholders and the extent to which the intervention is part of an adopted partner government strategy and contributes to implementation of an action plan.

If it is a ROM review at **an early stage**, the Expert should assess whether the design of the intervention has been sufficiently participatory to build the future buy-in.

If the ROM review is at **a later stage of implementation**, the Expert will check whether any change in personnel / government has occurred and changed the level of commitment.

The Expert should indicate whether this lack of commitment is contingent and can be mended with time and *ad hoc* communication, or it is structural and bound to reduce the relevance of the intervention in the long run.

2. Coordination, complementarity, and EU added value

***Coordination:** activities of two or more development partners that are intended to mobilise aid resources or to harmonise their policies, programmes, procedures, and practices so as to maximise the development effectiveness of aid resources.*

***Complementarity** is intended to ensure that EU development policy is complementary to the policies pursued by the Member States.*

***EU added value:** Under the principle of subsidiarity (Article 5 Treaty on European Union), the EU should only act when the objectives can be better achieved by Union action rather than by potentially varying action by Member States. It requires consideration of the value and improvements, which are caused by the EU rather than another party taking action.*

***OECD DAC (2020) Coherence:** The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.*

2.1 Is the intervention likely to benefit or benefiting from any **complementary/synergies** with other interventions funded by the EU and other entities (donors, public and private)?

Often action documents simply list potential complementary interventions rather than really explaining how effective synergies will take place.

If the ROM review is **at an early stage**, the Expert should search for evidence of the listed complementarities **and** synergies that would be emerging and detail how they are likely to benefit the intervention in all aspects. For (sector) institution building interventions the Expert should especially assess to what extent the intervention complements and follows the same principles as horizontal governance (public administration reform, rule of law) interventions.

If the ROM review is **at a later stage** of implementation, the Expert should assess in what way complementarity/synergies are manifesting themselves e.g. by giving examples of synergies created, of coordination meetings taking place regularly, on the nature and scope of the coordination meetings (are they

participated at relevant level for shaping decisions?, etc.). The Expert will also explain how these complementarities and synergies benefit the intervention under all aspects.

The Experts in answering this question should differentiate EU interventions and interventions by other entities.

For institution building interventions, and where relevant, the Expert should highlight whether there are ongoing governance reforms. It is also important to verify whether the intervention is going in the same direction and supports the same principles as horizontal governance interventions.

2.2 Is the intervention (still) reflecting and benefiting from adequate **EU added value**?

The main question to answer would be the extent to which EU intervention is adding benefits to what would have resulted from action taken by the EU MS and other entities (donors, public, private) on their own.

For reviews at **an early stage**, the expert should check whether the intervention has been designed with due consideration of EU added value and describe how/whether this latter is still reflected in the intervention's early implementation.

For reviews at a **later stage**, the expert will search for the presence of the EU added value in the intervention rationale, its effective realisation or persistence during implementation, and will detail how the EU added value is benefiting the intervention.

3. Intervention logic, Monitoring & Learning – Can we monitor results and learn?

3.1 To what extent does the intervention, as currently designed and implemented, take into account **past experiences** in the sector, good practices and lessons learned from previous interventions?

Given the emphasis placed on the development of a learning culture within the EU, the Expert is asked to check the extent to which the present intervention is integrating lessons from previous or related interventions in the same sector, whether implemented by the EU or other entities. The Expert should add a note on whether lessons learnt were clearly and specifically described in the AD.

If the ROM review is **at an early stage**, the Expert should search for evidence of the good practices and lessons learnt, listed in the AD, being effectively integrated in the intervention's inception phase.

If the ROM review is **at a later stage of implementation**, the Expert should assess whether the intervention is building on the previous experience in the same sector, whether it is up taking the lessons learnt stated at design level, or any new one that may have emerged during implementation. The Expert should explain how this is taking place. If it is not taking place, the Expert should explain why.

3.2 What is the current **quality of the intervention logic**? Are planned outputs and outcomes coherent and feasible, and have key assumptions and risks been clearly identified?

The vertical logic of an intervention is found in the logical framework matrix of the intervention or any similar matrix that may be usually developed by the IPs, i.e. results frameworks, theory of change etc. see technical guidance on the revision of logframes provided in the ROM Handbook in Chapter 7.

If the ROM review is **at an early stage**, the Expert can use his/her sector Expertise to assess whether the vertical logic of the intervention is coherent and clearly illustrated (i.e. all results statements (outcomes and outputs) are specific, pitched at the right level and clear -e.g. avoid generic statements such as "capacity improved"), including a clear distinction and logical relationship between outputs, outcomes and impacts.

If the ROM review is **at a later stage** of implementation, the Expert should assess whether the vertical logic is still coherent and clearly illustrating the adequacy of the response to the changed needs.

The Experts should check whether the proposed results (outputs, outcomes, impact) are coherent with the scope of the proposed intervention.

The Experts should check whether the analysis of assumptions and risks (and related mitigation measures) has soundly informed the design and is still valid and whether it duly takes into account gender inequality matters.

If needed by the OM, the result of this revision will converge into the elaboration by the expert of a clean and amended logical framework to be annexed to ROM Report.

3.3 Is the horizontal logic of the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) adequate? I.e. choice of **indicators**, data availability, baseline data, target values and relevant disaggregation.

For all reviews, the Expert needs to assess the horizontal logic of the intervention, usually found in the Logical Framework Matrix. In other words, the Expert will assess whether the selected indicators are RACER, whether relevantly disaggregated data is available for those indicators, whether targets are realistic, whether they have been sex-age and disability disaggregated when relevant, and if they are formulated to take into account a human rights and gender equality perspective. In particular, the Expert could check the following:

- Are the indicators well defined and relevant to measure the achievement of the results?
- Are the indicators sufficient in scope to measure what they are supposed to measure?
- (They may be well formulated but not covering all areas needed)
- Are all related data sources well identified? Is data available on a timely basis?
- Are the indicators specific and sensitive enough also to measure achievement of human rights and gender equality?
- Are baselines (values and time) set and updated for each indicator?
- Are target (values and time) set for the indicators and are they realistic or do they need to be updated?
- Have indicators been validated with the IP(s) at design stage?

3.4 Does the intervention have an adequate **internal monitoring system**?

A monitoring system is a fully-fledged monitoring framework, based on the intervention logframe, detailing the indicators (incl. baselines, milestones and targets), which will allow to measure progress (intervention performance) toward the achievements of results, as well as the frequency and responsibilities for data collection and quality assurance, analysis and reporting on such indicators).

If the ROM review is **at an early stage**, the Expert should assess the quality of the internal monitoring system, if already existing or under preparation. If no system is being developed, the Expert should explain why and propose recommendations for its establishment.

If the ROM review is **at a later stage** of implementation, the Expert should assess whether a monitoring system is in place and effectively working. The Expert should check to what extent the MS is based on the LFM, whether the frequency and responsibility of collecting data are defined and respected, whether the quality of data is assured, the sources of verification specified and reliable. The analysis should also include the quality of reporting i.e. from IP to EU and other key stakeholders, i.e. does it clearly identify progress against planned results (as opposed to activity reporting), problems and proposed solutions?

When relevant, the Expert should also verify to what extent the intervention logic is based on the partner government monitoring and reporting system.

3.5 Are there any **lessons learned and good practices** that would be useful to share beyond the intervention context?

[Yes/No → if yes, report in the dedicated template]

EU places great emphasis in the development of a corporate learning culture. Its ROM activities present a good opportunity for contributing to the knowledge sharing and learning practices of the EU.

- **Lessons learnt** generalise findings and translate past experience into relevant knowledge that should support decision-making, improve performance and promote the achievement of better results. Ideally, they should support the work of both the relevant European and partner institutions.

A lesson may be positive or negative. A lesson must be significant in that it has a real or assumed impact on interventions.

- A **good practice** is a successful process or methodology that is ethical, fair, and replicable. It should also consider, when relevant, what were the transformative practices that worked. A good practice is not only a practice that is good, but one that has been proven to work well and produce good results. It has been tested and supported by a series of evidence and validated sufficiently through its various replications. It can therefore be recommended as a model. A good practice is not to be viewed as prescriptive, it can be adapted to meet new challenges, becoming better as improvements are discovered.

In some cases, a practice has the potential to become a “good practice” but cannot be yet qualified as one because of a lack of evidence and/or replications. In this case, it can be considered a “**promising practice**”.

- A **promising practice** has demonstrated a high degree of success in its single setting, and the possibility of replication in the same setting is guaranteed. It has generated some quantitative data showing positive outcomes over a period of time. A promising practice has the potential to become a good practice, but it doesn’t have enough research or has yet to be replicated to support wider adoption or upscaling. As such, a promising practice incorporates a process of continuous learning and improvement.

If the Expert has detected any lesson learnt or good or promising practice in this intervention, he/she is invited to fill in the ad-hoc form on learning.

4. Efficiency → Are we doing things well?

***Better regulation:** Efficiency considers the cost-effective and timely relationship between the resources used by an intervention and the changes it generates (which may be positive or negative). Resources include staff, purchases, time and money spent fixed costs, running costs, and administrative burden.*

***OECD-DAC (2020):** The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver results, in an economic and timely way.*

4.1 Are the **implementation mechanisms** proving to be appropriate to achieve planned outputs and contribute to outcomes?

For this question the focus is on:

- The functioning of the operational structures (operational/internal management structures/contractual arrangements) and on aspects of design and implementation that are likely to affect or have already affected efficiency
- Both the political and administrative steering role that needs to be assumed by national/local counterparts. The lack of political commitment and administrative steering affects efficiency.
- The role of the Delegation should also be included here.

If the ROM review is **at an early stage**, the Expert should assess whether the roles/responsibilities of the different parties are clearly defined and likely to be respected to ensure efficiency to the implementation, whether the chosen implementation mechanisms and operational structures are likely to affect efficiency, or are already showing areas that need addressing or improvement. The Expert will recommend and seek consensus among the parties for the changes that are deemed necessary to guarantee smooth implementation with no delays.

If the ROM review is **at a later stage**, the Expert will assess the same aspects as above, with more evidence to judge upon, in terms of the proper functioning of the operational structures or the political / administrative steering. The point to stress here is the need to assess the different steering/operational/management structures that have been put in place (e.g. steering committee meetings, MoUs, definitions of roles etc.) to see if they are fostering or hindering efficiency, if they are still proving to be adequate to guarantee the smooth implementation of the intervention and adjusted to the changing implementation context. The Expert will recommend and seek consensus on the improvements that are feasible at that stage of implementation.

In assessing the operational structures in place, the Expert should also assess if there are gender equality and human rights expertise available and if their absence is likely to have or is having an impact on efficiency.

4.2 Are the **inputs / resources** provided by the various stakeholders (still) adequate for achieving the planned results?

In answering this question, the Expert should consider the following aspects:

- Do the resources actually put at the disposal of the intervention correspond to the needs of the intervention?
- To what degree are other resources which are not EU-funded made available?

If the Review is **at an early stage**, the Expert will focus on assessing the adequacy of the by-design inputs/resources (quantities planned per type of resource, expected quality of the resources) to detect any sign of inadequacy that should be promptly addressed to ensure efficiency.

If the Review is **at a later stage**, the Expert will assess whether the input/resources provided by the various stakeholders continue to be adequate to achieve the expected results qualitatively and quantitatively under the current implementation context or in an evolving context.

When dealing with this question the Expert should also explore whether human rights and gender issues have been considered in the allocation of resources.

Where relevant, the Expert should say to what extent is the budget allocation sufficient for Gender and/or Disability relevant actions/activities if the intervention has been marked 1 or 2 by the OECD gender equality or disability marker 1 and 2?

4.3 Has the intervention encountered any **delays** and was the planning revised accordingly?

In answering this question, for all types of reviews, the Expert should consider the implementation progress and highlight significant deviations from schedule. The expert should focus on the following aspects:

1. If there are delays, at what level, how important are they and what are the consequences?
2. What are the reasons for these delays and to what extent have appropriate corrective measures been defined and implemented?
3. To what extent has the planning been revised accordingly?

For reviews **at an early stage**, the focus will be on detecting any element that is likely to engender delays and recommend early mitigation measures.

4.4 Is **spending** in line with the budget?

In answering this question, for all types of reviews, the Expert should check if spending is in line with what was approved in the original budget, bearing in mind that budgets can evolve over time. The important point is that interventions are not penalised for adapting budgets so long as this is justified and has been approved by relevant EU services.

If an Expert is able to go further and comment on the actual cost effectiveness, then he/she should do so. In this case, the Expert should assess the extent to which are the costs of the inputs/resources provided by the intervention reasonably economic in comparison with both the benefits and any recognised norms.

For reviews **at an early stage**, the focus will be on detecting early signs of misalignment that can be timely addressed.

5. Effectiveness → Is it working?

OECD-DAC (2020): The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its intended objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.

5.1 Are the **outputs** being achieved with the **expected quality**?

Outputs are typically the result of several completed activities. They are under the control of the intervention.

The Expert is required to assess the degree of completion of the expected outputs and their related quality. Under this criterion, outputs have to be considered and assessed for their capacity (quality) to lead to outcomes.

For reviews **at an early stage**, it will likely be too early to assess outputs' quality and capacity to lead to outcomes. However, if the intervention has already completed some outputs and/or if there are already signs that the quality is below requirements, then the Expert will have to highlight these risks and propose remedial actions.

5.2 Are the expected **outcomes** likely to be achieved?

The Expert is required to assess the level of achievement of outcomes, by screening any evidence of changes in behaviour, stakeholders' engagement and take up, government buy-in, taking place after outputs completion.

Evidence is to be gathered through interviews with the target groups, other stakeholders, analysis of documents, assessment of the output quality, etc.

For reviews **at early stage**, the Expert will only comment on early signs of outcomes' achievement if it is relevant.

5.3 To what extent are results **inclusive** i.e. ensuring the fair distribution of effects across different groups of the population?

This question is not expected to cover the unintended results, covered under MQ 5.5.

This question aims at capturing the concepts of inclusiveness and "leaving no one behind"⁶ as an element affecting effectiveness. The Expert should look beyond the target groups and final beneficiaries of the intervention to see what (if any) effects it has had, or would likely have, on other groups.

When dealing with this question, the Expert should also consider to what extent the results address non-discrimination and gender-related discrepancies in the intervention.

For reviews **at early stage**, the Expert will only comment on early signs of inclusiveness or lack of inclusiveness. In the latter case, mitigation measures are to be recommended.

⁶ Trainings and material on these concepts are now included in the Gender responsive RBA training.

5.4 Does the intervention effectively **influence** the partner’s relevant policy and interventions?

The Expert should assess whether the intervention has had any input in policy development and policy dialogue. When dealing with this question the Expert should consider a range of policy areas, including human rights, non-discrimination, gender equality, VAWG, disability, environment, etc. For reviews **at early stage**, the Expert will only comment on early signs of effective influence on policy development and dialogue, if relevant.

5.5 Is the intervention having any **unintended positive or negative effects**? Were the negative effects considered for possible (risk) mitigation?

