



**DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE**

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Working Party on Aid Evaluation

GLOSSARY OF EVALUATION AND RESULTS BASED MANAGEMENT TERMS

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TERMS GROUPED BY CATEGORIES	
<p>Quality assurance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appraisal Audit Evaluation Evaluation Feedback Monitoring Performance measurement Project cycle management Quality Assurance Results-Based management <p>Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beneficiaries Partners Stakeholders Target group <p>Logical Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity Assumptions Causal relationship Development objective Immediate objective Logical framework <p>Result Based Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benchmark Causal relationship Country strategy Input Outcome Outputs Performance Performance indicator Performance measurement Performance monitoring Project or program objective Purpose Result Results chain Results framework Results-Based management <p>Tools and analyses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analytic tools Data collection tools Triangulation Validity 	<p>Evaluation measures and criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountability Attribution Base-line study Counterfactual Development intervention Economy Effect Effectiveness Efficacy Efficiency Feedback Goal Impact Indicator Institutional development impact Lessons learned Reach Relevance Reliability Sustainability Terms of reference <p>Types of evaluations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cluster evaluation Country program evaluation/ Country assistance evaluation Ex-ante evaluation Ex-post evaluation External evaluation Formative evaluation Independent evaluation Internal evaluation Joint Evaluation Meta-evaluation Mid-term evaluation Participatory evaluation Process evaluation Program evaluation Project evaluation Risk analysis Sector evaluation Sector program evaluation Self-evaluation Thematic Evaluation

Accountability

Obligation to demonstrate that contracted work has been conducted in compliance with agreed rules and standards or to report fairly and accurately on performance results vis a vis mandated roles and/or plans. This may require a careful, even legally defensible, demonstration that the work is consistent with the contract terms.

Note: Accountability in development may refer to the obligations of partners to act according to clearly defined responsibilities, roles and performance expectations, often with respect to the prudent use of resources. For evaluators, it connotes the responsibility to provide accurate, fair and credible monitoring reports and performance assessments.

Activity

Actions taken or work performed through which inputs, such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources are mobilized to produce specific outputs.

Note: In development, an activity refers to such development assistance services as loans, credits, grants, technical advice, policy dialogue, aid coordination, etc.

Related term: development intervention

Analytical tools

Methods used to process and interpret information during an evaluation.

Appraisal

An overall assessment of the relevance, feasibility and potential sustainability of a development intervention prior to a decision of funding. Often used as a synonym for evaluation, including informal evaluation.

Note: In development agencies, banks, etc., the purpose of appraisal is to enable decision-makers to decide whether the activity represents an appropriate use of resources.

Related term: Ex-ante evaluation

Assumptions

Hypotheses about factors or risks which could affect the progress or success of a development intervention.

Note: Assumptions are made explicit when using a theory based evaluation approach so that the evaluation tracks the anticipated results chain. Assumptions can also be understood as hypothesized conditions that bear on the validity of the evaluation itself, e.g. about the characteristics of the population when designing a sampling procedure for a survey.

Attribution

The ascription of a causal link between observed (or expected to be observed) changes and a specific intervention.

Note: Attribution refers to that which is to be credited for the observed changes or results achieved. It represents the extent to which observed development effects can be attributed to a specific intervention or to the performance of one or more partner taking account of other interventions, (anticipated or unanticipated) confounding factors, or external shocks.

Audit

An independent, objective assurance activity designed to add value and improve an organization's operations. It helps an organization accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

Note: the distinction is made between *regularity* (financial) audit, which focuses on the compliance with applicable statutes and regulations; and *performance* audit, which is concerned with the audit of relevance, economy, efficiency and effectiveness. By *internal audit* is meant an assessment of internal controls undertaken by a unit reporting to management while an external audit is conducted by an independent organization.

Base-line study

An analysis describing the situation prior to a development intervention, against which progress can be assessed or comparisons made.

Benchmark

Reference point or standard against which performance or achievements can be assessed.

Note: a benchmark refers to the performance that has been achieved in the recent past by other comparable organizations, or what can be reasonably inferred to have been achieved in the circumstances.

Beneficiaries

The individuals, groups, or organizations, whether targeted or not, that benefit, directly or indirectly, from the development intervention.

Cluster evaluation

An evaluation of a set of related activities, projects and/or programs

Counterfactual

The situation or condition as it hypothetically would be for individuals, organizations, or groups were there no development intervention.

Country Program Evaluation/Country Assistance Evaluation

Evaluation of one or more donor's or agency's portfolio of development interventions, and the assistance strategy behind them, in a partner country.

Development Intervention

A vehicle for partner (donor and non-donor) support aimed to promote development

Note: Examples are policy advice, projects, programs,

Development objective

Intended outcome contributing to physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental, or other benefits to a society, community, or group of people via one or more development interventions.

