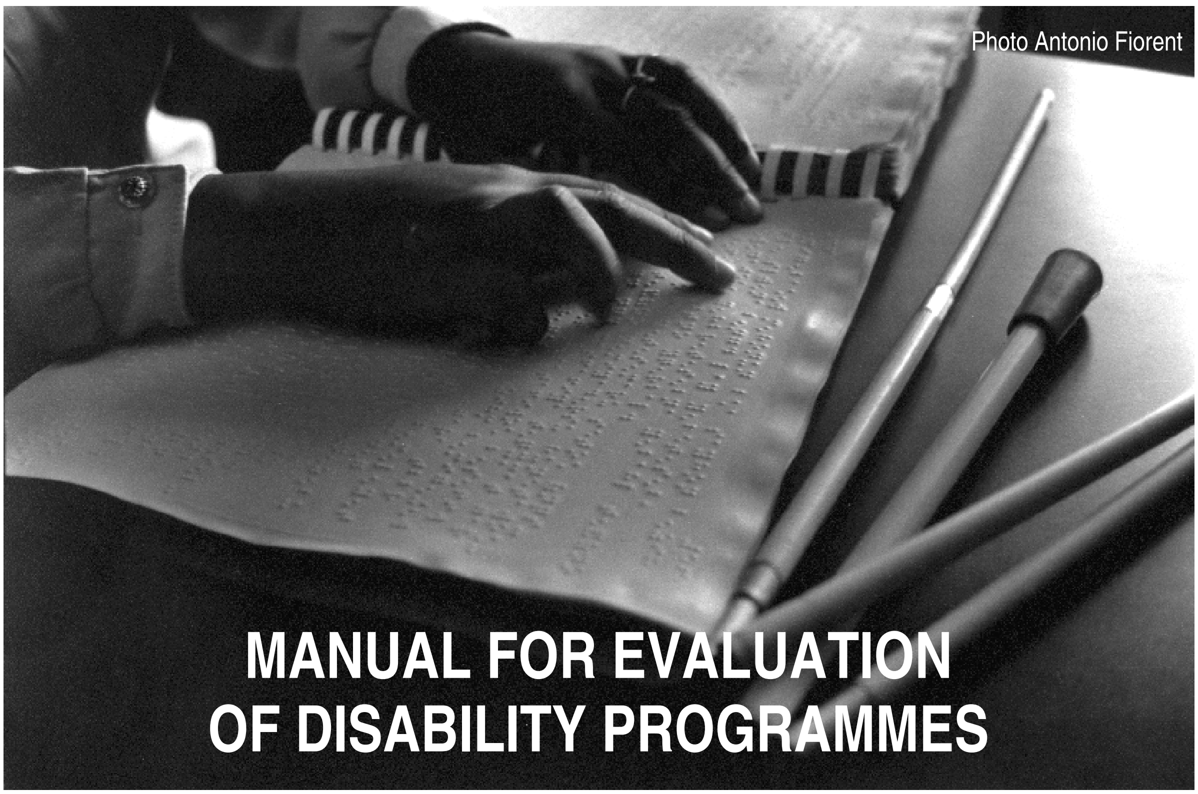


MANUAL FOR EVALUATION OF DISABILITY PROGRAMMES

The Secretariat of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. For whom

This manual aims at helping you to understand what evaluation is and how it can be done. It will provide you with basic knowledge of the types of evaluation that an organisation should undertake. It also presents the tools available and how they can be used.

The manual is targeted at everyone who should be involved in the evaluation of disability projects and activities. More specifically, they are boards of trustees, managers/directors, project managers and heads of departments and sections who are, in one way or other, responsible and accountable for the results produced in your organisation.

Once you have gone through this manual you should be able to take a leading role in evaluating different types of activities and projects in your organisation. You should also be able to write a report covering the findings, conclusions and recommendations from such evaluations.

1.2. Why

The management of an organisation is accountable for what the organisation does and what it doesn't do. The management is also accountable for how the organisation produces its results and how efficient and effective that is. In other words, the management is ultimately responsible for how the organisation's resources are used. In order to take this responsibility one has to assess the efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of what the organisation is doing, and in that process learn what works well and what does not. These three measurements can be defined as follows.

Efficiency

An organisation must not only be able to provide exceptional services, but also to provide them within an appropriate cost-effective structure. How efficient has our organisation been in the use of its human, financial and physical resources in its programmes? Some efficiency issues to be considered when monitoring and evaluating organisation work are;

• the extent to which staff members' abilities were used by the organisation
• whether physical facilities (buildings, equipment, etc) were used optimally
• whether financial resources were used optimally
• whether high quality administrative systems are in place (financial, human resource, programme, strategy, etc.) to support efficiency of the organisation

Effectiveness

Meaningful evaluation is difficult unless the objectives of operational plans, and projects or programmes are clear and explicit. The effectiveness of our organisation is measured by the extent to which our objectives have been achieved. Issues to consider for evaluation include
• did we have SMART objectives and did we achieve them?
• did we deliver the expected outputs and did we see the key performance indicators?
• did we adhere to our activity plan?
• did we have a system in place to asses and monitor effectiveness?
• what major factors (internal or external)influenced the achievement or non-achievement of objectives?

Relevance

Are our programmes relevant in terms of the stakeholder's needs and priorities and the organisation's policy? Are the objectives relevant and realisable? Has the organisation remained relevant to its users? Should alternative objectives and strategies be considered?
In order to answer these questions we need to consider whether
• the organisation regularly reviews the environment to adapt its strategy
• regular programme revisions reflect changing environment and capacities
• there is a need to review the organisation's mission
• the plans of action are reviewed regularly
• evaluation is conducted regularly to ensure that programmes remain relevant

It should be emphasised that evaluation is not only important for internal benefits for the organisation, but also for the need of accountability towards political authorities, sponsors and the general public who often fund the organisation through the tax system.

