
International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications

Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information External Evaluation

Terms of Reference (Annex 8)

Document Notes

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Summary

Terms of reference for external PERii review incorporating initial comments from DfID and Sida and revisions following initial scoping meeting with ITAD. For submission to DfID M&E unit for quality assurance and feedback.

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1. Summary

This document is a draft terms of reference (TORs) for an external evaluation of the INASP Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information phase 2 (PERii). The evaluation is being commissioned by INASP primarily to help guide the next phase of our work in this area. The overall objective of the evaluation is to examine successes and challenges to date and try to understand how they can inform the next phase of PERI over the next 5 years, in particular to identify which areas of success should be prioritised for additional investment to extend and expand their impact and which areas where challenges remain that would also benefit from additional investment to overcome those challenges.

The document will be used as a basis of discussion with invited evaluation consultants to prepare a proposal for undertaking this work. The final TORs will be agreed after those discussions and reflect the agreed approaches and outcomes that the evaluation consultant will then work to.

The results of this evaluation will initially be shared with INASP, the PERii programme funders and key programme stakeholders. A final evaluation report will also be published online for any interested parties able to access and use it.

2. Background

The International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) is a small UK based charity that works with partners to support global research communication through innovation, networking and capacity strengthening, focusing on the needs of developing and emerging countries. INASP works with them to address their national priorities for:

- Access to national and international scholarly information and knowledge
- Use, creation, management and uptake of scholarly information and knowledge via appropriate ICTs
- National, regional and international cooperation, networking and knowledge exchange

INASP advises and advocates for improved policy and practice in achieving sustainable and equitable development through effective communication, knowledge and networks. Established by the International Council for Science in 1992, INASP maps, supports and strengthens activities promoting access to and dissemination of information and knowledge; it identifies, encourages and supports new initiatives that will increase local publication and general access to scientific and scholarly literature; and it promotes in-country capacity strengthening in information production, organisation, access and dissemination.

2.1 What is PERii?

PERii is the second five-year phase of INASP's Programme for the Enhancement of Research Information.

Focusing on the needs of people in developing and emerging countries, PERii works with partners to support global research communication by further strengthening:

- the knowledge and skills of people working in research communication
- participation in international knowledge networks
- research communication policy and practice

Taking advantage of the possibilities offered by ICTs, the core programme areas focus on:

- access to international scholarly literature
- successful writing, publishing and communication of research from developing and emerging countries
- effective use, evaluation and management of ICTs to support research
- development of modern, digital research libraries
- advice and advocacy around the role of research communication and the people engaged in it for sustainable and equitable development

- policy makers and influencers' demand and capacity to use research information

2.1.1 What PERii does

Delivers information: ICT-enabled national access to international research findings

- Research community identifies required resources
- INASP negotiates affordable, sustainable access licenses
- Publishers provide low-price access to high-value content
- Countrywide access available to research, education and not-for-profit institutes
- No cost at point of use
- Access to over 20,000 full text journals
- Extensive bibliographic database information
- Document delivery
- Information literacy training for multiple levels of users to support effective use of online information resources

Disseminates nationally published research/strengthens local publishing: Increased visibility of national research outputs; more viable national publishing

- Online tables of contents and abstracts
- National journals supported to publish 'full text' online
- Document delivery and 'south-south' subscriptions
- Worldwide promotion of journals
- National and international workshops
- Study tours
- Publishing partnerships
- Print and online resources for publishers and editors

Enhances ICT skills: Enhanced skills in using and managing electronic resources and tools

- In-country workshops with local facilitators
- Cascading methodology - training courses 'travel' south-south
- Trains local trainers and facilitators
- Collaboration in development of materials
- Supporting increased information literacy, access and use
- Information literacy training for multiple levels of users to support effective use of online information resources and research evidence

Supports country collaboration and networking: Stronger local mechanisms for information resource sharing

- National networking and library consortia building

Research and development: Providing answers to challenges identified in the field

- Commission and support case studies
- Undertake research
- Pilot and evaluate new tools and techniques

Builds demand for use of evidence: Enhancing skills, awareness and motivations for accessing and using evidence and information within policy making

- In-country workshops with local facilitators
- Trains local trainers and facilitators
- Cascading methodology - training courses 'travel' south-south
- Undertake research to understand barriers to using evidence
- Pilot and evaluate new tools and techniques

2.2 What is done where?

The tables included in appendix 1 attempt to capture;

- The various aspects of the programme by geographical / country breakdown
- An indication of the relative weighting of INASP staff effort, resource and time spent in each area
- Broad brush details as to the depth of programme components and activities by country
- Log frame indicator allocated to programme component area
- Details of key contacts associated with each component area
- Details of key documents or data sources associated with country or programme components

It should be noted that due to the range of components and activities undertaken in the programme combined with the broad range of countries in which the programme operates and the time frames in which elements of the programme have been running, it is not possible to provide a simple listing of what has been planned, completed or not attempted and where. The attached tables attempt to capture these issues and the complexity of what comprises PERii as well as is possible. This complexity and difficulty in representing it may be an issue to be explored during the evaluation.