The Expert should detail:

- Any positive effects that have materialised but were not foreseen at design stage. What factors explain the results? These should strengthen the effectiveness of the intervention.
- Any unintended negative effects, such as unintended groups capturing the benefits or inputs from the intervention, unintended negative impacts on vulnerable and/or marginalised groups and on social groups affected by structural inequalities or unintended negative impacts on human rights, etc. (these can be further analysed under question 7.5 under the perspective of these effects influencing the sustainability of the intervention and eventually the fragility and conflict risk in the partner country).
- Measures taken for risk mitigation of unintended effects, such as steps taken to ensure that the selection of direct or indirect beneficiaries is regarded as transparent and equitable, and that the intervention will not worsen conflict dynamics or intergroup tensions?

Where applicable, the Expert should also consider unintended negative or positive effects on power relations between women and men and on discriminatory social norms.

For reviews **at early stage**, the Expert will only comment on early signs of unintended positive or negative effects. In the latter case, mitigation measures are to be recommended.

6 Sustainability – Will the benefits last?

***Better regulation:** Sustainability relates to the continuation of benefits from an intervention after major support has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time. It has various dimensions: social, economic, political, environmental, financial, institutional, etc.*

***OECD-DAC (2020):** The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue.*

***N.B.:** in this template, the aspect of environmental sustainability is covered under question 7.3*

6.1 Are key stakeholders attaining the **necessary capacities**⁷ (incl. institutional, human and financial) to ensure the continued flow of benefits/services?

The answer to this MQ and that of MQ 1.2 need to be coherent. The difference in the analysis is that MQ 1.2 relates to design and implementation, and the current one on sustainability having a forward-looking perspective (considering of course the answer to MQ 1.2).

The Expert should assess:

- any enhancement of institutional and human capacities brought by the intervention that is likely to support the continuation of benefits /services
- Also, where applicable, the Expert should assess to what extent the (sector) intervention contributes to ongoing governance reforms (public administration and/or rule of law) in order to build sustainable institutional and human capacities. Especially, where national legislation already exists, the Expert should assess whether the project respects national legislative requirements for inclusive and evidence-based policy and law-making, stakeholder engagement, etc.
- The financial measures, if any, taken by the local/national counterparts to ensure the continuation of services after the end of the intervention. If no financial measures are taken, it should be highlighted.
- For cases where the issues addressed by the intervention continue to require external support, the Expert should assess whether this external funding is assured e.g. from EU or another donor, and whether this is a sign of insufficient robustness of the achieved results.
- The Expert should highlight any evidence of the intervention being scaled up or having potential for doing so

For reviews **at early stage**, the Expert will only comment on early signs, at the level of capacities, likely to facilitate or hinder the continued flow of benefits/ services. In the latter case, remedial actions are to be recommended.

⁷ In the case of NEAR, refer to 'Addressing capacity development in planning/programming, monitoring and evaluation. A Guidance note'. December 2017.

6.2 Is access to the benefits generated by the intervention **affordable** for target groups over the long term?

The Expert should assess whether the target groups of the services can access (geographically, culturally and financially) over the long term.

- Is the benefit (service / good) accessible to end users over the longer-term?
- Is the service / good going to be provided against a fee or other form of payment?

The answer to this question will consider whether the benefits were for target groups that coincide with the final beneficiaries, or whether the target group is the responsible actor whose capacities are strengthened to provide a given service (or range of services) to the intended final beneficiaries.

For reviews **at early stage**, the Expert will only comment on early signs of the benefits/ service being affordable or unaffordable. In the latter case, remedial actions are to be recommended.

6.3 Has the **private sector** been sufficiently involved with a view to contributing to the sustainability of the intervention?

The Expert will determine whether, when relevant, the level of involvement of the private sector is adequate for the type of intervention to enhance sustainability. Where applicable, the Expert will assess whether the conditions are in place for the private sector to be able to take over.

For reviews **at early stage**, the Expert will only comment on early signs of the private sector's adequate or inadequate involvement. In the latter case, remedial actions are to be recommended.

6.4 Does the proposed intervention increase **resilience** to shocks and pressure (by addressing specific dimensions of fragility and their root causes)?

The Expert should assess the following aspects whenever applicable:

- Are dimensions of fragility in relation to environmental risks and climate change taken into consideration in relation, e.g. to financial and economic measures (disaster preparedness and disaster management, disaster risk reduction, emergency funds, etc.)?
- To what extent the intervention will likely contribute to improve the socio-economic conditions and resilience of the most socially disadvantaged and excluded groups in target areas/ communities (taking into account a gender perspective), e.g. food security, access to land, etc.?
- In case of institution building projects, to what extent does the (sector) intervention contribute to having 'one administration' rather than a siloed administration? Does the intervention respect existing legal requirements and/or promotes good governance principles for inclusive and evidence-based policy- and law-making, promotes government accountability, stakeholder engagement, etc.?

How is the intervention affecting existing divisions and/or competition for resources within regions/ with adjoining regions/ between rural and urban areas/ with international neighbours? Or between IDPs and host communities?

- To what extent the intervention is ensuring women's equal participation?

For reviews **at early stage**, the Expert will only comment, whenever applicable, on early signs of the intervention not addressing specific dimensions of fragility. In the latter case, remedial actions are to be recommended.

7. Cross cutting issues

7.1 What is the contribution of this intervention to achieving **gender equality and human rights outcomes**?

For all reviews, when dealing with this question the Expert should consider how the intervention is addressing gender equality and gender-related gaps in exercise and enjoyment of rights, and gender differences in participation and influence over decision-making; access to justice; ownership and access to and control over resources (e.g. land, finance, knowledge, energy).

Did a gender analysis inform the intervention? Have the OECD DAC policy markers on gender equality and disability been correctly reported on?

Is there evidence that the intervention contributed to a sustainable change of gender roles and relations (transformative change) and provided results that prevent discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes? To what extent the action contributes to empower persons with disability, marginalized and those most left behind?

7.2 To which extent does the intervention adhere to the working principles of the **rights-based approach**?

For all reviews, the Expert should assess whether the intervention, in its design and chosen modalities of implementation, is sufficiently taking into account the five working principles of the Rights-Based Approach:

- Apply all human rights (legality/universality/indivisibility)
- Participation and access to decision-making
- Non-discrimination and equal access
- Accountability and access to the rule of law
- Transparency and access to information

For more information see https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sectors/rights-based-approach-development-cooperation_en

7.3 How is the intervention dealing with **environmental constraints and opportunities**?

For all reviews, the Expert should assess what is being done to understand environmental constraints and opportunities, and to ensure environmental sustainability.

In terms of constraints and opportunities, the Experts should:

- Check if some environmental analysis was performed prior to or during implementation. If this is the case, Experts should indicate to which extent the results and recommendations of the analysis are being taken into account during implementation.
- In all cases, the Expert should consider potential environmental constraints (e.g., quality and availability of natural resources), and pressure (i.e., human activities which bring about changes in the state of the environment).
- In case of negative environmental impacts, Experts should check if offsetting or mitigation measures were put in place.
- Environmental opportunities include the improvement of the natural environment and personal and social well-being including participative approaches

regarding natural resource management. These may also relate to concepts such as circular economy, resource/consumption responsibility

- Check if the implementation is in line with the initial marking on Aid to environment and Rio Marking on Biodiversity and on Combatting desertification.

In terms of environmental sustainability, the answer shall focus on the expected environmental footprint of the intervention.

Environmental sustainability shall be ensured by protecting or improving environmental conditions and ecosystem services (i.e., provisioning, regulating, habitat, and cultural services).

- Environmental benefits may comprise:
- Improved environmental conditions (e.g. protection, sustainable use and restoration of ecosystems and natural resources, including forests, water, soil and land, clean urban areas ...).
- Improved human health.
- Protection and sustainable use of biodiversity.
- Sustainable use of natural resources.
- Fewer conflicts over access to / use of natural resources (including land, forests, water);
- Maintaining community cultural values related to its environment.

Experts should consider:

- Main sources of potential impacts, notably activities and outputs.
- Main receptors of impacts, notably: air, climate, land, water, biodiversity, human development (use of land, water, ...), sites of natural or cultural interest.
- Significance of the identified impacts.
- A distinction shall be made between direct impacts, as the result of interaction with the environment, and global impact, which may be superior to the addition of single direct impacts.

7.4 To what extent does the intervention contribute to EU **climate change** commitments?

For all reviews, depending on the intervention, the Expert could check if the intervention is in line with the NDC of the relative country (ies) or other national commitments such as the Nat adaptation Plan and, if possible, detail the contribution of the intervention to the national targets

In terms of climate change adaptation, is the intervention anticipating the adverse effects of climate change and taking appropriate action to prevent or minimise the damage they can cause, or taking advantage of opportunities that may arise?

In terms of climate change mitigation, to which extent is the intervention taking steps towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and/or Carbon storage/sequestration? Are there opportunities to support low carbon development and climate neutral economy, or realistic alternatives allowing

reduction of GHG emissions (e.g., improved energy efficiency).

Experts should also check if the implementation is performed according to Rio Marking on climate change. Experts may indicate when a possibility of using a Rio Marker was not taken, i.e. when an intervention is contributing to climate action and yet, it was not Rio marked during its formulation.

7.5 Is the intervention inadvertently worsening conflict risks, conflict dynamics, violence, lack of human security and other dimensions of fragility?

For all types of reviews, whenever relevant, the Expert should assess the following:

- Does the proposed intervention take into account the principle of Doing No Harm (including from a gender equality perspective)?
- Has the intervention considered its possible unintended negative impacts on gender equality, vulnerable and/or marginalised groups and on social groups affected by structural inequalities?
- Is the proposed intervention expected to have an impact on addressing structural causes of conflict(s), or conflict risks, and how?
- What is the potential for unintended groups to capture benefits or inputs from the proposed intervention (e.g. conflict economy; local elites; business interests, political parties, armed groups, etc.)?
- Are there issues of governance, democratisation, rule of law, gender equality and human rights to be taken into account in relation to apparently neutral macro-economic/trade measures, or management of natural resources, in order to prevent possible social conflict and doing harm?
- Is there a recent conflict analysis and/or conflict sensitivity assessment to inform implementation, also considering EU policies on women, peace and security?

8. Communication and visibility

8.1 Is the application of the EU requirement and published guidelines on **communication and visibility** benefitting the EU image in the country/region?

Since all interventions have set rules on communication and visibility, the ROM should highlight insufficient application of rules https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en , and asses the effects of this on the observed EU image in the country/region

For reviews **at early stage**, the Expert will only comment on early signs of insufficient compliance with the set rules and recommend adequate remedial actions.

Annex 3: MQs with guidance specific to blending operations

1. Relevance → Are we doing the right things?

***Better regulation:** Relevance looks at the relationship between the needs and problems in society and the objectives of the intervention. Things change over time - certain objectives may be met or superseded; needs and problems change, new ones arise.*

***OECD-DAC (2020):** the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries' global, country, and partner-institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.*

1.1. Does the intervention constitute an adequate response to the current **needs** and **rights** of the target groups / end beneficiaries?

The Experts should assess whether the operation is still responding to the needs and rights under three interlinked points of view:

1. Is the intervention (still) addressing the needs and rights of the targeted beneficiaries, leaving no one behind?
2. Is the intervention (still) addressing the correct needs and rights?
3. Is the intervention's strategy (still) the correct response to beneficiaries' needs?

In particular:

- Under 1: The Expert should assess whether the priorities of the blending facility, at the time of approval, still correspond to the development priorities of the targeted beneficiaries at the moment of the review. In doing so, the Expert will assess whether:
 - A stakeholders' analysis was carried out to inform the application form and whether this is still valid. If no sound stakeholder analysis was carried out at design level, it should be highlighted, together with its consequences in design and implementation (i.e. reference to potential lack of/weak responsiveness, lack of/weak ownership and commitment, etc.).
 - Sufficient and meaningful stakeholder consultation and engagement took place or was anybody left behind at design/preparation/feasibility stage. Specific attention shall be paid to women and children as well as to groups in disadvantaged and/or vulnerable situations (for instance, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, minorities, LGBTI, elderly, migrants and displaced persons).
 - A gender equality perspective was taken into account.
- Under 2: The Expert should question whether the intervention is addressing the correct development problem or market failure, and whether implementation has adapted to changed needs, if any.
 - For infrastructures interventions, the Expert should check whether the intervention was (is still) recognised as a priority by all, in line with relevant documents (plans, strategies, etc.)?

- Does the operation address market failure or suboptimal investment situations which have proven to be financially viable but do not give rise to enough funding from market sources? Have the conditions changed in that there is no longer market failure?
- Does the operation accelerate access to financing including for large-scale and multi-objective interventions?
- The Expert should also question whether human rights and a gender equality perspective have been identified in the context and problem analysis and addressed in the intervention? Had a gender analysis informed the intervention?
- Under 3: The Expert should question whether the chosen blending type or mix of blending types (grants, interest rates subsidies, loan guarantees, technical assistance and risk capital) is still adequate to respond to the identified needs, taking into account the debt sustainability situation of each country, sector needs as blending generally best suit capital intensive sectors with high interventions costs (infrastructure sectors as well as private sector development -mainly interventions aiming to support MSMEs).
 - The Expert should check whether the incentives proposed by the intervention are still useful for a new generation of products created after the beginning of the intervention.
 - Is there any evidence that the strategy adopted by the intervention is not adequate to address the above needs and rights? And if not, would there be another type of intervention more appropriate?

1.2. Is the intervention adapted to the present institutional, human and financial **capacities** of the partner government and/or other key stakeholder(s) with a role in implementation?

The Expert should assess whether the capacities of the implementing FI, local FI, partner government, Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), Contractors for infrastructure interventions (Engineering, Procurement and Construction, Operation and maintenance), chosen TA associated to the blending operation (to provide: market scoping studies, sector assessment, feasibility studies, TA for intervention preparation or intervention implementation, capacity development of different stakeholders, supervision of works, etc.) are adequate to support the response to needs⁸. For instance:

- Have local FI enough capacities to reach the targeted beneficiaries of a blended facility? Do they have the capacities to plan and implement the intervention in a rights-based and gender-responsive way?
- Have all capacity building requirements, maintenance and repair processes been foreseen, prepared and well-funded?
- Has the selection of implementing partners and contractors been made based on merit and usefulness to the country? (for instance, it is important to support local contractors where possible).

In answering this question, the Expert could use the distinction between duty bearers, who have the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil rights, or rights holders, who should have the capacity to know, claim and enjoy their rights.

⁸In the case of NEAR ROM contracts, please refer to ‘Addressing capacity development in planning/programming, monitoring and evaluation. A Guidance note’. December 2017.

- For duty bearers (for instance, partner government, SPV, concessionary, local FI, etc.): Do they still have the mandate (e.g. existing strategy, capacities and resources) to undertake their mission? Do they still have the capacities to plan and implement the intervention in a rights-based and gender-responsive way? If relevant, do they have sufficient capacity to absorb, adapt, and respond to risks and stresses? Can the intervention enhance the capacities of duty bearers to meet the rights of the population and ensure the intervention is gender responsive?
- For rights holders (for instance energy facility users, local communities, local SMEs, etc.): Are they in a disadvantage and/or vulnerable situation or discriminated against, to what extent, why? Do they have the capacities to claim their rights, to what extent? If relevant, do they have sufficient capacity to absorb, adapt, and respond to risks and stresses? Organisations representing the interests of rights holders: are they included as relevant stakeholders and have they sufficient capacity?

1.3. Is the choice of **implementing partner/method of implementation**⁹ proving to be appropriate?

The choice of implementing partner is often a key determining factor in the success (or not) of an intervention. This choice is decided during the formulation of the intervention and assessed through the screening of the application form. The Expert should assess to what extent changes may have occurred in the level of engagement of the FI in the country/region.