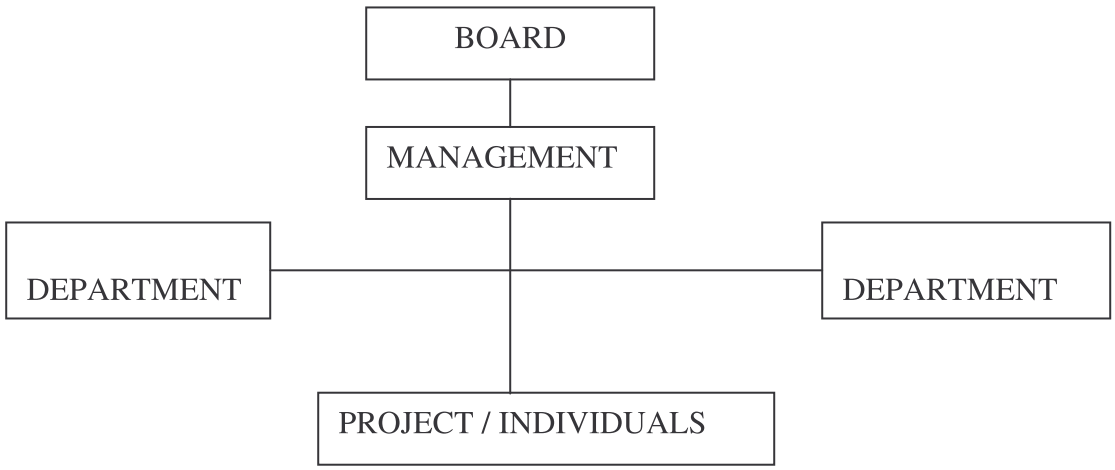
Unfortunately, organisations rarely evaluate their programmes or activities. There are several reasons for this shortcoming. It could be

- the lack of traditions to follow
- its personnel generally lack the knowledge and the skills to evaluate
- the structures for evaluation (who is supposed to do it, and when?) are unclear
- there are no proper systems or tools for evaluation
- evaluation is perceived as difficult, time-consuming and costly

As a result of insufficient evaluation, organisations miss an opportunity to learn from their own successes and failures and hence much of what is done in organisations is based on trial and error. This way of operating is inefficient and expensive in the long term.

1.3. Who does what

Regular and formal evaluation procedures are signs of organisational maturity and professionalism. Evaluation of organisation activities and project must not be optional, it should be made compulsory so that all organisation activities are monitored and evaluated in systematic way and that sufficient resources (personnel, time and funds) are allocated to this important process. This means that evaluation should be made a prioritised activity in your organisation and therefore it should be institutionalised. There is a need for clarity on the purpose, roles (who does what), processes and restrictions in connection with evaluation. In bringing this clarity to the organisation all levels of decision-makers have to be involved. The roles to be played by the different levels of authority in the institutionalisation of evaluation can be illustrated as presented below. It should be noted that this is a general picture and that your organisation might have to modify this proposal to make it suitable to your situation.



The board needs to develop a policy, set objectives and allocate resources for the evaluation of activities in the organisation. It also needs to request / instruct the management to implement such policy and report progress and problems to the board.

The management is accountable for ensuring that structures, systems and work procedures for evaluation are developed and implemented. It needs to request from each department (represented by its head) a plan and a budget for evaluation of projects and activities, and approve or disapprove such plans and budgets. Moreover, the management should request regular progress reports from departments.

The heads of **departments** are accountable for the planning, implementation and reporting of evaluation activities in their respective departments. They need to ensure that sufficient systems, work procedures and skills are available for this purpose.

The individual staff members must be directly involved in the day-to-day evaluation of activities and projects that they are engaged in. In doing so they need to follow instructions and procedures developed by the organisation.

2. WHAT IS EVALUATION

Evaluation is a systematic assessment of the design, implementation and results of an ongoing or completed project or programme. The aim is to determine

- Relevance and fulfilment of objectives
- Efficiency
- Effectiveness
- Impact
- Sustainability of the organisations performance

It entails measurement of performance against

- Set objectives
- Expected outputs and key performance indicators (KPI)
- Plan of action
- Budget

2.1. Purpose

Evaluations serve several purposes, but the ultimate focus should be on two dimensions; learning and accountability.

Learning is produced all the way through the evaluation process; during the data collection, when one draws the conclusions and makes the recommendations. Lessons drawn from a project, programme or activity all provide learning. Research and experience in general show that the parties involved in an evaluation (interviewees, participants in workshops and seminars arranged, staff and management, readers of reports etc.) more often than not take the evaluation conclusions and recommendations on-board.

The term *accountability* in evaluation refers to documenting results achieved, responsibility and ‘being held accountable’ for your actions. Evaluations are therefore used as an instrument to document the use and results of the organisation’s funds. This calls for the organisation to account for its performance in relation to its activities.

Evaluation is

- A tool in quality assurance
- Essential in determining success or failure of any project or activity
- Focused on a particular task or product and aimed at improving it

Although there is a lot to learn from evaluations that other organisations have undertaken, we strongly recommend that each organisation carry out its own evaluation in order to gain the learning and experience from being involved in the evaluation process.

2.2. Tools

The validity and reliability of evaluations are obviously of great importance. Hence it is necessary to be as objective and honest as possible when you evaluate your activities and projects. No matter whether you are pro or against a certain project, you should still be able to conclude whether a project has been relevant and cost-effective or not.

To enable you to be as objective and neutral as possible you need to have tools and parameters to measure the project against. The most important ones are

- Objectives , Expected Outputs and KPI
- Action Plan
- Budget

Unless you have these three important tools evaluation is bound to be subjective and unreliable. If you are in a good mood you might conclude that “this project has been excellent” while you may come to a completely different conclusion if you would have had a “bad day”. With these three basic tools however, you stand a much better chance of arriving at reasonable and “accurate” conclusions that you and you organisation can learn from and make good use of in the planning of future activities and programmes.

Let us look into how these tools work, in some more detail.

Objectives express the desired state of matters at the end of your project (or whatever you want to evaluate). In other words, they tell you and your colleagues what your organisation or project is expected to achieve and will hence help your team to focus on the same priorities. The objectives need to be clear and known to everybody who should contribute to the achievement of them, and also specific enough to make them steer your team towards the desired state. We often claim that objectives need to be SMART, which is an acronym for

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant (to the problem that the project should resolve)
Time-bound

An example of a SMART objective is
By the end of 2006 the organisation shall have increased the number of institutional donors to at least ten.

Objectives are often supported by “expected output”. Expected outputs express a specification of the products and services that a particular project or programme should produce. In the example above (increased number of institutional donors) some outputs could be “information materials on our DPO”, “a fundraising strategy”, “a database of donors operating in Africa” etc.

Action Plans present what one needs to do to attain one’s objectives and outputs. They also express when these actions should happen and who should be responsible for each action. A common way of presenting and keeping track of the action plan is to make use of a Gannt-chart.

The *budget* - which is an economic plan that states how much money has been allocated to the various activities and purposes, and when such funds would be required - should express your priorities and ensure that you have *all* the money that you require for *all* the activities needed for completing you project or programme. To make a budget as useful as possible for monitoring and summative evaluation, it should be activity-based.