Economy

Absence of waste for a given output.

Note: An activity is more economical when the costs of the scarce resources used are close to the minimum needed to achieve planned objectives.

Effect

Intended or unintended change resulting directly or indirectly from a development intervention.

Related terms: primary effect, secondary effect, unexpected effect, direct effect, external effect, indirect effect, gross effect, net effect, first round effect.

Effectiveness

A measure of the merit or worth of an activity, i.e. the extent to which a development intervention has attained, or is expected to attain, its relevant objectives efficiently and in a sustainable way.

Related terms: relevance, efficacy, efficiency, sustainability.

Efficacy

The extent to which the project's objectives were achieved, or expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

Efficiency

A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to outputs.

Evaluability

Extent to which an activity or a program can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion..

Note: Evaluability assessment calls for the early review of a proposed activity in order to ascertain whether its objectives are adequately defined and its results verifiable.

Evaluation

The process of determining the worth or significance of a development activity, policy or program. An assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of a planned, on-going, or completed development intervention. The aim is to determine the relevance of objectives, the efficacy of design and implementation, the efficiency of resource use, and the sustainability of results. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both partner and donor.

Note: Evaluation involves the definition of appropriate standards, the examination of performance against those standards, an assessment of actual and expected results and the identification of relevant lessons. It can also incorporate "reviews" which are meta-analytic summaries of multiple evaluations.

Evaluation Feedback

The presentation and dissemination of evaluation findings in order to facilitate their utilization so as to improve the effectiveness of new or existing development activities.

Ex-ante evaluation

An evaluation that is performed before implementation

Related terms: appraisal, quality at entry, evaluability assessment

Ex-post evaluation

Evaluation of a development intervention after it has been completed.

Note: It may be undertaken directly after or long after completion. The intention is to understand the factors of success or failure, to assess the sustainability of results and impacts, and to draw conclusions that may inform other interventions.

External evaluation

The evaluation of a development intervention conducted by entities and individuals at arm's length (i.e. at least not reporting to the same manager) from the implementing organization and its partners.

Feedback

The transmission of findings generated through the evaluation process to parties for whom it is relevant and useful so as to facilitate learning. This may involve the collection and dissemination of findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons from experience.

Formative evaluation

Evaluation intended to improve performance, most often conducted during the design and/or implementation phases of projects or programs.

Note: Formative evaluations may also be conducted for other reasons such as compliance, legal requirements or as part of a larger evaluation initiative.

Goal

The higher-order objective to which a development intervention is intended to contribute.

Related term: development objective

Impact

The totality of positive and negative, primary and secondary effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

Note: also interpreted as the longer term or ultimate result attributable to a development intervention (RBM term); in this usage, it is contrasted with output and outcome which reflect more immediate results from the intervention.

Independent evaluation

An evaluation carried out by entities and persons free of control by those responsible for the design and implementation of the development intervention.

Note: The credibility of an evaluation depends in part on how independently it has been carried out, i.e. on the extent of autonomy, and ability to access information, carry out investigations and report findings free of political influence or organizational pressure.

Indicator

Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor.

Inputs

The financial, human, and material resources used by the development intervention.

Institutional Development Impact

The extent to which a project improves or weakens the ability of a country or region to make more efficient, equitable, and sustainable use of its human, financial, and national resources through: (a) better definition, stability, transparency, enforceability and predictability of institutional arrangements and/or (b) better alignment of the mission and capacity of an organization with its mandate, which derives from these institutional arrangements. Such impacts can include intended and unintended effects of a project.

Internal evaluation

Evaluation of a development intervention conducted by a unit and/or individuals reporting to the management of the donor, partner, or implementing organization.

Joint Evaluation

An evaluation to which different donor agencies and/or partners contribute.

Note: There are various degrees of “jointness” depending on the extent to which individual partners cooperate in the evaluation process, merge their evaluation resources and combine their evaluation reporting. Joint evaluations can help overcome attribution problems in assessing the effectiveness of programs and strategies, the complementarity of efforts supported by different partners, the quality of aid co-ordination, etc.

Lessons learned

Generalizations (broadly or narrowly stated) that can be derived from the evaluation of development interventions based on an experience or group of experiences from one or more projects, programs, or policies.

Logical framework (Logframe)

Management tool used to improve the design of development interventions, most often at the project level. It involves identifying strategic elements (inputs, outputs, purpose, goal) and their causal relationships, and the assumptions or risks that may influence success and failure. It thus facilitates planning, execution and evaluation of a development intervention.

Meta-evaluation

The term is used for evaluations designed to aggregate findings from a series of evaluations. It can also be used to denote the evaluation of an evaluation to judge its quality and/or assess the performance of the evaluators.