3. Purpose, objectives and scope

An external evaluation of PERii is being commissioned in order to evaluate:

- the programme's strengths and weaknesses and potential early impact of the programme (indicative 40% weighting);
- the key areas requiring further investment and support, continuation, modification or withdrawal in the next phase of the programme (indicative 60% weighting¹).

Whilst the evaluation will be based on the standard OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria, the primary focus of the evaluation will be on defining evidence-based learning on the nature of PERii's successes and challenges to date in order to inform future PERii strategy, design and investments

The evaluation will include a focus on effectiveness in terms of PERii results across components and, where appropriate, and feasible to comment on the efficiency and value for money (VfM) offered by the programme and where this can be enhanced.

In particular, the evaluation will focus on identifying drivers of success and key constraints relating to:

- Overall PERii architecture including management processes, etc.
- Drivers of successes and constraints at the level of PERii components and logframe outputs

3.1 Intended users and uses of the evaluation

The primary intended users and audience of this evaluation will be INASP staff, programme funders (current and potential funders of future phases) and programme implementation partners in the north and south.

The evaluation will be used to inform stakeholders of the programme's effectiveness, efficiency, value for money and outcomes via publications including; an internal and external evaluation report, a four-page INASP InfoBrief, and a number of INASP formal (newsletter articles) and informal (blog postings) articles. INASP will be responsible for the creation of all of these outputs based on the final evaluation report prepared by the evaluators.

The evaluation will also help to establish best practice when planning and developing future activities. Particular attention to paid in this regard, as continued work within the areas covered by the programme is planned and so understanding what works and does not work will be important to help guide that.

¹ This weighting is indicative of the forward-looking emphasis and focus of the evaluation but recognises that much of the forward-looking aspects of the review will draw on and be informed by an assessment of PERii's results to date.

3.2 What are the questions that the evaluation will address?

Outcome: Q. To what extent has the programme achieved its stated outcome of “Within targeted developing countries, an enabling environment for research communication is owned & driven by a sustainable local network of stakeholder partners” (as stated in the 2011 annual report and log frame)?

Outputs: Q. To what extent have the planned outputs been achieved?

- The provision of information to support research has been enhanced.
 - Availability of information & knowledge required to enable high quality research that is provided by physical & virtual networks of people & systems from within target countries.
- The visibility and accessibility of southern published research has been improved.
 - Capacity of editors & publishers to disseminate national research content via international databases and Journals Online platforms (JOLs).
- Library and information services targeted at researchers have been improved.
 - Capacity of librarians & ICT professionals to facilitate access to & use of research content.
 - Southern partners' capacity to monitor, evaluate and revise their training and capacity development activities using appropriate tools and approaches.
- Production and publication of southern research publications has been improved.
 - Researchers' ability to access, use & communicate research content.
- Research information producers and intermediaries have increased their involvement in local, national and international professional networks.
 - Engagement in the building of sustainable country owned systems, peer-to-peer processes & international networks from people in target countries.
- Policy makers' and influencers' ability to access and use research content has been improved.

Architecture and programme design: Q. To what extent has the management and implementation of the activities associated with the programme been effective and efficient, and did they provide value for money?

Q. To what extent are PERii systems, structures, staffing, resources and management processes (both within INASP and across the wider group of participating implementation partners) effective and efficient at delivering the programme? In particular, is the PERii architecture appropriate and optimum for delivering key programme outcomes relating to:

- Advocacy, innovation, networking, training and capacity building, sustainability, equity.

3.2.1 Forward looking questions

Elements of PERii will be continued into a next phase of programme work. Based on the questions outlined above, a number of key specifically forward looking questions should also be explored. In particular:

- Q. What is the role and niche for PERI over the next 5 years?
 - How is the current model of making journals and INASP negotiated licenses available on a countrywide basis to eligible institutions, while national consortia are established, working and sustainable for different stakeholders e.g. consumers of that research (researchers and libraries), producers of that research (publishers) and mediators of that access (INASP)?
 - Is the current model of making local journals available via national and regional Journals Online Systems sustainable and effective?

- Q. How ready are INASP partner countries to take on elements or all of the activities undertaken within the programme without further input from INASP?
 - Is the current approach to in-country management of activities via Country Coordinators and Coordinating Teams sustainable and effective?
- Q. Is the current approach to delivering training producing the required changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes? Is the approach producing sustainably enhanced capacity to undertake further training locally without further INASP intervention?
- Q. To what extent is the current programme addressing the most topical and relevant areas of scholarly research and communication? Are there any areas that the programme is not currently addressing which would enhance or contribute to research information and knowledge system wide capacity development?
- Q. Are there any areas of the current programme which have become redundant, or are pitched at an incorrect level or audience, or which might be undertaken in a different way?