- Have general conditions in the country changed future engagement of the FI in the country?
- Have new priorities of the FI (or its local partners) changed the thematic and geographic spread of the FI?
- Has this an impact on the relevance of the choice of the FI for this blending operation?

The Expert should check whether, either at an early stage, or later during the implementation, changes have occurred that may have altered the adequacy of the choice of partner and modality. If the choice proves inappropriate, explain why and what has changed.

1.4. Do all key stakeholders demonstrate effective commitment to the objectives of the intervention (i.e. **ownership**)?

The Expert should assess the degree of ownership by the key stakeholders and the extent to which the intervention is part of an adopted partner government strategy and contributes to implementation of an action plan.

The Expert will assess the degree of involvement of the blending's beneficiary throughout the intervention cycle and whether any change in personnel / government has occurred and altered the level of commitment. The Expert should indicate whether any lack of commitment is contingent and can be mended with remedial actions, or it is structural and bound to reduce the relevance of the intervention in the long run.

⁹Term used to describe the entity that implements EU funds. There are three types: direct, indirect and shared management.

2. Coordination, complementarity and EU added value

***Coordination:** activities of two or more development partners that are intended to mobilise aid resources or to harmonise their policies, programmes, procedures and practices so as to maximise the development effectiveness of aid resources.*

***Complementarity** is intended to ensure that EU development policy is complementary to the policies pursued by the Member States.*

***EU added value:** Under the principle of subsidiarity (Article 5 Treaty on European Union), the EU should only act when the objectives can be better achieved by Union action rather than by potentially varying action by Member States. It requires consideration of the value and improvements, which are caused by the EU rather than another party taking action.*

***OECD DAC (2020) Coherence:** The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.*

2.1 Is the intervention likely to benefit or benefiting from any **complementary/synergies** with other interventions funded by the EU and other entities (donors, public and private)?

As blending is also a response to the significant increase in the number and type of providers of development finance over the last two decades, in the context of limited public resources for external assistance and the growing need for development financing, the EU, as a global player, strives to achieve a more comprehensive approach to enhance donor coordination. Blending operations may constitute an opportunity to engage with government a dialogue on specific sector policy, because interventions supported through blending frequently involve sovereign loans in sectors that are of strategic importance to partner countries.

The Expert will be asked to test whether:

- Interest between the EU and the FI are aligned in achieving the defined policy objectives, and synergies are visible also with other interventions, or between the blending operation and other interventions, possibly fostered by provisions such as co-investment, risk sharing requirements, or financial incentives.
- Coordination mechanisms with other donors are defined, regular, on schedule and effective?
- EUDs include the blended operation in their dialogue with partner countries on specific policies in line with the intervention under direct management or any other relevant initiative, and ensure complementarity and synergies with the various aid modalities including budget support, interventions implemented under direct management or any other relevant initiative?

It is likely that the application form will mention potential complementary interventions rather than really explaining how effective synergies will take place. The Expert should search for evidence of the listed complementarities **and** synergies that would be emerging. The Expert should assess in what way complementarity/synergies are manifesting themselves e.g. by giving examples of synergies created. The Experts in answering this question should differentiate EU interventions and interventions by other entities.

2.2 Is the intervention (still) reflecting and benefiting from adequate **EU added value**?

The Expert should search for evidence of consideration of the EU added value during design and its effective realisation during implementation.

The main question to answer would be the extent to which EU intervention is adding benefits to what would have resulted from action taken by the EU MS and other entities (donors, public, private) on their own. In particular, the Experts should assess the following aspects:

- To what extent has the intervention leveraged funds amongst FIs? Other financiers? Private sector? Analyse the importance of the leverage and additionality
- Is there still additionality and leverage of the EU contribution? Is some corrective measure necessary to safeguard the additionality?

3. Intervention logic, Monitoring & Learning – Can we monitor results and learn?

3.1 To what extent does the intervention, as currently designed and implemented take into account **past experiences** in the sector, good practices and lessons learnt from previous interventions?

Given the emphasis placed on the development of a learning culture within the EU, the Expert is asked to check the extent to which the present intervention is integrating lessons from previous or related interventions in the same sector, whether implemented by the EU or other entities.

In particular, the Expert should assess whether:

- the intervention is building on the previous experience in the same sector or previous phases of the same intervention;
- it is applying the lessons learnt that may have emerged over ten years of blending operations, as well as the lessons learnt by the donor community in similar interventions and sectors. The Experts should search in the feasibility studies or application forms, in addition to using their know-how of blending operations.
- observations and recommendations from previous monitoring reports, annual reviews and evaluations are followed up / implemented.

The Expert should explain how this is taking place. If it is not taking place, the Expert should explain why.

3.2 What is the current **quality of the intervention logic**? Are planned outputs and outcomes coherent and feasible, and have key assumptions and risks been clearly identified?

The vertical logic of an intervention is found in the logical framework matrix of the intervention or any similar matrix that may be usually developed by the implementing partners, i.e. results frameworks, theory of change etc. see technical guidance on the revision of logframes provided in the ROM Handbook.

The Experts should check whether:

- the “Expected results” section of the Application Form - presently described only through indicators - is showing an internal coherence with the stated development objectives, or additional results should be added.
- outcomes are defined beyond financial return and are commensurate with the size and scope of the proposed intervention.

- gender equality specific outcomes are integrated in the “expected results”
- the intervention logic - in whatever form described - has been adapted if circumstances have changed.

If the ROM review is **at an early stage**, the Expert can use his/her sector expertise to assess whether the vertical logic of the intervention is coherent and sufficiently clearly illustrated (i.e. all results statements (outcomes and outputs) are specific, pitched at the right level and clear

If the ROM review is **at a later stage** of implementation, the Expert should assess whether the vertical logic is still coherent and clearly illustrating the adequacy of the response to the changed needs.

The Experts should check whether the analysis of assumptions and risks (and related mitigation measures) has soundly informed the proposal and is still valid. In particular, the Expert should check whether the FI has provided a specific assessment of the currency risks, market risks, financial and economic risks or risk profile of borrowers, and has considered all potential negative externalities (environment, social and/or economic) including gender inequality matters.

3.3 Is the horizontal logic of the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) adequate? I.e. choice of **indicators**, data availability, baseline data, target values and relevant disaggregation.

The Expert needs to assess the horizontal logic of the intervention, whichever format it may take in the application form or further delegation agreement. In other words, the Expert will assess whether the selected indicators are RACER, whether relevantly disaggregated data is available for those indicators, whether targets are realistic, whether they have been sex-age and disability disaggregated when relevant, and if they are formulated to take into account a human rights and gender equality perspective. In particular, the Expert should check whether:

- Indicators have been adequately selected to capture development results, and in particular on the social and developmental value of the investment (i.e. improving living conditions and access to services and goods for groups people that experienced discrimination and gender inequality, added value in social sectors such as education and health)
- additional results indicators should be considered
- baselines have been produced before intervention start or shortly after the start

The Expert should investigate if the FI has developed a results measurement framework in order to be able to report on the indicators.

3.4 Does the intervention have an adequate **internal monitoring system**?

A monitoring system is a fully-fledged monitoring framework, based on the intervention logframe, detailing the indicators (incl. baselines, milestones and targets) by which measuring the achievements of results, as well as the frequency and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and reporting on such indicators. For blending interventions, the Experts should assess the extent to which the broad monitoring framework provided into the Application Form or subsequent agreements, has been converted into a proper monitoring system, with specifications on ways of calculating data, responsibilities and frequency for collecting data, reporting systems, and dissemination flows.

In particular Experts should assess whether:

- all elements of monitoring and reporting have been well defined and agreed between the EU and the FI – including in the contracts – and
- the scope and modus operandi of the monitoring is sufficiently detailed and explained in the Application Form and/or subsequent agreement
- monitoring and reporting arrangements with the financial and other intermediaries and/or the beneficiaries are adequately implemented
- relevant data collection systems exist, or have they been put in place

At a lower level of delegation, for interventions financed through intermediation with different layers, the Experts should assess whether monitoring and reporting arrangements with the financial and other intermediaries and/or the beneficiaries are well defined, i.e. are sufficiently defined, reliable and verifiable to be used as source of information for reporting by the FI to the EU.

The analysis should include the quality of reporting i.e. from IF to EU and other key stakeholders, covering the following aspects:

- Do the FI report on the results indicators as agreed between the EU and the FIs?
- Do reports clearly identify progress against planned results (as opposed to activity reporting), problems and proposed solutions?
- Do data allow assessing the additionality and leverage of the blending operation and to continue monitoring it?
- Are the risks monitoring procedures in place, effective and are the risk assessments regularly updated? Are risk mitigating measures anticipated sufficiently and effective?
- Are the procedures to verify assumption in place, effective and are the assumptions regularly monitored?

When relevant, the Expert should also verify to what extent the intervention logic is based on the partner government monitoring and reporting system.

3.5 Are there any **lessons learned and good practices** that would be useful to share beyond the intervention context?

[Yes/No → if yes, report in the dedicated template]

EU places great emphasis in the development of a corporate learning culture. Its ROM activities present a good opportunity for contributing to the knowledge sharing and learning practices of the EU

Lessons learnt generalise findings and translate past experience into relevant knowledge that should support decision-making, improve performance and promote the achievement of better results. Ideally, they should support the work of both the relevant European and partner institutions.

A lesson may be positive or negative. A lesson must be significant in that it has a real or assumed impact on interventions.

A good practice is a successful process or methodology that is ethical, fair, and replicable. It should also consider, when relevant, what were the transformative practices that worked. A good practice is not only a practice that is good, but one that has been proven to work well and produce good results. It has been tested and supported by a series of evidence and validated sufficiently through its various replications. It can therefore be recommended as a model. A good practice is not to be viewed as prescriptive, it can be adapted to meet new challenges, becoming better as improvements are discovered.

- In some cases, a practice has the potential to become a “good practice” but cannot be yet qualified as one because of a lack of evidence and/or replications. In this case, it can be considered a “promising practice”.

- A promising practice has demonstrated a high degree of success in its single setting, and the possibility of replication in the same setting is guaranteed. It has generated some quantitative data showing positive outcomes over a period of time. A promising practice has the potential to become a good practice, but it doesn't have enough research or has yet to be replicated to support wider adoption or upscaling. As such, a promising practice incorporates a process of continuous learning and improvement.

If the Expert has detected any lesson learnt or best good or promising practice in this intervention, he/she is invited to fill in the ad-hoc form on learning.

For instance, the Expert could screen these aspects:

- Does the blending operation contribute to the spreading of a culture of M&E based on shared methods and oriented on development results?
- Does the Internal Control system set up by the lead IF institution for the implementation of the specific blending operation (or mix of blending types like grants, interest rates subsidies, loan guarantees, technical assistance and risk capital) remain in compliance with applicable regulatory and contractual provisions and is it likely to be replicated for other operations? Does it yield best practices and lessons learnt?
- Is the blending modality of intervention likely to foster consultations, cross sector synergies and enrich policy dialogue?

4 Efficiency → Are we doing things well?

***Better regulation:** Efficiency considers the cost-effective and timely relationship between the resources used by an intervention and the changes it generates (which may be positive or negative). Resources include staff, purchases, time and money spent fixed costs, running costs, and administrative burden.*

***OECD-DAC (2020):** The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver results, in an economic and timely way.*

4.1 Are the **implementation mechanisms** proving to be appropriate to achieve planned outputs and contribute to outcomes?

For this question the focus is on:

- The functioning of the operational structures (operational/internal management structures/contractual arrangements) and on aspects of design and implementation that either contributed or reduced efficiency.
- Both the political and administrative steering role that needs to be assumed by national/local counterparts. The lack of political commitment and administrative steering affects efficiency.
- The role of the Delegation should also be included here.

The Expert should assess whether all elements of monitoring and reporting as defined and agreed between the EU and the FI are being respected. In particular:

- Does the FI provide an annual update of the financial leverage ratios? And of the risks?

- Have all management/coordination/technical meetings been planned normally; has the EU been invited as agreed and informed in due time; has it received the relevant documentation on time and have the minutes of the meetings been duly prepared; has the EU participated in Steering Committees when this was foreseen?
- Do local counterparts have a steering role?
- Are field visits regular and - where relevant - joint between the EU, the FI, the Government and other stakeholders?
- Is the necessary expertise available to follow closely progress at the local level?"
- Does the EUD have enough time and means to participate in monitoring? Would an ad hoc – be it temporary or intermittent – specialised support be useful?
- Is the information flow between the IFIs HQ, IFI's local office of the FI, the EU HQ and EUD smooth and structured so that all have the same level of information?
- Can the EU avail of the information if requested on risks, updates of the intervention logic?

4.2 Are the **inputs / resources** provided by the various stakeholders (still) adequate for achieving the planned results?

In answering this question, the Expert should assess whether the inputs (loans, grants and/or guarantees) are being made available as agreed in terms of volume and calendar by the IF and the co-financier(s)

When dealing with this question the Expert should also explore whether human rights and gender issues have been considered in the allocation of resources.

4.3 Has the intervention encountered any **delays** and was the planning revised accordingly?

In answering this question, the Expert should consider the following aspects:

- If there are delays, how important are they and what are the consequences?
- What are the reasons for these delays and to what extent have appropriate corrective measures been defined and implemented?
- To what extent has the planning been revised accordingly?

4.4 Is **spending** in line with the budget?

The objective is not for the Expert to revisit the originally approved budget but rather to see if spending is in line with what was approved, bearing in mind that budgets can evolve over time. The important point is that interventions are not penalised for adapting budgets so long as this is justified and has been approved by relevant EU services.

If an Expert is able to go further and comment on the actual cost effectiveness, then he/she should do so. In this case, the Expert should assess the extent to which are the costs of the inputs/resources provided by the intervention reasonably economic in comparison with both the benefits and any recognised norms. For instance, to what extent are FI's management fees or the EPC fees, or the Operation and maintenance cost, etc. in line with economic norms to achieve the planned results?

5. Effectiveness → Is it working?

OECD-DAC (2020): The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its intended objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.

5.1 Are the **outputs** being achieved with the **expected quality**?

Outputs are typically the result of several completed activities. They are under the control of the intervention.

The Expert is required to assess the degree of completion of the expected outputs and their related quality.

Is the quality of outputs satisfactory (not only EU contribution, but for the whole intervention)?

5.2 Are the expected **outcomes** likely to be achieved?

The Experts should assess the level of achievement of outcomes, by screening any evidence of changes in behaviour, stakeholders' engagement and take up, government buy-in, taking place after outputs completion.

For instance, the Expert should highlight the ramifications for the private sector (if any) and for the market.

5.3 To what extent are results **inclusive** i.e. ensuring the fair distribution of effects across different groups of the population?

This question is not expected to cover the unintended results, covered under MQ 5.5. This question aims at capturing the concepts of inclusiveness and "leaving no one behind"¹⁰ as an element affecting effectiveness. The Expert should look beyond the target groups and final beneficiaries of the intervention to see what (if any) effects it has had, or would likely have, on other groups.

In particular, the Experts are required to assess whether the blending intervention is leaving no one behind, i.e. is ensuring a fair distribution of the benefits across the intended beneficiaries, is not discriminating based on sex, gender, disability, as well as to groups in vulnerable situation.