2. 3. Benefits of evaluation

As organisations become more result-focused, user-oriented and accountable, evaluation ought to be a key tool in improving practice. It will enable us incorporate lessons learnt from our various projects and programmes into the decision making process of the organisation management. Without a process of evaluation, many questions about an organisation's work remain unanswered. Evaluation will also help us justifying the organisation's functions and existence in the local society.

The benefits of evaluation can be summarised as follows:

- Evaluation serves as input to management and staff of ongoing activities, in order to *improve performance and implementation*
- Evaluation serves as input to the *design and planning of future activities*
- Evaluation *documents the effectiveness and efficiency* of development activities
- Evaluation *provides a learning arena* and ensures accountability

2.4.What can be evaluated?

Evaluation can be applied to any activity that organisations undertake. The tendency has been to apply evaluation only to the number and type of people benefiting from our programmes. However, other areas such as education and public programmes, client satisfaction, research, financial administration, staff development programmes, impact of new administrative and financial systems, should and could also be evaluated.

Each organisation must reflect on *what they want to know* or evaluate, and *what questions* would be relevant in order to get that knowledge. It is very important that enough time is allocated to this first step!

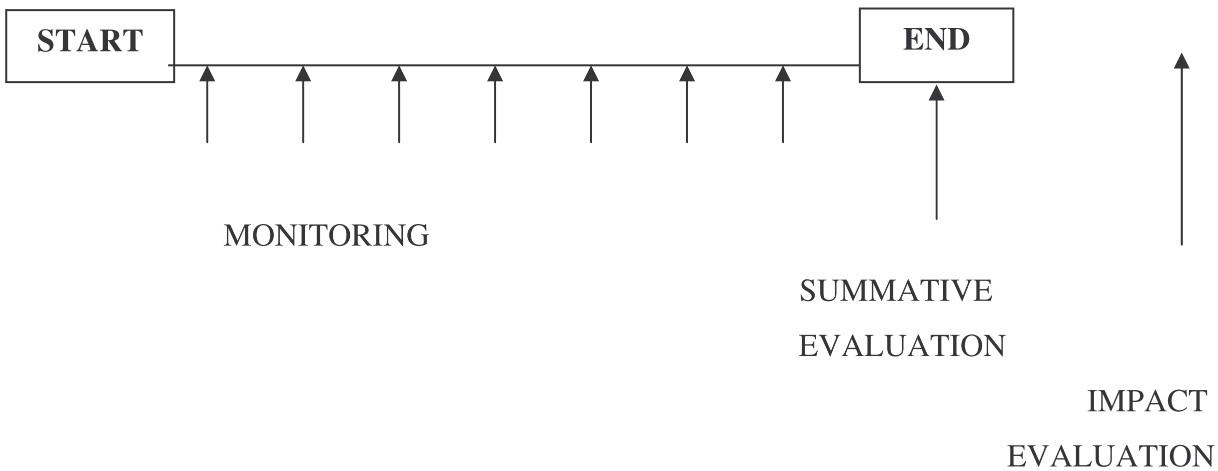
2.5. Types of evaluation

There are three main types of evaluation. They are equally important to your organisation and they serve different purposes. These three types of evaluation are

- Monitoring (formative evaluation)
- Summative evaluation (project evaluation)

- Impact evaluation

These three types of evaluation can be illustrated like this:



3. MONITORING

The first, and probably most important, type of evaluation that you need to embark on is the monitoring. Sometimes monitoring is called "formative evaluation".

3.1. Purpose

The *main purpose* of the monitoring is to ensure that your project or programme is "*going in the right direction, at an acceptable cost and at the right speed*". In other words, you need to continuously check whether you are approaching the expected outputs that you have set for your project and programme and that you are doing so within the time-frames and budget-frames that have been set.

Monitoring starts at the same time as the project, programme or year of operation itself. The person ultimately accountable for results (Project Manager in a project and Head of Department in other activities) is responsible for the monitoring, but needs to involve her team members in this process. When possible, the intended beneficiaries / target group should also be involved in the monitoring. This applies if the intended beneficiaries are internal (your colleagues in the organisation) as well as when they are external / the public.

3.2 Tools

It is imperative that you have some basic tools to help you monitor your project or programme. The most important tools that you need in this process are the *SMART objectives* that have been prepared for your specific project, department or organisation, the *action plan* for your work (that will lead to your objectives) and the *budget* that you have developed prior to the project or financial year that you now are monitoring.

You need to check on your objectives and expected outputs every week and ask yourself if your project or programme is approaching them. If you have developed key performance indicators (KPI) it will be even easier to monitor progress, as you then will be able to see such indicators (evidence or "milestones") by and by. For example, if your output is that your project should have developed a policy in October you may have decided that one KPI is that you have composed the policy writing team by the end of May and another KPI is that you have developed a first draft of the policy by the end of June.

To develop KPIs for the disability sector is of great importance to enable DPOs and other stakeholders to systematically monitor progress. Examples of such KPI for a country are:

- Accessibility to buildings and public transport for people with disability.
- Enrolment in primary education of children with disabilities.
- Availability and quality of disability specific legislation.
- Number of disabled people in Parliament, municipal councils, etc.
- Proportion of women engaged in disability boards, etc.
- Number and quality of teachers trained to assist children with special needs.
- Etc.

You should *use your plan of action* as an active monitoring tool during the implementation of your activities and projects. Every week you have to consult your plan of action and ask yourself whether you are doing what you are supposed to be doing according to you plan, and if you are doing so within the set time-frames. If you don't follow your action plan you (as the project manager) need to take some positive action. It may be that you have to reallocate resources, set new priorities or even revise your expected outputs.

The *budget* that you have prepared for your organisation / department / project is another very important monitoring tool which you need to consult frequently. Continuously you need to check expenses that you have incurred against the budget. This control is obviously much easier if you have developed an activity-based budget than if you have an itemised budget. After the completion of any activity you need to check the actual costs against the budgeted ones. In case you have spent more than what you have budgeted for this particular activity you need to take some action, otherwise you run a great risk of being short of funds before you have completed your project. The action that you need to take if you have overspent could be one of the following three

- Reallocate funds from one budgeted activity to another

- Revise your project idea and drop one or several outputs (consult superiors and sponsors before you take such a step)
- Raise additional funds to cover the amounts that you have overspent (often difficult though)

All these three tools should be active ones that you consult frequently. They can be seen as the steering wheel, the accelerator and the break in a motor car, i.e. they will help you to get to the right place, at the right time, in a controlled manner.