4. Existing information sources

INASP will provide any public or internal documentation associated with PERii as requested by the evaluators. An initial core set of background documents will be provided and it is envisaged they will form the basis of the existing information sources that should be consulted during this work. These will comprise:

- Original programme proposal
- Original programme agreements and extension contracts
- Annual progress reports from 2008-11
- Log frame and associated reporting documents from 2008-11
- Annual review reports from selected funding bodies (where available)
- Case studies and external publications produced by INASP and partners as part of the programme
- Previous programme evaluation reports; complete programme evaluation reports from 2004 and 2008 and a range of specific programme activity / component evaluation reports
- Contact and network details of partners and identified beneficiaries or participants within the programme

In addition the programme Web site and associated online information is available from:

<http://www.inasp.info/perii>

5. Methodology

The methodology will be consistent with the essence of the evaluation - examining successes and challenges to date and how they can inform PERii's future over the next 5 years – and in line with the available resources and timeline. The evaluation team will design a mixed method approach in order to generate and triangulate a robust evidence base to answer the key evaluation questions. The evaluation team will apply to core principles through the method:

1. **Given the limited resources and tight timeline, the evaluation team will use existing data sources wherever possible** (particularly data available from the PERii M&E system and existing evaluation reports and publications). This includes drawing on the expertise of external consultants familiar with the PERii programme and the wider field of global research communication such as Jon Harle and others. The evaluation team will focus any primary data collection activities on filling gaps where robust secondary data does not already exist.

2. **The evaluation team will design a purposive sample method in order to explicitly target key activities (particularly the country visits) to identify and then contrast contexts where PERii has been successful with contexts where PERii has encountered challenges and constraints.** It is anticipated that this approach (whilst being less formally rigorous than a random sample approach) is more appropriate in terms of generating lessons to inform future PERii strategy and the nature of future investments to enhance sustainability of successful outputs as well as future investments and innovations to address perceived challenges.

The mixed-method approach will involve, but not be limited to, the following:

- Desk research; document review (a selection of potentially useful documents will be provided)
- Potentially 2 pairs of country visits in order to understand both success and challenges in 2 regions, proposed as:
 - Kenya (PERii high performer) and Uganda or Tanzania (PERii “lagger”)
 - Bangladesh (PERii high performer) and Nepal (PERii “lagger”)
- Country or regional stakeholder meetings - with key informant interviews and focus group discussions with a full range of stakeholders and “users” of the programme. Consideration of understanding the perspectives of “non-users” of the programme
- Use of web-based surveying (SurveyMonkey) drawing on PERii’s directory of contacts, disaggregated according to different stakeholder and ‘user’ groups where possible
- Review of previous evaluations of the programme and programme elements
- Quantitative analysis of key programme output and outcome data
- Web exploration; current Web presence; relevant threads on discussion lists, etc.
- Reference to complementary initiatives e.g. HINARI, AGORA, eIFL
- Consultation with INASP staff (a ‘who’s who in INASP’ and the staff time available for consultation will be provided)

The exact methods used will be decided by the evaluation team at the kick off meeting and reflected in a simple and concise Inception Report. Reflecting the methodology developed, the Inception Report will comprise:

- A brief outline of the purposive sample approach addressing PERii successes and challenges including the countries representative countries the evaluation team plan to visit.
- An overall Evaluation Matrix – elucidating key evaluation questions, sets of sub-questions, data collection tools, and sources.
- A semi-structured interview/focus group checklist to ensure all interviews and focus groups (face to face and telephone) are conducted according to the same outline and format.
- An initial web survey outline – key questions according to likely recipient groups including any ‘counter-factual’ potential groups outside those directly engaged by PERii.

6. Skills and qualifications

The evaluation consultant/s should be experienced in complex programme evaluation of programmes operating in multiple regions and countries (in Africa, South Asia and Latin America) and within multiple institutions within each country (higher education and research institutions). They should have a proven track record of evaluating programmes focused on research sector and institutional level strengthening interventions.

The ability to undertake work associated with this evaluation in English and Spanish is a pre-requisite and in French an additional benefit.

7. Logistics and procedures

The evaluator will be responsible for the collection and analysis of data and the presentation of findings in an evaluation report. INASP will be responsible for the use and dissemination of findings from the evaluation.

Within INASP, Martin Belcher will be the liaison point. INASP can provide logistical support in relation to travel booking, and provide information and access to documents as necessary.

8. Outputs and timeline

Three formal outputs are required:

1. Initial evaluation planning meeting within two weeks of contracting – to include evaluator, INASP – in which final TORs are agreed.
2. Draft evaluation report for initial feedback and comment.
3. Final evaluation report. The final report should be in Plain English and no longer than 25 pages, plus executive summary and appendices. Completed data sets should be returned and included as an appendix. The report should be submitted electronically in MS Office and PDF formats.

8.1 Timeline

Initial meeting with INASP to agree TORs:	September 2012
Data collection:	September and October 2012
Data analysis:	October 2012
Mid-evaluation review with INASP:	by 5 October 2012 (optional)
Reporting – draft report:	by 24 October 2012
Reporting – final report:	31 October 2012
Payment schedule:	To be agreed.

9. Reporting and contracting arrangements

To be agreed.

10. Budget

To be agreed.

11. Further information

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