5.4 Does the intervention effectively **influence** the partner's relevant policy and interventions?

The Expert should assess whether the intervention has had any input in policy development and policy dialogue. In particular, the Experts should assess the following aspects:

- What is the input (if any) of the blending operation in the sector policy development and policy dialogue?
- Is there any evidence that blending has allowed to be involved in the formulation of policies with the partner countries and to create co-financing

¹⁰ Trainings and material on these concepts are now included in the Gender responsive RBA training.

opportunities including with the private sector?

- Has the sector policy of the Government changed since the approval of the EU contribution?
- Has the Government effectively implemented the agreed policy changes and/or has it provided enough resources to make the policy effective?
- Did the blending operation carry a “policy leverage”?

When dealing with this question the Expert should consider a range of policy areas, including human rights, non-discrimination, gender equality, VAWG, disability, environment, etc.

5.5 Is the intervention having any **unintended positive or negative effects**? Were the negative effects considered for possible (risk) mitigation?

The Expert should detail:

- Any positive effects that have materialised but were not foreseen at design stage. For instance, capacity building, economic stabilisation, job creation, economic multiplier effect, enhanced partnership and cooperation between the FI and local partners in development in the sector of the intervention. What factors explain the results? These should strengthen the effectiveness of the intervention;
- Any unintended negative effects at actual implementation level, for instance crowding-out of investors, market distortion, unfair competition, over-indebtedness, transparency issues, corruption, environmental damages, socio-economic discrimination, gender inequality, unintended groups capturing the benefits or inputs from the intervention, unintended negative impacts on vulnerable and/or marginalised groups and on social groups affected by structural inequalities or unintended negative impacts on human rights, etc. (these can be further analysed under question 7.5 under the perspective of these effects influencing the sustainability of the intervention and eventually the fragility and conflict risk in the partner country)
- Measures taken for risk mitigation of unintended effects, such as steps taken to ensure that the selection of direct or indirect beneficiaries is regarded as transparent and equitable, and that the intervention will not worsen conflict dynamics or intergroup tensions.

When dealing with this question, the Expert should also consider unintended negative or positive effects on power relations between women and men and on discriminatory social norms.

6. Sustainability → Will the benefits last?

***Better regulation:** Sustainability relates to the continuation of benefits from an intervention after major support has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time. It has various dimensions: social, economic, political, environmental, financial, institutional, etc.*

***OECD-DAC (2020):** The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue.*

***N.B.:** in this template, the aspect of environmental sustainability is covered under question 7.3*

6.1 Are key stakeholders attaining the **necessary capacities**¹¹ (incl. institutional, human and financial) to ensure the continued flow of benefits/services?

The answer to this MQ and that of MQ 1.2 need to be coherent. The difference in the analysis is that MQ 1.2 relates to design and implementation, and the current one on sustainability having a forward-looking perspective (considering of course the answer to MQ 1.2).

The Expert should detail:

- Any enhancement of institutional and human capacities brought by the intervention that is likely to support the continuation of benefits /services. For instance, is the technical assistance component providing the necessary institutional and human capacities to ensure the continued flow of benefits/services? Are local IF acquiring better capacities / enhanced ratios for enhanced financial operations?
- Any contribution to ongoing governance reforms (public administration and/or rule of law) in order to build sustainable institutional and human capacities.
- The financial measures, if any, taken by the local/national counterparts to ensure the continuation of services after the end of the intervention. For instance, for public infrastructures, financed through blending, details on Government's realistic commitment to finance Operation and Maintenance, whether it has entered any off-take agreement with the newly established service provider, etc. If no financial measures are taken, it should be highlighted
- Any evidence of the intervention being scaled up or having potential for doing so.

For cases where the issues addressed by the intervention continue to require external support, the Expert should assess whether this external funding is assured e.g. from EU or another donor, and whether this is a sign of insufficient robustness of the achieved results.

6.2 Is access to the benefits generated by the intervention **affordable** for target groups over the long term?

The Expert should assess whether the target groups of the services have access (geographically, culturally and financially) over the long term.

- Is the benefit (service / good) accessible to end users over the longer-term?
- Is the service / good going to be provided against a fee or other form of payment?

The answer to this question will consider whether the benefits were for target groups that coincide with the final beneficiaries, or whether the target group is the responsible actor whose capacities are strengthened to provide a given service (or range of services) to the intended final beneficiaries.

For instance, if the blending operation is helping to finance a public utility (power, water, transport), the Expert should assess whether the future/agreed tariff policy is affordable for the target groups over the long term, including from a gender perspective.

6.3 Has the **private sector** been sufficiently involved with a view to contributing to the sustainability of the intervention?

In addition to involvement, and where applicable, are the conditions in place for the private sector to be able to take over?

¹¹In the case of NEAR, refer to 'Addressing capacity development in planning/programming, monitoring and evaluation. A Guidance note'. December 2017.

In particular, the Expert should assess if the intervention has had an effect on the market and remedying the market inefficiencies and, when relevant, to what extent could the private sector take over in the future.

6.4 Does the proposed intervention increase **resilience** to shocks and pressure (by addressing specific dimensions of fragility and their root causes)?

The Expert should assess the following aspects:

- Are dimensions of fragility in relation to environmental risks and climate change taken into consideration in the intervention and investment associated to it? Does an Environment and Social Management Plan exist and is being implemented?
- Have sufficient measures (MoU, capacity building schemes, sub-contracting, etc.) been taken to safeguard the rights of the host communities in the implementation of infrastructure projects?
- To what extent the intervention will likely contribute to improve the socio-economic conditions and resilience of the most socially disadvantaged and excluded groups in target areas/ communities (taking into account a gender perspective), e.g. food security, access to land, etc.?
- How is the intervention affecting existing divisions and/or competition for resources within regions/ with adjoining regions/ between rural and urban areas/ with international neighbours? Or between IDPs and host communities?
- To what extent the intervention is ensuring women's equal participation?

7 Cross cutting issues

7.1 What is the contribution of this intervention to achieving **gender equality and human rights outcomes**?

When dealing with this question the Expert should consider how the intervention is addressing gender equality and gender-related gaps in exercise and enjoyment of rights, and gender differences in participation and influence over decision-making; access to justice; ownership and access to and control over resources (e.g. land, finance, knowledge, energy).

Did a gender analysis inform the intervention? Have the OECD DAC policy markers on gender equality and disability been correctly reported on?

Is there evidence that the intervention contributed to a sustainable change of gender roles and relations (transformative change) and provided results that prevent discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes? To what extent the action has contributed to empower persons with disability, marginalized and those most left behind?

7.2 To which extent does the intervention adhere to the working principles of the **rights-based approach**?

The Expert should assess whether the intervention, in its design and chosen modalities of implementation, is sufficiently taking into account the five working principles of the Rights-Based Approach:

- Apply all human rights (legality/universality/indivisibility)
- Participation and access to decision-making
- Non-discrimination and equal access

- Accountability and access to the rule of law
- Transparency and access to information

For more information see https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sectors/rights-based-approach-development-cooperation_en

7.3 How is the intervention dealing with **environmental constraints and opportunities**?

The Expert should assess what is being done to understand environmental constraints and opportunities, and to act upon them. In order to do so, the Experts should:

- Check if some environmental analysis was performed prior to or during implementation. If this is the case, Experts should indicate to which extent the results and recommendations of the analysis are being taken into account during implementation.
- In all cases, the Expert should consider potential environmental constraints (e.g., quality and availability of natural resources), and pressure (i.e., human activities which bring about changes in the state of the environment).
- In case of negative environmental impacts, Experts should check if offsetting or mitigation measures were put in place.
- Environmental opportunities include the improvement of personal and social well-being including participative approaches regarding natural resource management. These may also relate to concepts such as circular economy, resource/consumption responsibility
- Check if the implementation is in line with the initial marking on Aid to environment and Rio Marking on Biodiversity and on Combatting desertification.

In terms of environmental sustainability, the answer shall focus on the expected environmental footprint of the intervention, once it is complete.

Environmental sustainability shall be ensured by protecting or improving environmental conditions and ecosystem services (i.e., provisioning, regulating, habitat, and cultural services).

Environmental benefits may comprise:

- Improved environmental conditions (e.g., for forests, water sources, agricultural potential, recreational potential, aesthetic values, clean urban areas ...).
- Improved human health.
- Protection of biodiversity.
- Decreased use of natural resources.
- Fewer conflicts over access to / use of natural resources (including land, forests, water).
- Maintaining community cultural values related to its environment.

Experts should consider:

- Main sources of potential impacts, notably activities and outputs.
- Main receptors of impacts, notably: air, climate, land, water, biodiversity, human development (use of land, water, ...), sites of natural or cultural interest.
- Significance of the identified impacts.
- A distinction shall be made between direct impacts, as the result of interaction with the environment, and global impact, which may be superior to the addition of single direct impacts.

7.4 To what extent does the intervention contribute to EU **climate change** commitments?

In terms of climate change adaptation, is the intervention anticipating the adverse effects of climate change and taking appropriate action to prevent or minimise the damage they can cause, or taking advantage of opportunities that may arise?

In terms of climate change mitigation, to which extent is the intervention taking steps towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and/or Carbon storage/sequestration? Are there opportunities to support low carbon development, or realistic alternatives allowing reduction of GHG emissions (e.g., improved energy efficiency).

Experts should also check if the implementation is performed according to Rio Marking on climate change. Experts may indicate when a possibility of using a Rio Marker was not taken, i.e. when an intervention is contributing to climate action and yet, it was not Rio marked during its formulation.

7.5 Is the intervention inadvertently worsening conflict risks, conflict dynamics, violence, lack of human security and other dimensions of fragility?

- Does the proposed intervention take into account the principle of Doing No Harm (including from a gender equality perspective)
- Has the intervention considered its possible unintended negative impacts on gender equality, vulnerable and/or marginalised groups and on social groups affected by structural inequalities?
- Is the proposed intervention expected to have an impact on addressing structural causes of conflict(s), or conflict risks, and how?
- What is the potential for unintended groups to capture benefits or inputs from the proposed intervention (e.g. conflict economy; local elites; business interests, political parties, armed groups, etc.)?
- Are there issues of governance, democratisation, rule of law, gender equality and human rights to be taken into account in relation to apparently neutral macro-economic/trade measures, or management of natural resources, in order to prevent possible social conflict and doing harm?
- Is there a recent conflict analysis and/or conflict sensitivity assessment to inform implementation, also considering EU policies on women, peace and security?

8 Communication and visibility

8.1 Is the application of the EU requirement and published guidelines on **communication and visibility** benefitting the EU image in the country/region?

The Expert should assess whether, the EU visibility is assured and sufficient.

Since all interventions have set rules on communication and visibility, the ROM should highlight insufficient application of rules.

https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en



Annex 4: Templates for ROM reviews

ROM Report

ROM-XXX

ROM review title

INTERVENTION INFORMATION	
ID	
Title	
Start date	
End date	
DG in Charge	
Responsible Service	
Blending	

OPERATIONAL INFORMATION	
Geographical Implementation	
Benefiting Zone	
Operational manager (OM)	

FINANCIAL INFORMATION	
EU contribution	
Paid amount	
Date of last payment	

ROM REVIEW INFORMATION	
ROM ID	
Countries visited	
ROM expert(s) name(s)	
Field phase start date	
Field phase end date	

ROM REPORT

ROM-XXX

ROM review title

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

max 7000 characters

PROJECT SYNOPSIS

Description of the context with a focus on the problematic to be addressed by the action

max 4000 characters

Description of the intervention logic

max 7000 characters

Description of the target group(s) and final beneficiaries

max 4000 characters

FINDINGS

1. Relevance

max 12000 characters

2. Coordination, complementarity and EU added value

max 12000 characters

3. Intervention logic, Monitoring & Learning

max 12000 characters

ROM REPORT

ROM-XXX

ROM review title

4. Efficiency

max 12000 characters

5. Effectiveness

max 12000 characters

6. Sustainability

max 12000 characters

7. Cross-cutting issues

max 12000 characters

8. Communication and visibility

max 12000 characters

CONCLUSIONS

C1

max 3000 characters

C2

max 3000 characters

ROM REPORT

ROM-XXX

ROM review title

C3

max 3000 characters

C4

max 3000 characters

C5

max 3000 characters

C6

max 3000 characters

C7

max 3000 characters

C8

max 3000 characters

C9

max 3000 characters

C10

max 3000 characters

ROM REPORT

ROM-XXX

ROM review title

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

max 2000 characters

Linked to Conclusions

Priority

Importance

To whom

Recommendation 2

max 2000 characters

Linked to Conclusions

Priority

Importance

To whom

Recommendation 3

max 2000 characters

Linked to Conclusions

Priority

Importance

To whom

Recommendation 4

max 2000 characters

Linked to Conclusions

Priority

Importance

To whom

Recommendation 5

max 2000 characters

Linked to Conclusions

Priority

Importance

To whom

ROM REPORT

ROM-XXX

ROM review title

Recommendation 6

max 2000 characters

Linked to Conclusions

Priority

Importance

To whom

Recommendation 7

max 2000 characters

Linked to Conclusions

Priority

Importance

To whom

Recommendation 8

max 2000 characters

Linked to Conclusions

Priority

Importance

To whom

Recommendation 9

max 2000 characters

Linked to Conclusions

Priority

Importance

To whom

Recommendation 10

max 2000 characters

Linked to Conclusions

Priority

Importance

To whom

ROM REPORT



ROM Monitoring Questions

ROM-XXX

ROM review title

INTERVENTION INFORMATION	
ID	
Title	
Start date	
End date	
DG in Charge	
Responsible Service	
Blending	

OPERATIONAL INFORMATION	
Geographical Implementation	
Benefiting Zone	
DAC Purpose Code	
Operational manager (OM)	

FINANCIAL INFORMATION	
EU contribution	
Paid amount	
Date of last payment	

ROM REVIEW INFORMATION	
ROM ID	
Countries visited	
ROM expert(s) name(s)	
Field phase start date	
Field phase end date	

ROM-XXX

ROM review title

- 3.2 What is the current **quality of the intervention** logic? Are planned outputs and outcomes coherent and feasible, and have key assumptions and risks been clearly identified?

max 6000 characters

- 3.3 Is the horizontal logic of the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) adequate? I.e. choice of **indicators**, data-availability, baseline data, target values and relevant disaggregation.

max 6000 characters

- 3.4 Does the intervention have an adequate **internal monitoring system**?

max 6000 characters

- Yes** 3.5 Are there any **lessons learned** and **good practices** that would be useful to share beyond the intervention context?

No

max 6000 characters

4. EFFICIENCY

- 4.1 Are the **implementation mechanisms** proving to be appropriate to achieve planned outputs and contribute to outcomes?

max 6000 characters

- 4.2 Are the **inputs / resources** provided by the various stakeholders (still) adequate for achieving the planned results ?

max 6000 characters

- 4.3 Has the intervention encountered any **delays** and was the planning revised accordingly?

max 6000 characters

ROM
MONITORING
QUESTIONS

ROM-XXX

ROM review title

- 3.2 What is the current **quality of the intervention** logic? Are planned outputs and outcomes coherent and feasible, and have key assumptions and risks been clearly identified?

max 6000 characters

- 3.3 Is the horizontal logic of the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) adequate? I.e. choice of **indicators**, data-availability, baseline data, target values and relevant disaggregation.

max 6000 characters

- 3.4 Does the intervention have an adequate **internal monitoring system**?

max 6000 characters

- Yes** 3.5 Are there any **lessons learned** and **good practices** that would be useful to share beyond the intervention context?