3.3 Methods

The way you use the tools mentioned above will vary from one organisation and another, as well as from one project to another. However, the most common methods to be used will probably be

- Observations
- Meetings
- Reports

Observations are something that you do daily. You just have to get used to observing the “right” things. You have to ask yourself whether what you see makes you believe that you are on the right track, i.e. moving towards the set objective and expected outputs. Do people seem to be satisfied with the developments? Is everyone involved and participating in our activities or why do some seem to be inactive or disinterested? In making your observation – either by walking around on the project site or by studying your key tools and reports in your own office – you have to use the same point of departure; your expected outputs, your action plan and your budget.

Meetings with your project staff – and beneficiaries when appropriate and possible – should take place regularly. Many managers consider such monitoring meetings necessary once every fortnight, but if you have reasons to think that this is too frequent or seldom you may choose to have them at other intervals. The meetings should be “short and sweet”. Spend no more than hour or so, and make sure that you are focused on project / programme matters. The first half can be used for following-up on progress made and problems encountered, while the second half can be used for planning and co-ordination of activities that will take place between now and when you meet next. With your team members you need to check on the progress made since you last met. Deal with one expected output at a time and ask the team about

- What progress has been made?
- What problems have been encountered, and how have you dealt / will you deal with them?
- What resources have been used and is that within the budget-frame?

Take note of the progress and problems reported by your team members, and probe if you need to. If there is a need for a decision or any other intervention from you or your organisation management, you need to act now. Otherwise you move on to the next focus, what you plan to do during the next two weeks (or until you have your next meeting) in connection with each expected output. This will give you a good picture of whether you are sticking to your plan of action or not, and it will also give you a good opportunity to co-ordinate different activities and resources. You should take simple minutes from these monitoring meetings, as they will be useful for both subsequent decision-making and for the summative evaluation that you will undertake later (chapter 4).

3.4 Reports

Writing and submitting progress reports is an important monitoring method. Your organisation should develop a standard format for such reports in order to secure that all relevant information for monitoring is included. We would like to recommend that you include at least the following components

- Progress made (against set expected outputs)
- Problems encountered (and what you have done to limit them)
- Budget follow-up in which expenses incurred are compared with funds allocated
- Plans for the next month / quarter (until a new report will be submitted)

Such reports will “force” the writer to consider all aspects of monitoring that we have listed above. Moreover, the receiver of the report (normally the superior levels in the organisation and the sponsor) will be given an opportunity to monitor the project / programme to the extent they feel appropriate.

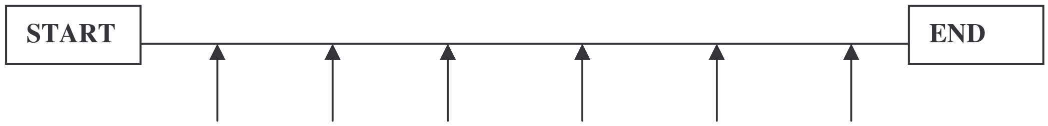
A progress report should be relatively brief in order not to exhaust the time and energy of the writer and reader, respectively. Some 5 – 10 pages will normally suffice.

3.5 Who should be involved?

The Project Manager (for a project) or the Head of Department shall be overall responsible for the monitoring of progress and the budget. She will ensure that the tools required for monitoring (see above) are in place and that everybody that needs to use these tools has access to them. She will also make sure that monitoring meetings are held as required and that progress reports are written as scheduled. The project team members / departmental staff members also need to be involved in the monitoring, for two reasons. Firstly, they can provide much of the vital information required in monitoring (progress, problems encountered, etc.) and they need to learn whether everything is on track.

The target group / intended beneficiaries of the project or programme should be involved whenever this is possible. They are the best ones to determine whether the project / programme is relevant and has a positive impact or not. It is much too common that the target group is overlooked in monitoring processes.

Lastly, the management and board of the organisation should be involved in the monitoring process through progress reports that regularly are submitted to them (by the Project Manager / Head of Department). The monitoring process can be illustrated as follows:



Purpose

Ensure that

- The project approaches its objective and expected outputs.
- The project is on schedule and that the plan of action is followed
- The project is run within given budget frames.

Tools	*Methods*
- Objective/expected outputs/KPI	- Observations
- Plan of action	- Meetings
- Budget	- Reports

Key players

- Project Manager or Head of Department (depending on whether the monitoring covers a project or part of the department's normal activities)
- Project team members / Staff in the department concerned.
- Intended beneficiaries.
- Superiors and sponsors (through reports submitted by project manager or head of department).

4. SUMMATIVE EVALUATION

The second type of evaluation in organisations is the summative evaluation. Sometimes it is called "project evaluation". This type of evaluation takes place at the very end of the project, programme or financial year.

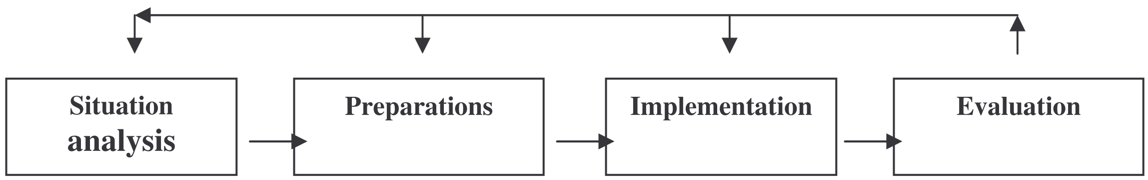
4.1 Purpose

The *main purpose* of the summative evaluation is to determine if the project / programme has achieved its expected outputs within its given time- and budget-frames. If there is a discrepancy between the expected outputs and the actual ones, one has to understand why this happened. Hence, the overall purpose is to learn from your own successes and failures so that you can make use of this knowledge in the planning of projects and programmes to come.

Many of the tools, methods and key players are the same as we have used in monitoring. Again, it is difficult to over-emphasis the importance of good preparations of your objective, expected outputs, action plan and budget. If you have taken the trouble to develop such tools in a professional and accurate manner your summative evaluation will be easy and pleasurable. On the other hand, if your basic tools are weak and blunt the summative evaluation will be difficult and cumbersome. Moreover, if you have done your monitoring well up to this point your summative evaluation will be easy and the chances that you have achieved your expected outputs within given time- and budget-frames are great.

We have mentioned above that evaluation primarily is a learning exercise. If there is a discrepancy between the expected outputs and the actual ones, one has to understand why this happened. In doing so we need to review the whole project cycle and ask a number of questions relating to each of the four phases. It can be illustrated as follows:

THE PROJECT CYCLE



		Make use of:
Problem analysis	Activity plan	Activity plan
Target group analysis	Budget	Budget
Other agents	Infrastructure	Infrastructure
Mission	Procurement	Procurement
Legal aspects	Staff development	Personnel
↓		
Objective		

Questions that you need to ask yourself could be;

- Did we analyse the problem sufficiently? Did we fully understand the causes and the effects of the problem?
- Did we involve the target group so that we fully understood their needs and wishes?
- Did we identify our “competitors so that we could collaborate / provide an alternative solution?
- Did we consider our organisation’s mission before we decided that this project was a priority?
- Did we consider all relevant laws and regulations before we planned our project?
- Did we develop a SMART objective, and did everyone concerned agree to it?
- Did we develop a plan that would lead to the objective? Was it detailed enough or maybe too detailed?

- Did we develop a budget that covered all planned activities? Was the budget detailed enough or perhaps too detailed?
- Did we prepare all necessary infrastructure before we implemented the project?
- Did we procure all necessary materials and tools, etc. before we launched the actual project?
- Did we prepare the staff before the launch of the project?
- Did we make full use of our plan, budget, tools, staff, etc. that we had prepared?
- Did we monitor properly?
- Did we write good progress reports?

4. 2. Preparation

Good preparation is a foundation for a fruitful evaluation. In this phase a series of questions like the ones posed below will aid the organisation come out with evaluation priorities.

Why do you want to evaluate?

It is essential to agree on the main purpose of the evaluation before it is designed and planned. In an earlier section we pointed out that evaluations should focus on learning and / or accountability. These two dimensions therefore deserve special consideration. Are you evaluating in order to learn from lessons drawn or to account for results achieved or both?.

What is to be to evaluated?

It is essential to define the questions, which will be addressed in the evaluation - these are often referred to as the "issues" of the evaluation. One approach of identifying the main issues is to ask several appropriate people within the organisation to reflect on issues they feel are important and why they believe these are important.

Setting evaluation priorities will be necessary. The various activities to be evaluated should be organised into categories, which represent a broad spectrum of issues, such as policy, programme and project activities as well as sectors, themes, procedures and management issues.

Who will do it?

Who is to be involved in the evaluation and what are their roles and responsibilities? The institutional structure for managing evaluation is crucial in ensuring an effective evaluation process. It is normal to have an internal evaluation team, but external evaluators or a combination of internal and external members is also possible. The single most important aspect that makes evaluations useful is quality and credibility and this depends on selection of evaluators and the participatory process.

Who should evaluate?

Internal evaluator	**External evaluator**
Advantages	*Advantages*
Cheaper	Less biased, more objective and critical
Has insights into the organisation	Technical expertise
Focused on management's priorities	Experience from similar evaluations
Disadvantages	*Disadvantages*
Over-influenced by history	May be insensitive to matters
May not be objective	Can be misled by key stakeholders
Less committed to the evaluation	Responsible to external organisation
	Expensive

Discuss the evaluation process and set rules for how the individual team members will operate. The following criteria can help in deciding on an evaluation team

- *Credibility* - someone who is recognised by the main stakeholders and by members of the organisation as having the appropriate mix of authority, responsibility, knowledge of the organisation and insight.
- *Technical expertise* - someone who understands evaluation principles, understands the issues of evaluation and can analyse data.
- *Impartiality* - someone who can balance the perspectives of different people.

- *Interpersonal skills* - someone who can interact with all parties in a sensitive and effective manner and is able to work on a team and
- *Communication skills* - someone who can communicate the results of the evaluation timeously and in a manner understood by all parties.

How will it be done?

In the preparation phase it is fundamental to "*start with the end*".. You have to be crystal clear over what the outputs / results from your evaluation should be. Are you only supposed to produce a status report with statistical data on different matters or do you also need to interpret the data, make a qualitative analysis resulting in recommendation for the future? Do you need to write a report with findings, conclusions and recommendations or do you only need to present your findings in a meeting with your colleagues? Before you start collecting data from various and disseminate the information. You need to make some decisions at the preparation stage on how to simplify the collection. It is important to think about the analysis process before the evaluation project begins, so that you do not end with a mass of data and no way of making sense of it all. In other words, depending on the expected outputs you need to decide on what type and volumes of data that needs to be collected, the sources of such data, the methods to be used, etc.

When to evaluate?

The summative evaluation should be done at the very end of the project or programme. The results of the project must be possible to identify at this stage and the project personnel (that need to provide information required for the evaluation) must still be available.

Estimating resources required for the evaluation

The cost of an evaluation differs invariably according to the range of issues to be covered by the evaluation, number of people needed and amount and length of travel and desk study activities required. Quality evaluation requires sufficient resources. As part of the preparation phase it is important to produce a detailed estimate of the resources required. The common resources required are

- Pertinent technical expertise to do a quality and credible job

- Critical resources in terms of support from involved parties, stakeholders, and other people interviewed by the evaluation team
- Time
- Materials
- Funding

It takes careful planning to get the scope of work in balance with the funding and available resources, and there will always be a potential conflict between the two. The best way to prevent this is to negotiate very explicitly about the resources to be made available and the trade-offs associated with the inevitable constraints on resources. We recommend that you develop some terms of reference for the evaluation prior to the actual start of the evaluation. Such terms of reference should cover the following aspect

- Background and justification of the evaluation
- Purpose and overall objective of the evaluation
- Scope of work (issues to be covered)
- Methodology
- Expected Outputs (reports, seminars, etc.)
- Costs

4.3. Data collection

The preparation phase is followed by the data collection phase. Any evaluation must describe the sources and methods of collecting data used. When seeking the best sources of data, you need to consider what is realistic, feasible and acceptable. Data can be collected from two sources: *documents* and *people*. Document sources include plans of action, progress and annual reports and financial statements. The important point here is to make sure that you review documents appropriate to your evaluation questions.

Deciding who will be your best sources of data is like identifying your key stakeholders. Stakeholders are generally defined as persons, groups and institutions that have a significant interest (*stake*) in the project. An analysis of the stakeholders in a given project will include the direct project participants, those who *own* the project, those who are affected by it, positively or negatively, and those who wish to affect it. One way of identifying the main partners in a project / programme, is to undertake a *stakeholder analysis* in order to ensure that all relevant parties to an evaluation are involved. A stakeholder analysis seeks to answers questions such as

- Who depends on the project?
- Who are interested in the outcome of the project?
- Who will influence the project?
- Who will be affected by the project?
- Who will work against the project?