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max 6000 characters

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max 6000 characters

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max 6000 characters

ROM
MONITORING
QUESTIONS

ROM-XXX

ROM review title

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max 6000 characters

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max 6000 characters

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max 6000 characters

- Yes 3.5 Are there any **lessons learned** and **good practices** that would be useful to share beyond the intervention context?

No

max 6000 characters

4. EFFICIENCY

- 4.1 Are the **implementation mechanisms** proving to be appropriate to achieve planned outputs and contribute to outcomes?

max 6000 characters

- 4.2 Are the **inputs / resources** provided by the various stakeholders (still) adequate for achieving the planned results ?

max 6000 characters

- 4.3 Has the intervention encountered any **delays** and was the planning revised accordingly?

max 6000 characters

ROM
MONITORING
QUESTIONS

ROM-XXX

ROM review title

8. COMMUNICATION & VISIBILITY

- 8.1 Is the application of the EU requirement and published guidelines on communication and visibility benefiting the EU image in the country/region?
-
-

max 6000 characters

9. LIST OF DOCUMENTS ANALYSED¹²

9.1 Country Programming documents	
9.2 Action Documents	
9.3 QRM checklists	
9.4 Financing / Contribution / Delegation / Administration Agreement or Grant Contract (or in some cases Service Contract). In these documents, all annexes are to be included such as Technical and Administrative provisions, Implementation schedule, logframe (incl. updates)	
9.5 Project contracts / programme estimates	
9.6 In case of projects selected through calls for proposals: Guidelines for calls for proposals	
9.7 Riders to all the documents listed above and their explanatory notes	
9.8 Annual and overall activity schedules / implementation plans	
9.9 Implementation progress reports	
9.10 Previous ROM reports	
9.11 Mid-term evaluations	
9.12 Final evaluations of previous phases (if any)	
9.13 Thematic studies and consultancy reports related to the project	
9.23 Other Documents	
max 20 other documents	

10. LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Category	Name	Email	Position	Institution

ROM
MONITORING
QUESTIONS

¹² For the EU Trust Funds (EUTF), the “list of documents analysed” will include specific relevant documents for this type of interventions (9.14 to 9.22).

Annex 5: Template good practices and lessons learnt

Lesson learnt definition

Lessons learnt (LL) generalise findings and translate past experience into relevant knowledge that should support decision-making, improve performance and promote the achievement of better results. Ideally, they should support the work of both the relevant European and partner institutions. A lesson may be positive or negative. A lesson must be significant in that it has a real or assumed impact on interventions.

A **good practice** (GP) is a successful process or methodology that is ethical, fair, and replicable. It should also consider, when relevant, what were the transformative practices that worked. A good practice is not only a practice that is good, but one that has been proven to work well and produce good results. It has been tested and supported by a series of evidence and validated sufficiently through its various replications. It can therefore be recommended as a model. A good practice is not to be viewed as prescriptive, it can be adapted to meet new challenges, becoming better as improvements are discovered.

In some cases, a practice has the potential to become a “good practice” but cannot be yet qualified as one because of a lack of evidence and/or replications. In this case, it can be considered a “promising practice”.

A **promising practice** (PP) has demonstrated a high degree of success in its single setting, and the possibility of replication in the same setting is guaranteed. It has generated some quantitative data showing positive outcomes over a period of time. A promising practice has the potential to become a good practice, but it doesn't have enough research or has yet to be replicated to support wider adoption or upscaling. As such, a promising practice incorporates a process of continuous learning and improvement.

The ROM methodology foresees a single reporting template for LL, GP and PP. For simplicity, we use the abbreviation LL/GP.

Good practice criteria

The following set of criteria will help you determine whether a practice is a “good practice”:

Effective and successful:

A good “Lesson Learnt” has shown its strategic relevance as the most effective way in achieving a specific objective; it has been successfully adopted and has had tangible positive impact/s on individuals and/or communities.

Efficient implementation:

A good Lesson Learnt has shown its efficiency as the most successful way in conducting and implementing a project, thus clearly contributing to achieving the expected results of the project.

Environmentally, economically and socially sustainable:

A good “Lesson Learnt” meets current needs, in particular the essential needs of the world’s poorest, without compromising the ability to address future needs.

Gender and age sensitive:

A description of the lesson learnt must show how actors, men and women, involved in the process, were able to improve their autonomy, resilience, capacity to take decisions at household and community level and access to services and entitlements.

Technically feasible:

Technical feasibility is the basis of a good “Lesson Learnt”. It is easy to learn and to implement.

Potential for validation, replicability and adaptability:

A good “Lesson Learnt” should have the potential for validation and replication and should therefore be adaptable to similar objectives in varying situations.

Template for lessons learnt

Use one per Lesson Learnt (LL) please.

Project's Title	
Monitoring dates	
Project's Location	What is the geographical range where the LL has been used? Please specify when possible, the country, region, province, district, town and village.
ROM Expert	
QC Expert	
Type of Lesson Learnt	Positive/Negative
Lesson Learnt or Practice	Short description
Project Objective/s	What is the aim/objective of the project?
Methodological Approach	What methodology has been used in order to address the initial issue and lead to a successful outcome and finally to the good/bad Lesson Learnt? Please include gender aspects addressed in the description of the methodological approach.
Impact/effect	What has been the impact (positive or negative) of this Lesson Learnt on the beneficiaries (by categories of beneficiaries and or users, including by gender) and/or of the project?
Stakeholders and Partners	Who are the beneficiaries or the target group of the Lesson Learnt? Who else is involved (institutions, partners, implementing agencies, and donors)?
Validation	Is there a confirmation by the beneficiaries that the practice addresses their needs properly? Has the Lesson Learnt been validated with the stakeholders/final users? Can the lesson learnt be validated eventually?
Success Factors	What are the conditions (institutional, economic, social, and environmental) that need to be in place for the lesson learnt to be successfully replicated (in a similar context)?
Constraints	What are the challenges encountered by men and women in applying the practice?
Replicability and/or up-scaling	What are the possibilities of extending the lesson learnt more widely?
Contact details	What is the name/s and contacts of the people or the project to contact if you want more information on the good practice?
Documents	If there any document (training material, communication material, documentation of the LL, brochure, study) linked to the LL, please provide reference.
Key words	To be fulfilled by the QC Expert

Annex 6: Templates for internal QC of ROM reviews

Quality checklist by ROM expert

Projects and programmes title					
CRIS reference					
ROM Report reference					
ROM expert name					
Nr of days ROM Review	Desk:	Travel:	Field:	Reporting:	TOT:

Comments by ROM expert

1. I received complete project and contextual documentation to carry out ROM service 3 weeks before the starting date.	Yes/no	
2. I am satisfied with the level of documentation received.	Yes/no	
3. Meetings were set with the main country partner and the implementing partners one week before the ROM field phase starts (in case of a ROM review).	Yes/no	
4. Briefing with EUD/HQ took place at the very first day of the ROM field phase.	Yes/no	<i>Including date of the briefing</i>
5. Briefing took place with other stakeholders.	Yes/no	<i>Including date of the briefing</i>
6. I was sufficiently briefed on the P/P to implement the ROM mission	Yes/no	
7. I had easily access to all relevant stakeholders during the field phase (in case of a ROM review).	Yes/no	
8. I had sufficient time to meet stakeholders including final beneficiaries (in case of a ROM review).	Yes/no	
9. Debriefing with EUD/HQ took place at the very last day of the ROM field phase.	Yes/no	<i>Including date of the debriefing</i>
10. Debriefing took place with other stakeholders (in case of a ROM review).	Yes/no	<i>Including date of the debriefing</i>
11. Any other issues to be reported.	<i>n.a.</i>	
Overall assessment	Overall score¹	

Scoring for the overall assessment: (5: excellent;4: very good; 3: good; 2: insufficient; 1: poor)

QC report by QC expert

Projects and programme title	CAPITAL LETTERS (no bold) Font Calibri 8
CRIS reference	
OM name	SURNAME Name
Reason for ROM	
ROM report reference	<i>This should include the CRIS Reference and the date of upload of Final ROM report and MQ</i>
ROM expert name	SURNAME Name
QC Expert name	SURNAME Name
Dates of the QC	From 00/00/20XX (date of first draft sent by ROM expert to QC expert) to 00/00/20XX (date of finalisation of QC process)

1. Reason for ROM and focus of the ROM review

Colour of KPI 5 (use of scheduled resources): Green, Yellow or Red	G/Y/R	This can be seen in the ROM module, Production, Project information tab: Additional information from EAMR
Are there any comments under KPI 5?	Y/N	Copy paste the remarks from the ROM module, Project information tab: Additional information from EAMR
Colour of KPI 6 (achievement of output targets and outcomes): Green, Yellow or Red	G/Y/R	This can be seen in the ROM module, Production, Project information tab: Additional information from EAMR
Are there any comments under KPI 6?	Y/N	Copy paste the remarks from the ROM module, Project information tab: Additional information from EAMR
Has the OM provided any explanation about the reason for ROM in the ROM Module?	Y/N	Please check the 'Comment for Reason for ROM request' box in the ROM Workplan tab. Copy-paste the comments (if any). If the reason is "Problematic", the OM may have provided further explanations on the reasons why.

2. Remarks by EC services

Were there any specific remarks sent to the ROM Contractor regarding the ROM expert and/or the ROM review?	Yes / No	Comments by QC expert
--	----------	-----------------------

3. Remarks by the ROM expert

Overall score in the Quality checklist of ROM expert (copied from Annex A3 – Quality checklist)?	Score	Main comments of the ROM expert in the quality checklist
--	-------	--

4. Delivery of answers to monitoring questions and of ROM Reports

Timely delivery of draft ROM Report and MQ?	Yes/no	Comments by QC expert
---	--------	-----------------------

5. Comments by ROM QC expert

Scoring: 5 = no revisions necessary, 4 = minor revisions advised, 3 = revisions needed, 2 = revisions essential, 1 = revision imperative

Please duplicate and update Section 5 for each round of QC.

<p>1. Overall consistency and clarity of the report Are all sections of the ROM report and MQ addressed? If sections are judged not applicable, is a brief explanation provided? Is the language used clear, unambiguous and without unexplained terminology? Are abbreviations defined at first use? Are the reports free from typing, spelling and grammatical errors? Are sections of the ROM report linked with those in monitoring questions? Is information provided in the right places?</p>	Score	
<p>2. Reliable data available Are any key documents missing from the list of documents listed in the MQ report? Are any key stakeholders missing from the sources and contact list?</p>	Score	<i>The important aspect here is not whether reliable data was used, but whether it was available.</i>
<p>3. Sound data analysis Is the report sufficiently analytical or mainly descriptive? When only weak data was available or key data was missing, has the ROM expert explained the reasons for this and the limitations of the data used? Is the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data appropriately and systematically done so that answers to the ROM monitoring questions provide adequate information, and does it include quantitative and qualitative evidence? Are cause and effect relationships between planned and actual results fully explained (gap analysis)? Are the assumptions included in the Logframe reviewed in the ROM report? Has an adequate triangulation of the collected data and information been carried out?</p>	Score	
<p>4. Credible findings and conclusions Are the ROM expert's findings based on (tangible, clear, poor, anecdotal) evidence? Do findings follow logically from and are they justified by the data analysis? Are the significant findings included in the conclusions (i.e. those findings that may have an impact on the project's performance and achievement of results)?</p>	Score	
<p>5. Consistency between sections Are grades consistent with the analysis? Are Relevance comments in line with project/programme's context, purpose and objectives? Do efficiency comments address the rate of the project/programme's achievement of targets against the rate of planned resources (cost, time, human power) used? Do the effectiveness comments address the extent to which the objectives (expected results) have been achieved or are expected to be achieved? Do Sustainability comments address the beneficiaries' capabilities to maintain and enhance P/P results and added value?</p>	Score	<i>The question addresses both the Consistency between sections in the ROM report and the MQ.</i>
<p>6. Useful recommendations Are the recommendations linked to the conclusions? Are the recommendations specific, justified and operational (implementable)? Are recommendations clearly addressed to the respective stakeholders responsible for their follow up?</p>	Score	

7. Overall assessment	<i>Overall QC score</i>	<i>QC expert's overall comments</i> on the quality of the draft ROM report
-----------------------	-------------------------	--

Quality Control Report by QC Expert – Nth check

In case, the QC by the ROM Contractor and related interaction between the QC expert and the ROM expert required several steps, the QC expert duplicates and updates Section 5 for each round of QC.

Quality Control Report by QC Expert after EC comments on draft report

Were there many issues underlined by the OM? Please provide a short summary, if relevant.	<i>Yes / No</i>	<i>Comments by ROM QC expert</i>
---	-----------------	----------------------------------

Annex 7: Sampling procedure for ROM reviews in early stages of implementation

This section presents the sampling procedure to be implemented in view of collecting data that can be used to assess the effectiveness of the ROM instrument in a statistically sound manner.

The ROM serves two purposes: accountability and monitoring.

Regarding accountability, the ROM allows us to assess to what extent the EU taxpayers' money is being efficiently used to effectively produce development results that are relevant and sustainable. Are there systematic differences in performance for projects in different sectors, regions, etc.? What factors determine good and bad performance? In order to answer these questions, it is not necessary to ROM the whole population of development projects. It is sufficient to ROM a random sample of development projects and use statistical inference to draw conclusions for the population as a whole. Here the crucial question is what sample size would be needed in order to draw meaningful conclusions with the required precision and confidence levels.

Regarding monitoring, the ROM allows OMs to collect information that can be used to make adjustments to the monitoring system and project design/implementation in order to maximise performance. Does it work? This question can be addressed by considering 3 sub-questions. Does the ROM lead to improved monitoring systems? Does the ROM lead to improved project design/implementation? Does the ROM result in higher project performance? These questions are particularly meaningful for the specific case of ROM reviews that are implemented during the first 18 months of a project's implementation. In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to observe the quality of the monitoring systems, the quality of project design/implementation and project performance for a treatment group and a control group of development projects. How should the members of these groups be selected? How many projects need to be selected for each of the groups?

In both cases, we would like to use the data collected for a sample to draw inferences for the population in a statistically sound manner. Therefore, a probability sampling technique must be used. The simplest approach would be simple random sampling, but it presents the following potential disadvantages.

- A random sample could end up being a strange sample that is not particularly representative of the general population.
- A random sample could potentially not include any (or simply not enough) observations belonging to specific subpopulations of interest.
- The sample size has to be big enough to reveal the full complexity of the variations that are present in the population.

Stratification is a technique that addresses these issues. Instead of simply randomly sampling from the population as a whole, the population is divided into strata and sampling units are randomly drawn from the individual strata.

- Stratification ensures that the sample matches the population at least for the strata variables.
- Stratification ensures that there are a minimum number of observations within each stratum.
- The sample size needed to achieve the desired precision will be smaller than for simple random sampling. The logic is the following. The most important variable in determining sample size


requirements is the degree of heterogeneity existing in the population for a given variable. When all members of the population are identical, a sample of one single observation suffices to provide us with the information needed. The greater the heterogeneity in the population the bigger the sample will need to be in order to fully reveal this variance. If the population can be divided into strata which are relatively homogenous then this will help limit the number of sampling units needed to achieve the desired precision.