At the general level, the funding agency and the project management are the most fundamental parties to the evaluation. A stakeholder analysis will soon show, however, that there are more stakeholders than the two. A list of stakeholders to any evaluation would include at least the following

- The management of the organisation funding the project
- The project manager
- Project staff
- The target groups

In appendix 1 you will find a list of commonly used *data collection methods*, ranged from informal, inexpensive methods to precise, formal but expensive methods, with a notion of some of their key features.

4.4. Data analysis

The data, which results from all evaluation projects, can be categorised as either *quantitative or qualitative*. The evaluator should employ the most appropriate method of analysis, governed of course by the nature of the data. An appealing advantage of quantitative analysis (statistics, frequency, etc.) is that it can summarise findings in a clear, precise and reliable way. Not all information, however, can be analysed quantitatively. For example, responses to an open-ended interview survey may provide lengthy descriptions that may be difficult to categorise and quantify, without losing subtle differences in the responses.

Both qualitative and quantitative analysis relies on the evaluator's professional judgement concerning the relevance and validity of available data. Qualitative analysis is best done in conjunction with some sort of statistical analysis of related quantitative data. All evaluations should therefore be designed so that the two sorts of analysis, using different but related data, will be mutually reinforcing. Some aspects of qualitative and quantitative methods data analysis are discussed in appendix 2.

The summative evaluation process can be illustrated as follows

START — **END**

Purpose

- Compare objective and expected outputs with actual outputs.
- Determine effectiveness and efficiency.
- Learn from success and failure.

Tools	*Methods*
- Objective/expected outputs/KPI	- Observations
- Plan of action	- Meetings
- Budget	- Reports
- Reports	- Interviews
- Project document	- Studying relevant documents

Key players

- Project Manager or Head of Department (depending on whether the monitoring covers a project or part of the department's normal activities)
- Project team members / Staff in the department concerned.
- Intended beneficiaries.
- Superiors and sponsors (through reports submitted by project manager or head of department).

5. IMPACT EVALUATION

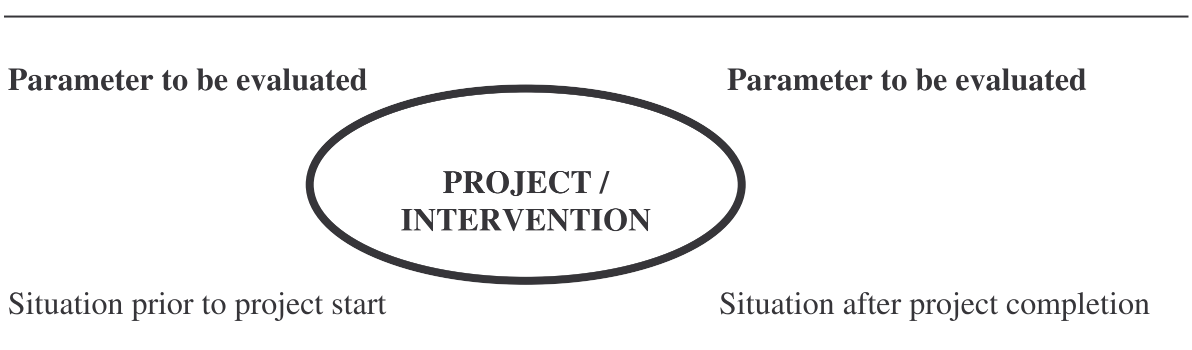
5.1 Purpose

The purpose of impact evaluation is to establish the sustainable effect (impact) of the project or programme after it has ended. This type of evaluation should be done some time after the project has come to an end. Depending on the type of project or programme that you want to evaluate, the impact could be measured some three months to several years after its completion.

Naturally, the effects of a project or programme can be either positive or negative – or both at the same time, for different groups of people. The key question is whether the project has been successful or not and whether it has a largely positive and sustainable effect. One has to *compare the status of certain key parameters prior to the project with the same key parameters after the project or programme*. Such key parameters obviously need to be linked to the problem that justified the project or programme, and to the expected outputs set for the same. In other words, if the project primarily aims at increasing the target group's income, you will have to compare their income before the project with their income some time after the completion of the project.

The impact evaluation process can be illustrated as follows

Impact evaluation



5.2 Preparation

Some of the tools, methods and key players are the same as we have used in the summative evaluation. Again, it is difficult to over-emphasis the importance of good preparations of your objectives, expected outputs, action plan and budget. If you have taken the trouble to develop such tools in a professional and accurate manner your impact evaluation will be easy and pleasurable. On the other hand, if your basic tools are weak and blunt the impact evaluation will be difficult and cumbersome..

Before your start collecting data for your impact evaluation you need to decide what parameters you want to study. This should have been done during your situation analysis, long before you implemented your project or programme activities. Examples of such parameters are:

- Target group's knowledge about the organisation's main programmes
- Cost per capita (to produce something)
- Quality of work done
- Frequency of a specific disease
- Time required to process a request for assistance.
- Percentage of disabled children enrolling in primary education

5.3 Methods

There are a number of methods of evaluating impact. The most common ones are;

1. Using a target group plus a control group

Establishing the situation before and after the intervention - both in the target group and in a control group (that is not exposed to project). This is a precise procedure with high validity. However, it is expensive, complicated and time consuming.

2. The simple before-and-after study

The net effect of the intervention is estimated as the difference between measurements before and after. However, it is among the least valid of impact assessment approaches, since it is usually difficult to distinguish the effect of external factors from the effect of the intervention. Another complication is that it requires comparable baseline data. It is also a high cost method.

3. The simple after study with control group

This may be easier to apply, but with low validity. For one thing, it assumes that the situation in both the target and control group were similar in the "before" situation. Also, there is an ethical dilemma involved in studying a control group if this means that its members will not benefit from the intervention.

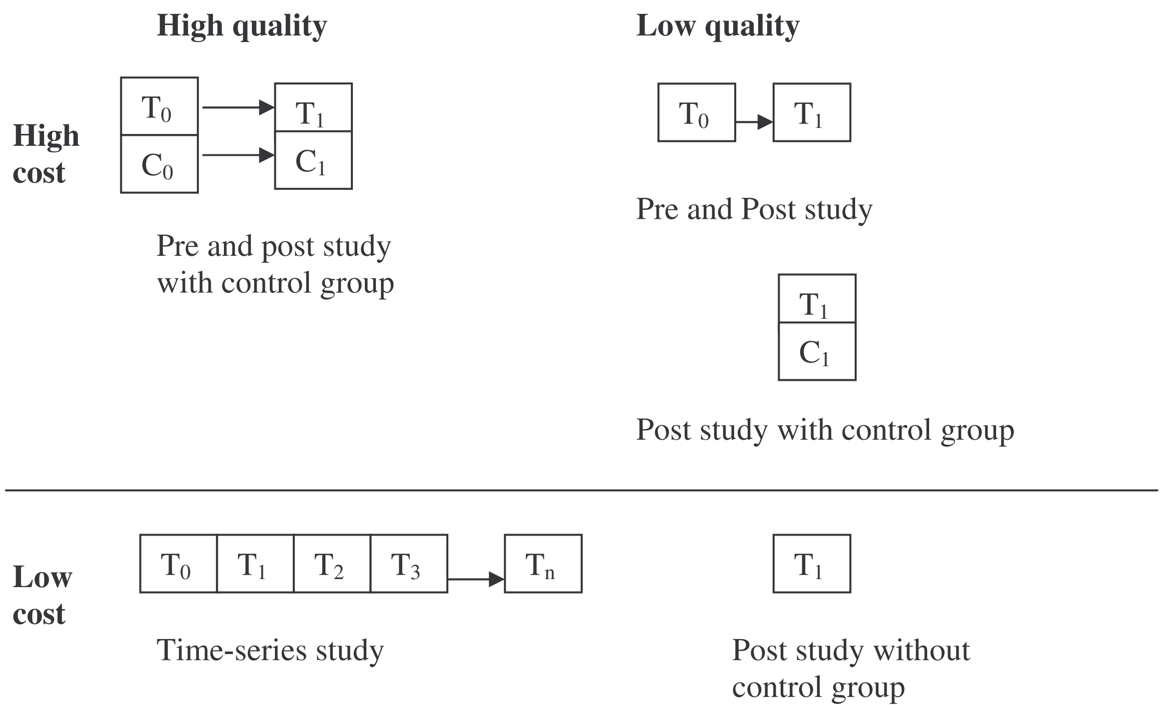
4. The time-series study

This is the most useful design. It may not be expensive to apply, provided data are generated as part of the implementation process. By registering data at regular intervals, it may be possible to identify changes in terms of trends before, during and after the intervention was enacted. However, also time-series studies have definite limitations, especially as regards the formation of hypotheses and understanding of complex models.

5. To study the target group only in retrospect and without a control group

This is the most common design in impact evaluation. However such a simple design does not provide a basis for drawing firm conclusions. The evaluator will have to make judgements on the basis of general experience. Provided that this is adequate, the method may well yield useful information, but validity will remain low. Other supporting evidence must therefore be made available to verify findings. To some extent this is based on judgmental "evidence" from three different sources; expert's assessment, manager's assessment and participants' assessment.

The figure below illustrates the above methods of evaluating impact and it makes the distinction between cost and quality.



Impact evaluation can be illustrated as follows::

START ——— **END** IMPACT

Purpose:
Determine the sustainability of the project's results.
Use conclusions in the planning of future projects and programmes.

Tools	*Methods:*
Project document with problem analysis, etc.	Meeting
Objective and expected outputs	Studies of relevant documents
Budget	Observations
Reports	Interviews

Key players:
- Project Manager or Head of Department (depending on whether the monitoring covers a project or part of the department's normal activities)
- Project team members / Staff in the department concerned.
- Intended beneficiaries.
- Superiors and sponsors (through reports submitted by project manager or head of department).

6. REPORTING, DISSEMINATION AND FEEDBACK

6.1 Reporting

The results of summative and impact evaluations shall be presented in reports, using clear and accessible format and language. Such reports shall be disseminated to all major stakeholders, intended users and other interested parties. The reports should be written keeping target groups with the least advanced readers in mind.

Reports from summative and impact evaluations generally include the following elements

- *Executive summary* The report should have an executive summary, written as a self-contained paper providing the bare essentials for decision-makers regarding the background, major conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.
- *Introduction*, explaining why the evaluation was undertaken. The setting of the project under study in terms of geography, policy, sectors and institutions, as appropriate. A brief account why and how the project was undertaken, emphasising objectives, target groups, components, financing, management, etc. A description of the evaluation methods used.
- The main *findings* The findings of the evaluation are the answers to the questions raised and selected for evaluation. Relevant information to support findings should be included in a way that does not compromise sources. The main report should be relatively short.
- *Conclusions and recommendations* A substantial part of the report should be the main conclusions and recommendations. These should be substantiated with more detailed information only to the extent necessary. The main conclusions should be based on overall assessments of efficiency, effectiveness, impact, relevance, and sustainability. The main recommendations must contain an assessment of implications for the key stakeholders.
- *Lessons learned* The lessons learned provide the link between the results of the evaluation and future projects in an organisation.

- *Annexes.* Detailed findings, the Terms of Reference, the team's itinerary, list of persons met, and list of documents used should be annexed. Conclusions and recommendations in the main report should have references to the relevant findings in the annexes.

An editorial guide to how to write an evaluation report can be found in Appendix 3 to this manual.

6.2 Dissemination

The main purpose of evaluation is to provide relevant and timely input to decision makers, and the internal learning process in the organisation. This requires modes of communication and channels for feedback and learning from experience, for instance through publications, seminars, workshops, training, library services, advisory services and databases.

The reports should be disseminated to all major stakeholders in several ways apart from the evaluation report itself, e.g. annual reports providing a synthesis of findings; abstracts/summaries providing a synopsis of findings. A policy for the dissemination of the evaluation report should be established as part of the institutionalisation of evaluation.

Apart from distributing the evaluation report itself, the most common ways to disseminate evaluation information is through the evaluation summaries, annual reports, bibliographies thematic reports, seminars, press releases, and public debate.

6.3 Feedback

Feedback is a necessary part of the evaluation process as it provides the link between past and future activities. To ensure that the results of evaluations are utilised in future policy and project / programme developments, it is good to establish feedback mechanisms involving all parties concerned. These would include such measures as evaluation committees, seminars and workshops, automated systems, reporting and follow-up procedures. Informal means like networking and internal communications would also allow for the dissemination of ideas and information. In order to be effective, the feedback process requires staff and budget resources as well as support by senior management and the other actors involved. You must be prepared to act on your findings.

6.4 Learning arena

Top management and departmental heads should have the responsibility of ensuring that the results of the organisation's evaluation activities are taken into consideration in policy-making in processing ongoing project activities, and in decisions about new activities. Learning from experience means to extract lessons that may be applicable to a generic situation rather than to a specific circumstance. The lessons learned should be structured along the same lines as the findings, conclusions and recommendations, i.e., with a focus on relevance, performance and success. They should include both positive and negative lessons – the best and worst practices – that have a bearing beyond the programme or project at hand.