The main inconvenience with stratification is that projects in different strata of the sample will represent different numbers of projects in the population. For example, in a stratum of low variance across the units, a lower number of projects would represent all projects in that stratum of the population, whereas in a stratum with more variance across the units, a higher number of projects would be needed to represent the same number of projects in the population. Consequently, any calculations on the results collected for the sample of projects will have to use weights. This is not technically difficult, but if the weights are not used, even though the results would be valid for the sample, they would not be valid for the population.

The first step in stratified random sampling is to identify the stratification variables. The variables available are the basic characteristics of projects, such as sector, country (or region) and budget. But how to determine which variables should actually be used, how to define the strata boundaries and how to allocate sampling units to the different strata, all in a way that minimises the sample size for the required precision? In order to answer these questions optimally, the SamplingStrata package in R will be used. This package includes an algorithm that basically evaluates all possible stratifications and identifies the one that requires the smallest sample for a given level of precision. For a more technical presentation of the algorithm as well as an application, see <https://www.jstatsoft.org/article/view/v061i04/v61i04.pdf>.

In order to implement the algorithm contained in the SamplingStrata package, two categories of information must be provided for each of the units of the population. First, we need to specify the auxiliary information that is available for stratification. This information is available. Second, we must provide information on the variables of interest. These are the ROM scores for relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, but we do not have these scores for new projects. Without this information it is not possible to identify a stratification that splits the population into groups that are homogenous in terms of ROM scores. However, these ROM scores are available for older projects. So, the new projects in the population without ROM scores can be matched to similar older projects with ROM scores. This matching will be implemented using the MatchIt package in R. For a more technical presentation of the algorithm as well as an application, see <https://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=19&n=18>.

This sampling approach can be used to select units for both the treatment and control groups. The projects that are selected for the treatment group must be reviewed within the first 18 months of implementation, whereas the projects selected for the control group cannot be reviewed at all (preferably). However, denying a ROM to an OM who requests one is ethically and politically unacceptable, so an alternative method of identifying a control group must be used. Two possible ideas can be exploited, either separately or conjointly. First, one could test for a statistically significant inverse relationship between the timing of the ROM and the improvement in project performance. Our hypothesis is that the earlier the ROM is implemented, the better the project performs. Second, one could use the MatchIt package in R to identify projects that have not been reviewed that are similar



to those included in the randomly selected treatment group. Both approaches are only implemented ex-post (after the collection of the data at the completion of the projects) and therefore do not require additional explanation at this preliminary stage.

Annex 8: Duty of Care (Safety and Security Management Considerations)

The duty of care of Contractors towards their employees must be their highest priority. As missions to third countries become more complex, the security environment more volatile and the dangers and risks more diversified, greater attention has been paid to duty of care and security management aspects. Contractors must devote significant resources to provide staff with the training, support and information they need to stay healthy and safe.

Definitions

Duty of Care - The duty of care is an evolving concept. It refers to the established obligation incumbent on an organization to adopt active, adequate and effective measures to protect the life and well-being of all staff deployed in field missions/operations.

Safety - Used here as distinct from “protection” and “security” to refer to ‘accidents’ caused by nature (e.g., avalanche) or non-violent circumstances (e.g., fire, road accidents) and to illness, injury and death resulting from medical conditions not brought about by violence, or due to lax safety guidelines and procedures in the workplace.

Security - Used here to indicate the protection of aid personnel and aid agency assets from violence.

Security Management - Security management is about reducing risk. It does not offer any guarantee that incidents will not occur. It is also about contextual adaptation and situational judgement. The appropriateness of a specific measure will often depend on the context.

Duty of Care Arrangements for Missions

Security Arrangements - The Contractor shall put in place security measures for all its staff that are commensurate with the physical danger (possibly) facing them.

The Contractor shall also be responsible for monitoring the level of physical risk to which its staff located in the partner country are exposed and for keeping the Contracting Authority informed of the situation. If the Contracting Authority or the Contractor becomes aware of an imminent threat to the life or health of any of its staff, the Contractor must take immediate emergency action to remove the individuals concerned to safety. If the Contractor takes such action, it must communicate this immediately to the Project Manager (Contracting Authority) and this may lead to suspension of the contract.

Security Risk: Contractor should inform Mission Performers of the risk of street crime and take sensible measures to protect its staff and belongings. Mission Performers should take particular care of passport, bank cards, bags, jewellery, laptop and mobile, especially on public transport, when travelling to and from the airport and in crowded areas including markets. Credit card fraud can be common. Mission Performers should take stringent security precautions to mitigate the risks of street and violent crime.

Contingency: Ensure you can locate and communicate with staff at all times during their missions.

Communication: Mission Performers should carry reliable communication at all times and understand who to contact in the event of an emergency or incident.

Pre-Missions Assessments/Information Briefing

Civil Unrest: Mission Performers should avoid all protests and strike-related activity. They should minimise time spent around likely targets for militant attacks, both stationary and in transit. Mission Performers should not self-drive unless they are very familiar with local conditions and have local language ability

Terrorism: The Contractor and Mission Performers should keep track of the news. Incidents can occur and the security situation can deteriorate quickly. There may be increases in security force presence and restrictions on movement may be put in place at short notice.

Travel Security Advice: Ensure staff receive an itinerary-specific briefing prior to travel. It is advisable that the Contractor prearranges a meet and greet service upon arrival at the airport by a hotel representative or trusted local contact. For overland travel, arrange trained drivers and vehicles through a reputable provider, with robust journey planning and management. Formal security support is advisable for travel beyond major urban areas as well as within cities in some locations. An itinerary-specific briefing on the current security situation and prevailing threats is necessary prior to travel. The Contractor should support Mission Performers to arrange accommodation with adequate assessed security arrangements.

Other areas to be covered:

- Safe driving
- Travelling in town
- Staying safe in hotels and restaurants
- Natural Disasters
- Combining Private Trips
- Lone workers
- Workers with disabilities
- Other

Medical Arrangements: The Contractor should understand how to arrange additional security and medical support for Mission Performers if required. The Contractor should make sure that Missions Performers have access to General information on travel vaccination and a travel health checklist before traveling. The Contractor should make sure Mission Performers have adequate travel health insurance and accessible funds to cover the cost of any medical treatment abroad and repatriation.

Security Training: Where appropriate, the Contracting Authority will ensure that staff travelling to high risk countries receive pre-mission Hostile Environment Awareness Training (HEAT) or equivalent.

Emergency Action Plans: Contractors should develop contingency plans to address natural disasters, political unrest, serious incidents, etc.

Immigration Requirements and Procedures

Visas: The Contractor and Mission Performers should also consider checking with the transport provider or Travel Company to make sure passports and other travel documents meet their requirements.

Entry requirements: Missions Performers must have a passport that is valid for at least six months beyond the intended length of stay.

Suggested Contact Details

Emergency Contacts:

- Police
- Ambulance
- Fire Brigade
- Etc.

Diplomatic representation

- Relevant EU Delegation
- Relevant EU Embassy

DG INTPA Security Coordination Team 24/7 Permanence (contacts provided to the Team Leaders)

Annex 9: Template for the Preliminary Assessment

Preliminary Assessment

Type of ROM review **Blending Interventions**
 Intervention title
 Intervention reference (CRIS number)
 EUD/Unit in charge
 Status
 Note date

Intervention - Key information

Domain (instrument)	
DAC Sector	
Zone Benefiting from the Action	
Action Location	(only for contract)
Type of Intervention	
Geographic Implementation	
Entity in Charge	
OM in Charge	
Contracting Party	(only for contract)

Intervention – Financial Data on dd/mm/yyyy

Total Budget	
EU contribution(s) (€)	
Type(s) of EU contribution(s)	Investment grant, Technical Assistance, etc.
Lead Financing Institution	Loan Amount
Other co-financier(s)	Loan Amount
Other contribution(s) from FIs	Grant
Other contribution(s) from other donors	Grant
Other contribution(s) from Government(s)	Grant
EU funds disbursed	% disbursed/time
FI loans disbursed	% disbursed/time

Intervention – Dates

Selection of the intervention by the lead FI	
Application Form	
Signature of the Delegation Agreement	
Signature of the Agreement between FI and Government (if any)	
Signature of the Agreement between EU and Government (if any)	
Signature of loan contract	FI
Signature of other loan contracts (if any)	FI
EU funds allocated to the intervention	
Intervention activities	Start date End date

ROM Review – Preliminary Assessment

Date(s) of the preliminary meeting(s) with the lead FI		Start date	End date		
List of persons met in the FI					
Name	Position	Unit	Contact e-mail	Telephone	
List of documents collected					
Preliminary studies:					
Feasibility studies	yes/ no	Sector assessment	yes/ no	Aide memoire	yes/ no
Other studies	Yes/no - (If yes specify)				
Application form	yes/ no	Delegation Agreement	yes/ no	Loan Agreement lead FI	yes/ no
Agreement FI / Govern.	yes/ no	Agreement EU/Govern.	yes/ no	Other Loan agreements	yes/ no
Progress Reports	yes/ no	Training documents	yes/ no	Visibility documents	yes/ no
Other documents					
Missing documents					

Intervention Synopsis

Description of the Context			
Description of the Intervention Logic			
Overall Objectives			
Specific Objectives/Outcomes			
Outcomes/outputs indicators in the agreements/programming documents			
Activities			
Expected Outcomes/outputs	Indicators	Baseline data	Targets
Description of the target groups and final beneficiaries			

ROM Review -Scoping key features

Dates of field mission	Start date	End date		
Countries to visit	1....	2....	3....	4....
Number of days required / country	w/d	w/d	w/d	w/d
If deviations from standards explain				
Issues that could impact the efficiency of the field visit				
ROM Expert (Finance)	Name			
ROM Expert (Sectoral)	Name	Sector		
Time period during which the ROM mission is taking place within the implementation cycle				
Too early?	yes/ no	Too late?	yes/ no	
Key subjects deserving special attention during the mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .. • ... 			

Annex 10: Templates for QA of ROM reviews

QA report by ROM QA Expert

Type of QA assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Desk review
	<input type="checkbox"/> Shadow mission
Type of ROM Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Standard
	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote
	<input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid
	<input type="checkbox"/> Blending
	<input type="checkbox"/> Trust Fund

Projects and programme title		
CRIS/OPSYS reference / Intervention reference		
EU Contribution (€)		
Instrument type		
Geographic Implementation		
Geographical Area		
EUD/Unit in charge		
Operational Manager (OM) name		
ROM Review dates		
Country of the ROM Review		
ROM report reference		
ROM Expert name / Category	Expert category:	
QC Expert name / Type	QC Expert type:	
ROM QA Expert name		
Dates of the Desk review/Shadow mission		

Please use the following EC English-language Style Guide for authors and translators, both in-house and freelance, as reference document:

https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/styleguide_english_dgt_en.pdf

Please check the following link for guidance on using abbreviations:

<https://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-000100.htm>

A list of abbreviations and acronyms used by the European Commission is also available at:

<https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/ExactExternalWiki/Abbreviations+and+Acronyms>