Most organisations agree that evaluations represent a huge potential for learning, and that more needs to be done to exploit this potential. Learning in an organisation means the continuous testing of experience, and the transformation of that experience into knowledge. The main factor that must be considered when drawing positive lessons from experience is their applicability. The main feedback linkages are to make use of evaluation in planning of new interventions / projects, to manage existing activities, to develop policy and strategies, and to train staff members and external resources.

Studies of institutional learning indicates that the most important learning arenas for managers and decision makers is to be present in the field themselves, participating in internal reviews, drawing on experience from other organisations, and discussing with colleagues. Evaluation reports represent the main and most reliable source of substantive information about interventions /projects.

The users of evaluations go beyond the organisation's personnel and include the media, politicians, the public, external resources (researchers, professional agencies) etc. Information is essential to raise the general awareness and support for the cultural sectors, including organisations. Experience show that initiatives to make evaluation reports available to the public have been generally positive. Access to reliable information tends to lift the professional debate regarding cultural institutions. Researchers, students, companies and individuals have benefited.

APPENDIX 1.

Data collection methods

1. Literature search / document review

Examination of documents both of a general nature and related to the specific case under study. Economic and efficient way of obtaining information. Difficult to assess validity and reliability on secondary data.

2. Key informant interviews

Flexible, in-depth approach. Easy to implement. Useful for idea-generation and verification. Risk of biased presentation and interpretation from informants/interviewer.

3. Direct observation

Involves inspection, field visits, and observation to understand processes, infrastructure / services and their utilisation. Suited for providing insight and context. Dependent on observer's understanding and interpretation.

4. Informal survey

Involves quantitative surveys of small samples. Extensive use of non-probability sampling procedures. Reasonable and rapid. Risk of sampling errors/biases. Less suited for generalisation.

5. Extensive observation

In-depth observations over an extended period of time. Participatory or non-participatory. Well-suited for understanding processes but with limited potential for generalisation

6. Formal survey

Oral interviews or written questionnaires in a statistically representative sample of respondents.. Data collection is demanding but often produces reliable information. Written reports.

Interviews or questionnaires – or a combination of both?

As regards the methods of collecting the data one has to determine whether interviews or questionnaires would be more cost effective. Often it is sufficient just to sit down with a few key persons and interview them around a number of important issues that your evaluation wants to address. You take notes of what these people have to say and compare it to other types of data that you have collected.

If you choose to use a questionnaire in your data collection you need to determine whether you want a closed or an open-ended one. The main difference between the two is

- *Open-ended questionnaire* – where responses to questions are not prescribed and can consist of unlimited varieties. This gives the respondent a chance to answer in his own words, and in any way he finds suitable. However, one should be aware that the tabulation of such data is more difficult because responses have to be interpreted, before it can be categorised. This format is possible for small groups of up to approximately 25 people, and where the analysis can be done manually. If open-ended questionnaires are applied to larger groups they will be problematic.
- *Closed / multiple choice questionnaire* – where the possible responses have been decided beforehand and incorporated into the questions e.g. “Yes, No” or “Never, Sometimes, Often, Always”. This approach is recommended when it comes to the analysis of large volumes of data, as it makes the data more manageable. One can easily make statistical analysis and find frequencies, trends and correlations in this type of questionnaires.

Of course it is also possible to have a combination of the two. Many questionnaires have a number of multiple choice questions followed by a few open-ended questions.

APPENDIX 2

Quantitative or Qualitative Analysis – what is to prefer?

Quantitative analysis

This involves data that is presented as *numbers* and *statistics*, and could include both objective data such as budget figures or number of individuals. It also provides facts and subjective attitudinal data such as expressions of opinion on a scale. Quantitative data may be generated from questions relating to issues like

- How many people visited an information meeting.
- How much they participated in discussions (through observation)
- Where they came from
- How they heard about the meeting.
- What they thought about the meeting's relevancy for their own situation.

This type of questions and analysis can provide a broad picture of visitor satisfaction. Figures are often given in percentages.

An appealing advantage of quantitative analysis is that it can summarise findings in an evaluation in a clear, precise and reliable way. Not all information, however, can be analysed quantitatively. For example, responses to an open-ended interview survey may provide lengthy descriptions that may be difficult to categorise and quantify, without losing subtle differences in the responses.

Qualitative analysis

Qualitative analysis has to do with *attitudes* and allows us to find out *what people think*. This is based on qualitative data such as detailed descriptions, statements in response to open-ended questions, the transcript of opinions of groups, and observations of different types. Qualitative analysis typically includes contents analysis, case study analysis and logical and sequential analysis. All methods may produce *descriptions* (patterns, themes, tendencies, trends, etc.), and *interpretations* and explanations of these patterns. Using these methods makes demands on the evaluator to assess the validity and reliability of findings. Analysing qualitative data help us to deepen our understanding of the issues in an evaluation. However, such data is difficult to generalise and interpret. The credibility of the analysis depends on three distinct but related elements

- Techniques and methods used for gathering quality data
- Credibility of the evaluator
- Ideological, cultural and patterns subscribed to by the evaluator

Both qualitative and quantitative analysis relies on the evaluator's professional judgement concerning the relevance and validity of available data. Qualitative analysis is best done in conjunction with some sort of statistical analysis of related quantitative data. All evaluations should therefore be designed so that the two sorts of analysis, using different but related data, will be mutually reinforcing.

APPENDIX 3

Editorial guidance for evaluation reports (summative and impact evaluation)

- The main points should be presented early in the paragraphs while the reminder is used to substantiate and discuss the main points.
- Main points should as far as possible be supported by illustrations, graphs, tables, etc. with subtexts that focus the reader's attention on the important points that are derived.
- Jargon and difficult words should be avoided. Essential technical terms that may be new to the reader should be defined in the text, and in a glossary at the end.
- Long and complicated sentences should be broken down in shorter sentences. Active sentences should be preferred. Passive sentences should be used essentially to focus attention on specific topics.
- Ideas should not be crammed together in complex sentences with commas and brackets.
- Separate main ideas should be presented in separate sentences.
- The meaning of abbreviations and colloquial words should be explained. Abbreviations should be used as little as possible.
- Numbers should be presented in data tables or diagrams. The written text should highlight only the most important numbers and explain their implications.
- Percentages should in most cases be rounded up to the nearest whole number.
- It should be possible for the reader to get the main message from a table without consulting the text. Every table must therefore have a title, table number, reference to the source of information, sample size, and full description of what each figure refers to.