ROM REVIEW QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Quality factors / Judgement criteria / Minimum Quality Standards	Standard met			QA ROM Comments
	Yes	No	N/A	
I ROM mission planning and organisation				
1.1 ROM Review planning				
1.1.1 ROM Review is (still) eligible				
• The ROM Review dates are in line with the ROM Handbook.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
• Other non-eligibility factors have been excluded.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
• If eligibility factors have not been respected, it has been justified.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.1.2 ROM Contractor/Consortium potential Conflict of Interest (CoI) screening carried out				
• Any potential Conflict of Interest with respect to the ROM Contractor/Consortium has been resolved in line with the ROM Handbook procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.1.3 Preliminary assessment, before finalising the work plan				
• Blending During the visit to the Lead Financial Institution (LFI) Headquarters, the ROM Expert has met all units involved in the implementation of the intervention, and not just the managing unit.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Blending Preliminary assessment has been drafted in line with the template available in the ROM Handbook.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
• Blending All comments on the preliminary assessment have been addressed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Quality factors / Judgement criteria / Minimum Quality Standards	Standard met			QA ROM Comments
	Yes	No	N/A	
1.2 Expert Selection				
1.2.1 Selected ROM Experts meet the requirements for the ROM Review				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with specific requirements (i.e., specific sector, seniority, etc.) has been considered according to the ROM Review's complexity. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blending - Two experts have been selected (one with a specialisation in banking/finance and one with expertise corresponding to the sector of intervention of the blending intervention) and one of them is appointed as Mission Leader. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.2.2 ROM Expert's potential Conflict of Interest (CoI) screening carried out				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any potential conflict of interest with respect to the ROM Expert(s) has been resolved in line with the ROM Handbook procedures. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.2.3 ROM Expert trained in ROM				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For new experts, attendance to training has been evidenced/confirmed. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.3 ROM Review preparation				
1.3.1 Operational Manager's (OM) preferences /requests duly considered				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All OM's preferences/requests have been addressed as much as possible. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ROM Review modality has been assessed based on the OM's preference and contingent factors. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.3.2 Deviations from the ROM Handbook standards approved				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of days needed have been defined in line with the ROM Handbook provisions. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is any deviation from the standards (e.g., additional working days, more than 4 mission components, more than 1 expert, etc.), it has been duly justified. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All requested deviations have been approved. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.3.3 ROM Review information documented in the ROM Module/OPSYS				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All information, deviations, justification related to the ROM Review have been duly documented in the ROM Module/OPSYS. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
1.3.4 ROM Review launched on time				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ROM Review was launched on time, ideally at least three weeks or minimum one week before the start of the Field Phase. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
1.3.5 Relevant stakeholders informed of changes				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the dates of the mission, modality, selected ROM Expert, field visits or any other elements have changed, all relevant stakeholders have been informed. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.4 Logistics Arrangements				
1.4.1 All logistics identified and completed on time				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel arrangements, logistics, risk assessment, visa, security clearance with agreement of the ROM Expert were cleared at least one week before the Field Phase. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.4.2 Duty of care implemented				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Necessary insurances, security measures, country risks information sharing, and emergency contact details have been addressed. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
II. Desk Phase				
2.1 Documentation				
2.1.1 Documents collected from the ROM Module and made available to the ROM Expert				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ROM Contractor has shared available documentation with the ROM Expert to start the Desk Phase. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
2.1.2 Additional information requested and obtained from the OM/ Implementing Partners (IPs)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the ROM Expert has requested additional documentation, this request has been timely and properly fulfilled. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blending: Information made available to the ROM Expert is in line with the scope and focus deriving from the preliminary assessment. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
2.1.3 Internal guidelines and templates shared				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ROM Contractor has shared internal guidelines and templates in a timely manner. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
2.2 Field Phase preparation				
2.2.1 Agenda prepared				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agenda has been prepared and discussed with the OM and IPs. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
2.2.2 Interviews prepared				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence that the briefing meeting has been prepared. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence that specific topics have been identified to be discussed with each of the stakeholders listed on the agenda. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
2.2.3 Project Synopsis				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence that the Project Synopsis was ready before start of the Field Phase. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Quality factors / Judgement criteria / Minimum Quality Standards	Standard met			QA ROM Comments
	Yes	No	N/A	
III. Field Phase				
3.1 Briefing				
3.1.1 Briefing meeting in line with standards				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence that the OM's specific priorities have been discussed during the briefing meeting and incorporated, as much as is feasible, in interview preparation. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blending – Centrally managed interventions: briefing was attended by one of the Core Team experts. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blending – Interventions managed by Delegations: the Mission Leader has delivered the briefing and HQ services were invited to participate in the briefing via videoconference. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
3.2 Interviews				
3.2.1 Agenda implemented				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agenda has been fully implemented as planned. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a major deviation took place, it has been justified. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.3 Debriefing				
3.3.1 Debriefing meeting in line with standards				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence that the debriefing meeting addressed the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary Key findings; Preliminary outlines of conclusions and possible recommendations in line with the questions/key elements stressed by the OM during the briefing; Additional elements highlighted by the ROM Expert (e.g., identification of lessons learnt, promising practices and good practices that will then feed the learning fiches). There is evidence that the OM's feedback on the preliminary conclusions and recommendations has been collected and considered in the Draft report. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
3.3.2 IPs' involvement in the debriefing				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPs have participated in the debriefing with the OM or have received a separate debriefing. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blending – Centrally managed interventions: debriefing was attended by one of the Core Team experts. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blending – Interventions managed by Delegations: the Mission Leader has delivered the debriefing and HQ services were invited to participate in the debriefing via videoconference. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
IV. Reporting				
4.1 Quality of the Draft report				
4.1.1 Quality of the Executive Summary				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Executive Summary provides a comprehensive overview of the main findings, conclusions and recommendations. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
4.1.2 Overall quality of the report (completeness, consistency, coherence and clarity)				
Completeness				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All sections of the ROM report and the Monitoring Questions report (MQs) have been addressed. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If sections have not been addressed, brief explanations as to why have been provided. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Consistency				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information has been provided in the correct places. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring questions' grading is consistent with the narrative analysis. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reply to MQ 3.5 is consistent with the narrative analysis and the ROM Handbook provisions. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Coherence				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sections of the report have been linked with those in the MQs. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Clarity				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The language used is clear, unambiguous, without unexplained terminology and abbreviations, and without grammatical errors and spelling mistakes. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
4.1.3 Reliable data available (documents and stakeholders)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All key documents have been consulted by the ROM Expert, i.e., included in the list of documents consulted and confirmed by the expert in the <i>Quality Checklist by ROM Expert</i>. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All key stakeholders have been consulted by the ROM Expert, i.e., included in the agenda and confirmed in the <i>Quality Checklist by ROM Expert</i>. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
4.1.4 Findings based on sound data analysis				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The elements of response to monitoring questions have been derived from written data sources (reports, etc.), combined with interviews and observations made during field visits (when field visits are applicable). 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Quality factors / Judgement criteria / Minimum Quality Standards	Standard met			QA ROM Comments
	Yes	No	N/A	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If elements of responses are reliant exclusively on interviews, this was clearly flagged in the ROM report. • If key data were missing and/or were not reliable, the ROM Expert has explained the reasons for this, and the limitations of the data used. • Differences between planned and actual results have been fully explained. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.1.5 Credible conclusions				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusions have been derived from the key findings. • All the key findings that provided a basis for orange and/or red scores have led to a conclusion. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.1.6 Useful and coherent recommendations				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All recommendations stem from conclusions. • All the conclusions related to red and/or orange scores have led to recommendations. • The recommendations are specific, justified and could be feasibly implemented. • The recommendations are clearly addressed to the relevant stakeholders responsible for follow-up. • Blending: if the ROM mission indicates a need for additional or strengthened reporting mechanisms and/or a widening of scope of the internal monitoring by the LFI and its partners [i.e., to reflect socio-economic development results and implementation of EU policies] the ROM report provides specific recommendations. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.1.7 Quality control of the Draft ROM report				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The QC process has contributed to the overall quality of the Draft ROM report starting from the first version of the draft MQs and ROM report. • All QC comments have been addressed and answers duly documented. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.2 Quality of the Final report				
4.2.1 Treatment of OM's comments				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All OM's comments have been addressed. • Answers/changes made in draft MQs, and ROM report are duly documented. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.2.2 Quality control after OM's comments				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All QC comments regarding the treatment of OM's comments have been addressed. • ROM Expert's answers to QC comments are duly documented. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.3 Lessons learnt (LLs), promising practices (PPs) and good practices (GPs)				
4.3.1 Quality of identified lessons learnt good practices and promising practices				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description provided in Annex 5 is consistent with the ROM Handbook criteria associated with LLs, PPs and GPs. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
V. Quality Control process				
5.1 QC Process				
5.1.1 QC Expert has supported the ROM Expert				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is evidence that the QC process has provided support to the ROM Expert throughout the entire ROM Review (desk, field, reporting phases, LLs, PPs, GPs identification). • The quality control has been performed following the quality control process laid out by the ROM Contractor. • The quality control intensity has been adapted to the specific situation (e.g., less experienced ROM Expert(s), complex project/ROM Review) resulting in more coaching, more frequent contacts, more support, etc. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
VI. Traceability				
6.1 QC Documented trail				
6.1.1 Availability of internal QC annexes as per the ROM Handbook				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Quality checklist by ROM Expert</i> has been completed, stored and is available. • The <i>QC Report by QC Expert</i> has been completed, stored and is available. • Documentation of the QC process (emails, exchanges between the ROM Expert(s) and QC Expert, possibly several draft versions of MQs/ROM Report, etc.) have been stored and can be consulted. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.1.2 Availability of annexes on lessons learnt, promising practices and good practices, as per the ROM Handbook				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annexes applicable to lessons learnt, good practices and promising practices as per the ROM Handbook have been completed, stored and are available. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
VII. Timeliness				

Quality factors / Judgement criteria / Minimum Quality Standards	Standard met			QA ROM Comments
	Yes	No	N/A	
7.1 Timely reporting				
7.1.1 Timely submission of reports				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Draft ROM report has been submitted by the due deadline. The Final ROM report has been submitted by the due deadline. Any delays have been discussed and changes in deadlines agreed upon with the OM/ROM Coordinator. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For shadow missions only

Feedback collected from stakeholders interviewed/met during the shadow mission (OM, Focal Points/Delegations, beneficiaries, implementing partners, target groups, etc.)

Feedback regarding ROM reviews in general (expectations, impact, etc.)	
Feedback regarding the ROM review assessed	
Other points (ad hoc)	

Feedback from EC services on ROM report

	Draft	Final	
Were OM's comments on the ROM report uploaded onto the ROM Module/OPSYS on time?			
Total number of recommendations			
Number of fully accepted recommendations			
Number of partially accepted recommendations			
Number of rejected recommendations			
Number of recommendations not commented			
Grading by OM (5-star system)			Comments expressed by the OM:

Remarks by EC services on the ROM Review

Were there any specific remarks sent to the ROM Contractor regarding the ROM Expert and/or the ROM service?	
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Overall conclusion as seen by QA Expert

Overall QA assessment	
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Key findings and recommendations by QA ROM

	Findings	Recommendations
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Sources of information

List of documents consulted for QA

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List of persons interviewed/met

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Annex 11: Technical Guidelines for Support for Design Logframes and Monitoring Systems

These technical guidelines outline in more detail the main content of this service. They provide guidance for each of the aspects of the support for design logframes and monitoring systems provided by ROM Contractors (covering logframe, monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting requirements). Of course, they also need to be adapted to each particular situation and any methodological compromises¹³ agreed with the OM should be recorded in the ROM Expert's summary points and the subsequent QC report.

The first part of the guidelines specifies how to provide inputs/feedback, while the second part focuses on the content.

Section 1: Requirements for how to provide inputs/comments on draft documents

Each service request will be accompanied by draft documents that will need to be revised. In some cases, these may be the original logframe and other sections as they were written by the IP(s), while in others the OM and/or other EU colleagues may have already provided some inputs or made some edits. In any case, the ROM Expert should provide his/her inputs **in track changes**, proposing concrete solutions for any inaccurate or incomplete formulation. No changes should be made in the document without the track changes being turned on. For example:

- If the ROM Expert thinks that outcomes are formulated as outputs and that new outcomes need to be added – then s/he should propose a concrete outcome formulation and downgrade the existing outcomes to outputs (also adjusting the indicators and assumptions as needed).
- Other times, it may be the formulation of the Overall Objective that is lacking or unclear/vague (i.e. it just says “to contribute to the implementation of the national private sector development strategy”). In this case also, the ROM Expert should delete this using track changes and add a new, more concrete formulation instead (again, adjusting the indicators and assumptions as needed).
- In another situation, the result chain may be well designed but the indicators at outcome level may be inappropriate – they may, for example, all focus on direct intervention deliverables instead of on monitoring change in behaviour of the relevant target group. The ROM Expert should delete these indicators using track changes and propose new ones (while also adjusting the sources too).

Every time a major change is made (such as in the examples given above), a short **comments box** should be inserted to show why this has been done. The comment should be 1-2 sentences, not longer, and formulated without any complex terminology. For the examples above, the comments boxes might say:

- “The outcome statements were formulated as direct results of this intervention (this is what the intervention will actually deliver) so they are appropriate only as outputs. We have proposed new outcomes which explain what the government [or whoever is the target group] should do with the outputs of the intervention”.
- “The Overall Objective should communicate the desired impact of this intervention and focus on beneficiaries. From the previous formulation, it was not clear what benefit people could expect from the national strategy implementation, so we proposed more concrete wording in track changes”.
- “Indicators at outcome level were not adequate because they were tracking the status of intervention deliverables, i.e. outputs, rather than the change in behaviour or use of these

¹³For example, a formulation of an objective copied from a national strategy that does not fit with the methodological requirements for formulating a specific or overall objective, but is of political importance.

deliverables by the private sector [or whoever the target group is]. We propose to replace them with better defined outcome-level indicators”.

Comments are most effective if we explain (a) what was done wrong, and (b) what corrective measure we propose in track changes. Providing a longer explanation of what an outcome is vs. impact or what a result chain is not effective (ROM Coordination Units can provide this as a separate one-pager).

With each submission, the ROM Expert will provide a **summary of 3-5 bullet points** of proposed changes and any compromises that may have been accepted after discussion with the OM.

As explained in chapter 6 of this Handbook, support will be provided following a **phased approach**: after the introductory call and background reading, the ROM Expert will revise the results chain and intervention logic. Once this is agreed with the OM (after s/he confers with the implementing partner(s)), the ROM Expert will, in a second round of comments, focus on indicators and M&E requirements. The ROM Expert will explain this to the OM in the introductory call. Of course, if the results chain and intervention logic are already of good quality from the onset, the ROM Expert can immediately proceed to revising the remaining elements.

The ROM Expert should **not use overly complex terminology and explanations** but should adapt his/her comments and inputs to the OM’s (or other stakeholders’) level of knowledge of M&E. S/he should keep in mind that s/he may not be able to follow the negotiations with the IP until the end so the OM must understand the main points sufficiently in order to complete the contracting process (and monitor the intervention subsequently).

The ROM Expert will **coordinate and work together with any thematic Experts** who may be supporting the development of the given intervention. This means that the ROM Expert can ask the OM to invite the thematic Expert(s) to join their calls, and/or may consult with the thematic Expert(s) regarding the result chain formulation, indicator selection, or other aspects.

Section 2: Substance of Support for Design Logframes and Monitoring Systems

This section focuses on the content of the ROM Expert’s intervention. It is structured around the three areas of assistance outlined in the ToR.

a) Support EU Delegations and HQ services in ensuring that Descriptions of the Action (in draft contracts) include logframe matrices of adequate quality in terms of results

- Result chain

The ROM Expert will check the definition of result levels in order to ensure:

Compliance with OECD DAC definitions	SMART Definition	Alignment with the intervention logic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output • Outcome • Impact¹⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific • Measurable • Achievable • Relevant • Time-bound¹⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting the sequential and temporal result flow and assumptions of the intervention logic narrative coherent with the corresponding Action Document

¹⁴ Please note that DG NEAR allows more than one impact statement (Overall Objective), while DG DEVCO requests only one impact statement (as per the Action Document and PRAG templates). DG NEAR has produced additional guidance on the sequential/temporal treatment of impact that applies to NEAR interventions. Cf. DG NEAR Guidelines on linking planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation, 2016.

¹⁵ Recognizing that the time-bound criterion is not always applicable for impact.

The ROM Expert will ensure there is no repetition in the results chain (i.e. sometimes an impact statement is formulated as a rephrased version of the outcome, which should not be the case). The ROM Expert will also eliminate any causal links within a single result statement (i.e. "the specific objective is to increase access to the labour market for persons with disabilities by strengthening the capacities of the employment service and increasing opportunities for private sector involvement in VET" – everything that comes after 'by' is actually an output, whereas the specific objective should be simply "to increase access to the labour market for persons with disabilities"). Links such as 'in order to', 'by', 'through' and similar should be avoided in the formulation of objectives/outputs.

In collaboration with Experts from thematic facilities (when present), the ROM Expert will check the causal links between result levels to ensure that they are logical and realistic (given the available budget, activities and timeline) and approved recommendations from any ROM reviews from past phases and any evaluation reports shared by the OM are taken into account. The intervention logic should also be discussed and challenged in the call with the OM to assess the degree to which lessons learnt have been taken into account.

- *Coherence with the Action Document*

In terms of checking for coherence with the corresponding Action Document (AD), the ROM Expert may find it relevant to copy some result formulations or indicators from the AD logframe (of course assuming that they are methodologically sound). The individual legal commitment (contract) at hand may represent an entire AD, so ensuring coherence is simpler. Other times, if the individual legal commitment (contract) represents only a small portion of the AD, the impact statement may need to be adjusted to ensure it is logical for the results chain at contract level, while still reflecting the broader logic from the AD. This involves using an outcome from the AD as the impact statement for the individual legal commitment (contract).

By way of example, we can consider an Action Document aiming to reduce malnutrition among the population X in Country Y. In the corresponding Action Document, the impact statement for this programme would read:

OO/Impact: To reduce malnutrition among the population X in Country Y.

EU-funded interventions can contribute to this Overall Objective in a number of ways, contingent on the context, scope in terms of budget or timeframe, experience of implementing partner and other issues. Interventions may focus their contribution on, for example, regulatory and institutional frameworks, adequate dietary intake, improved childcare and feeding practices, more nutrition-sensitive agriculture, enhanced safety and quality of food products, reduced food losses and waste, or other specific areas. At Action Document level, each of these can be considered as possible *outcomes* that would contribute to the desired *impact* of reducing malnutrition. At individual legal commitment (contract) level, if the scope of the EU-funded contribution is limited, it may be appropriate for one of the AD outcomes to become the impact statement. In other words, there is a certain degree of interchangeability between impact and outcomes on AD and individual legal commitment levels depending on the level of ambition of each and their degree of influence.

The table below illustrates how a given intervention (intervention A or intervention corresponding to respective individual legal commitments or contracts) can contribute to the stated outcomes of the Action Document from which they derive.

Action Document	Intervention (contract) A	Intervention (contract) B- healthcare/hygiene component
OO/impact: To reduce malnutrition among population X in Country Y	OO/impact: To reduce malnutrition among population X in Country Y	
SOs/Outcomes: SO1: Improved household access to diverse quality foods all year round SO2: Improved child feeding practices SO3: Improved health status of population X	SOs/Outcomes: SO1: Improved household access to diverse quality foods all year round SO2: Improved child feeding practices	OO/Impact: To improve the health status of population X
		SO/Outcome: Improved hygiene practices of population X
Outputs: 1.1. Increased availability of services in support of agriculture, husbandry and fisheries 1.2. Increased access to productive inputs/tools/equipment, markets, and rural infrastructure 2.1. Increased awareness of adequate child feeding practices 3.1. Increased availability of child and maternal health care 3.2. Increased awareness or knowledge of sanitation & hygiene practices	Outputs: 1.1. Increased availability of services in support of agriculture, husbandry and fisheries 1.2. Increased access to productive inputs/tools/equipment, markets, and rural infrastructure 2.1. Increased awareness of adequate child feeding practices	Outputs: 1.1. Increased availability of child and maternal health care 1.2. Increased awareness or knowledge of sanitation & hygiene practices

While the *outcome* of an Action Document can at times become an overall objective / impact statement of an individual contract, the same cannot be said for the *outputs* from an AD. AD outputs are not interchangeable with outcomes of an individual legal commitment or contract, because outputs do not communicate change in behaviour. Doing so would risk hindering the evaluation of intervention effectiveness because the outcome to be evaluated would be reduced to an output and would not communicate the desired change of behaviour among our target group. Instead, a new, more specific outcome needs to be identified for this result chain (as shown in example B above).

- *Coherence of the result chain taking into consideration the scope of intervention*

Another specific case to keep in mind are individual legal commitments or **contracts which consist primarily of technical assistance**, such as training or on-demand advisory support. In these cases, it is advisable to use a more limited definition of objectives – rather than an impact statement on promoting sustainable development or reducing poverty, in these interventions the impact may revolve around improved access to services or government’s effectiveness. Of course, much depends on the scale (and budget) of the assistance – if it is large enough, we can be more ambitious with its objectives. Some examples are provided here:

Example 1 (AD 40-774, budget: EUR 44,000,000)	Example 2 (AD 041-268, budget: EUR 4,000,000)
OO/impact: to promote sustainable development (or whatever is the overall goal of cooperation)	OO/impact: to enhance effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the EU aid in West Africa (<i>normally promoting sustainable development would be an impact statement but here this would be too remote from the scope of the intervention, so the impact statement is more limited</i>)
<p>SO/outcome1: Improved performance of the EDF 11 portfolio of projects and programmes</p> <p>SO/outcome 2: Improved efficiency of intra-ACP programmes</p> <p>SO/outcome 3: Improved cooperation between social and economic actors</p>	<p>SO/outcome 1: ECOWAS Commission is certified for the management of EU funding</p> <p>SO/outcome 2: Improved coordination and monitoring of the RIP and other EU funded regional interventions by the ECOWAS RAO Support Unit</p> <p>SO/outcome 3: The ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development is certified for the management of EU funding</p>
<p>Output 1.1: Strengthened capacity of the ACP secretariat and Antenna office to use the applicable instructions and methodologies for portfolio management</p> <p>Output 2.1: Strengthened capacity of the ACP secretariat and Antenna office on procedures for handling the JPA and EESC meetings declarations and resolutions</p> <p>Output 3.1: Opportunities for cooperation between social and economic actors created</p>	<p>Output 1.1: Capacities of the identified directorates of the ECOWAS Commission are strengthened to ensure compliance with international standards related to the EU pillars</p> <p>Output 2.1: Capacities and knowledge of the RAO-SU and technical directorates for managing and administering the project cycle for regional EDF and other EU resources are enhanced</p> <p>Output 2.2: The capacity and mechanisms for policy dialogue and programming between ECOWAS Commission, EU and other development partners are improved</p> <p>Output 2.3: Mechanisms for intra-ECOWAS and EBID and external coordination with the EU and development partners are strengthened</p> <p>Output 2.4: Knowledge and participation of the ECOWAS Commission in EU and global dialogue in areas of mutual interest are developed and continued</p> <p>Output 2.5: Transparency and awareness of the use of EU resources is ensured</p> <p>Output 3.1: Capacities of the identified directorates of the EBID are strengthened to ensure compliance with international standards related to the EU pillars</p>

OO/impact: To improve access to the social protection system (*normally the impact statement would be about improved wellbeing or increased income, but here it is limited to access to social protection because the intervention only provides on-demand, short-term training and expert support*)

Specific Objective/outcome: Social protection policies, strategies and systems are more inclusive, effective and sustainable

Outputs:

1. Capacities of social protection institutions are strengthened
2. Enhanced public capacities for improving access to social protection to vulnerable groups

- **Indicators and sources of data**

After the results chain is agreed, the next step is to check the quality of indicators. This involves checking whether the indicators are **RACER**: Relevant, Accepted, Credible, Easy, Robust and disaggregated as appropriate.

The **Relevance** of indicators is assessed in three ways:

(a) Checking whether the indicators *match the given result* they are supposed to measure. This includes that indicators should be *result-oriented*, i.e. tracking the number and types of beneficiaries and status of any key deliverables, rather than the mere number of training sessions/meetings/media campaigns, etc. (which are more activity-oriented). In this framework, it is important that the ROM Expert assesses whether the indicators are sufficient in scope to measure what they are supposed to measure (corresponding result(s)).

(b) Checking whether the indicators are placed appropriately at the given level of the result chain. At *output* level, indicators should measure goods / services / direct benefits of the EU-funded intervention. At *outcome* level, indicators should enable us to monitor the change of our target group's behaviour/improvement of systems/performance, or similar (they can follow up on the use/application of output-level deliverables but they should not monitor the status of their mere delivery since this is done at output level). At *impact* level, indicators should monitor changes that tend to be long-term¹⁶.

(c) Indicators can include SDG/other UN/WB and similar indicators, any indicators coming from national strategies, as well as EURF/IPA II PF indicators and those coming from the relevant programming document. EURF, IPA II PF and programming document indicators should be flagged with one and two asterisks respectively (* for EURF or IPA II PF and ** for the programming document indicators).

Whether indicators are **Accepted, Credible, Easy** and **Robust** should be assessed based on the ROM Expert's general M&E knowledge. Some indicators may be easy to measure if the IP is an international organisation with sufficient M&E capacities, but may represent a challenge for a national NGO. Similarly, an indicator may be considered robust in India where it is relatively easy to conduct a survey, but inadequate for an intervention implemented in a more fragile and hard-to-reach context. Therefore, these aspects should be assessed by the ROM Expert based on the characteristics and context of the intervention and the IP.

As part of this check, the ROM Expert will ensure that all indicators are **measurable**. The measurement unit must be clear, and indicators formulated in a neutral way (without including a target or desired direction such as 'increased'):

- For quantitative indicators: "Number of", "Percentage of" or use a ratio, rate, index, etc.
- For qualitative indicators: "Status of", "Existence of", "Level of", "Extent to which" etc.

A quantitative variable could also be integrated in the assessment of progress for qualitative indicators (such as allocating sufficient funding as a percentage to a policy, for instance, which can be one aspect of assessing the extent to which the policy is effectively implemented).

Once the indicators have passed these checks, the ROM Expert should also review the **baseline & target values** for each indicator, in order to ensure that: (a) these values are specified for each indicator whenever they are available (but a target is not set if baseline data is unavailable), and (b) they follow the unit of measure specified in the indicator, and (c) they are logical (i.e. target is higher than the baseline and seems appropriate for the scale of the intervention). In case of any missing baseline or target data, the ROM Expert should write "to be provided in the first progress report".

The ROM Expert will check that a **source of data** is specified for each indicator, flagging any studies/surveys that need to be commissioned by the intervention. Sources should be specific, avoiding vague formulations such as "intervention M&E system" and favouring more specific

¹⁶DG NEAR has produced additional guidance on the sequential/temporal treatment of impact that applies to NEAR interventions. Cf. DG NEAR Guidelines on linking planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation, 2016.

sources (i.e. database of intervention beneficiaries, database of companies attending B2B events, satisfaction survey of conference participants, pre- and post-training tests, baseline and endline public perception surveys to be commissioned by the Action). One main source of data should be specified for each indicator – the most relevant one.

Assumptions provided at output and outcome levels in the logframe should also be checked by the ROM Expert to ensure that they are (a) well formulated – representing external conditions, outside of the intervention's control, (b) appropriate for the given result level, (c) not pre-conditions for the intervention (i.e. 'government interest in private sector development' – if this is not the case, the intervention should not be approved in the first place), and (d) complete (i.e. no major assumptions relevant for the intervention logic are missing).

There should be no assumptions at impact level, since there is no higher result level than this. The logframe works from the bottom up: at output level, we specify assumptions that must hold for the Action to directly contribute to the achievement of the outcomes. At outcome level, we write the assumptions that are necessary in order to contribute to the desired impact – and the result chain ends there.

- Intervention logic

The intervention logic should be developed in narrative form. It should include an explanation of the causal links between each two result levels (outputs and outcomes, outcomes and impact), noting the key assumptions at each level and evidence (from past / similar interventions, evaluations or research made available by the OM). This can include an explanation of why particular outputs were chosen for the intervention (i.e. particular gaps/needs in the sector/target region/population, other key aspects being covered by other donors). It is recommended to use the IF-THEN-BECAUSE formulation in the explanation of causal links between different result levels.

b) Support EU Delegations and HQ services in the definition of appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems

- The ROM Expert will review the proposed monitoring and evaluation system and recommend any additional tools/methods that may be needed in order to measure the above indicators. This can include, for example:
 - a. Studies or surveys that might be necessary in order to collect baseline and progress data, or to establish a target (e.g. baseline/endline surveys of the target population, studies of specific aspects the intervention aims to, net impact evaluations/impact assessments).
 - b. A dedicated M&E Expert (or Focal Point) on the intervention team, in charge of collecting progress data. This is even more important and complex in case of projects that are geographically dispersed, have multiple IPs/subcontractors or where data needs to be disaggregated according to several criteria.
- Any studies/surveys or other tools that may need to be commissioned by the intervention will be flagged as such in the logframe so that a budget can be allocated by the IP. Whenever a baseline is planned and budgeted, the ROM Expert should ensure that a similar final survey is also planned and budgeted accordingly.

- c) Support EU Delegations and HQ services in defining the scope of reporting requirements of the IP in line with the established legal provisions (special conditions of draft contracts)

If requested by the OM, the ROM Expert can also provide feedback on the proposed reporting requirements for the IP, which are outlined in special conditions of the contract. The ROM Expert should ensure that specific conditions of the draft contract with the IP have been adapted to the intervention at hand. The ROM Expert should recommend any additional reporting requirements for the special conditions and suggest any changes. For example, the frequency of reporting can be increased in some cases, or certain annexes or documents can be requested with each progress reports (i.e. updated databases of beneficiaries). The ROM Expert should ensure that the OM is aware of the latest PRAG models for interim and final narrative reports¹⁷ (July 2019 at the time of writing), which include analytical sections on the progress of achieving each result and a logframe with a column for current values for each indicator.

¹⁷All templates are available under Grants at: <https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/ExactExternalWiki/Annexes>.

Annex 12: QC templates for Support for Design Logframes and Monitoring Systems

Template for internal QC

Intervention title	
CRIS reference	
Reason for ROM	
ROM Expert name	
QC Expert name	
Date of the QC	
<i>Scoring (5: excellent; 4: very good; 3: good; 2: insufficient; 1: poor)</i>	

1. Remarks by EC services

Were there any specific remarks sent to the ROM Contractor regarding the ROM Expert and/or the ROM review?	Yes / No	Comments by ROM QC Expert
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2. Remarks by the ROM Expert

Overall score in the Quality checklist of ROM Expert (copied from Annex – Quality checklist)	Score	Main comments of the ROM Expert in the quality checklist
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3. Submission of deliverables by the ROM Expert

Timely service delivery (initial contact, meetings, submission of two versions of deliverables)	Yes/no	Comments by ROM QC Expert
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4. Comments by ROM QC Expert

<p>1. Overall consistency and clarity of deliverables submitted by the ROM Expert Are all components consistent (i.e. logframe and intervention logic; indicators and their given result level, assumptions and their given result level)? Are all deliverables complete (i.e. comments on / inputs for all aspects of the logframe; links between all levels of the result chain explained in the intervention logic, etc.) If sections are judged not applicable, is a brief explanation provided? Is the language used clear, unambiguous, without unexplained terminology, abbreviations and spelling errors? Is information provided in the right place?</p>	Score	Note that there are some changes here from the previous version of the QC template
<p>2. Reliable data available Are any key documents missing from the list of documents consulted? Are any key stakeholders missing from the sources and contact list?</p>	Score	Note the difference between this and the previous version of the QC template – the important aspect here is not whether reliable data is used – but whether it is available.
<p>3. Credible result chain and intervention logic Does the result chain flow logically and is justified by the background data provided by the OM?</p>	Score	
<p>4. Useful recommendations Are the recommendations for the OM clearly formulated and do they cover the primary changes made in the logframe/intervention logic/monitoring system?</p>	Score	

Quality Control Report by QC Expert – 2nd or more checks

In case, the QC by the ROM Contractor and related interaction between the QC Expert and the ROM Expert has been done in several steps, the QC Expert updates each time the QC report.

Quality Control Report by QC Expert – after OM comments

Were there many issues underlined by the OM (i.e. unsatisfactory scope of the Action, missing elements, requirement to follow certain national objectives even though their formulation does not comply with our definitions)? Please provide a short summary, if relevant.	Yes / No	Comments by ROM QC Expert
Have they been properly considered by the Expert?	Yes / No	Comments by ROM QC Expert

Satisfaction Survey

This satisfaction survey will be available in an EU survey form managed by the ROM Coordination Units. Upon delivery of the final product, the ROM Contractor will send a link to this satisfaction survey to the OM.

Contract ref.

1. How satisfied were you with the quality of the final deliverable (logframe, intervention logic, feedback on the reporting and monitoring system)?
Very satisfied / Satisfied / Unsatisfied / Very unsatisfied
 2. Were you satisfied with the timeliness of service provision? Yes / No
 3. Were you satisfied with the methodological (M&E) Expertise of the Expert? Yes / No
 4. Were you satisfied with the way in which the Expert provided and formulated his/her comments? Yes / No
 5. Do you want to provide additional explanation of your experience with this service? As this is a new service, any recommendations for our future work are welcome.
-

Quality checklist by ROM expert

Title of the intervention	
CRIS reference	
ROM Expert	
QC Expert	
Number of days allocated	

Comments by ROM Expert

1. I received complete intervention and contextual documentation two days before the starting date of the service.	<i>Yes/no</i>	
2. I am satisfied with the level of documentation received.	<i>Yes/no</i>	
3. The introductory call with the Delegation/Unit in charge took place within five working days of the starting date.	<i>Yes/no</i>	<i>Including date of the call</i>
4. The introductory meeting included other stakeholders.	<i>Yes/no</i>	<i>Including date of the briefing and stakeholders involved</i>
5. I had easily access to the OM and any other relevant stakeholders throughout service provision.	<i>Yes/no</i>	
6. A second call took place after the draft deliverable was shared.	<i>Yes/no</i>	<i>Including date of the call</i>
7. Any other issues to be reported.	<i>n.a.</i>	
Overall assessment	Overall score¹	

Scoring for the overall assessment: (5: excellent; 4: very good; 3: good; 2: insufficient; 1: poor)