Mid-term evaluation

Evaluation performed towards the middle of the period of implementation of the intervention.

Related term: formative evaluation

Monitoring

A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.

Related term: performance monitoring, indicator

Outcome

A measure of the likely effects of a development intervention's outputs, usually taken soon after completion of the intervention, and periodically thereafter.

Related terms: result, output, impact, effect.

Outputs

The products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.

Participatory evaluation

Evaluation in which representatives of agencies and stakeholders (including beneficiaries) work together in designing, carrying out and interpreting an evaluation.

Partners

The individuals and organizations that collaborate to achieve mutually agreed upon objectives

Note: The concept of partnership connotes shared goals, common responsibility for outcomes, distinct accountabilities and reciprocal obligations. Partners may include governments, civil society, non-governmental organizations, universities, professional and business associations, multi-lateral organizations, private companies, etc.

Performance

The degree to which a development intervention or a development partner operates according to specific criteria/standards/guidelines or achieves results in accordance with stated goals or plans.

Performance indicator

A variable that allows the verification of changes in the development intervention or shows results relative to what was planned.

Related terms: performance monitoring, performance measurement

Performance measurement

A system for assessing performance of development interventions against stated goals.

Related terms: performance monitoring, indicator

Performance monitoring

A continuous process of collecting and analyzing data to compare how well a project, program, or policy is being implemented against expected results.

Process evaluation

An evaluation of the internal dynamics of the implementing organizations, their policy instruments, their service delivery mechanisms, their management practices, and the linkages among these.

Related term: formative evaluation

Program evaluation

Evaluation of a set of development interventions, marshaled to attain specific global, regional, country, or sector development objectives.

Note: a development program is usually a time bound intervention that differs from a project in that it may cut across sectors, themes and/or geographic areas, involve lending and non-lending services, and may be supported by different funding sources.

Related term: Country program/strategy evaluation

Project evaluation

Evaluation of an individual development intervention designed to achieve specific objectives within specified resources and implementation schedules, often within the framework of a broader program..

Note: Cost benefit analysis is a major instrument of project evaluation.

Project or program objective

The intended physical, financial, institutional, social, environmental, or other development results to which a project or program is expected to contribute.

Note: The objective(s) is expressed in terms of the expected benefits for the target group; it does not refer to the services provided by the project (these are outputs), but to the benefits that beneficiaries are expected to derive as a result of receiving or using these services.

Purpose

The publicly stated objectives of the development program or project.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance encompasses any activity that is concerned with assessing and improving the merit or the worth of a development intervention or its compliance with given standards.

Note: examples of quality assurance activities include appraisal, RBM, reviews during implementation, evaluations, etc. Quality assurance may also refer to the assessment of the quality of a portfolio and its development effectiveness.

Reach

The beneficiaries and other stakeholders of a development intervention, whether sectors, groups of people, or geographic areas of the country or region.

Relevance

The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors policies.

Note: Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether the objectives of an intervention or its design are still appropriate given changed circumstances. .

Reliability

Consistency or dependability of data and evaluation judgements, with reference to the quality of the instruments, procedures and analyses used to collect and interpret evaluation data.

Note: evaluation information is reliable when repeated observations using similar instruments under similar conditions produce similar results.

Result

The measurable output, outcome or impact (intended or unintended, positive and negative) of a development intervention.

Related terms: outcome, effect, impact

Results Chain

The causal sequence for a development intervention that stipulates the necessary sequence to achieve desired objectives--beginning with inputs, moving through activities and outputs, and culminating in outcomes, impacts, and feedback.

Related Term: Assumption, results framework

Results framework

The program logic that explains how the development objective is to be achieved, including causal relationships and underlying assumptions.

Related terms: causal relationship, results chain

Results-Based Management (RBM)

A management strategy focusing on performance and achievement of outcomes and impacts.

Risk analysis

A detailed examination of the potential unwanted and negative consequences to human life, health, property, or the environment posed by development interventions; a systematic process to provide information regarding such undesirable consequences; the process of quantification of the probabilities and expected impacts for identified risks.

Sector program evaluation

Evaluation of a cluster of development interventions within one country or across countries, all of which contribute to the achievement of a specific development goal.

Note: a sector includes development activities commonly grouped together for the purpose of public action such as health, education, agriculture, transport etc.

Self-evaluation

An evaluation by those who are entrusted with the design and delivery of a development intervention.

Stakeholders

Agencies, organizations, groups or individuals who have a direct or indirect interest in the development intervention or its evaluation.

Sustainability

The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time (such as assets, skills, facilities, or improved services) generated by a development project or program. The probability of continued long term benefits.

Target group

The specific individuals or organizations for whose benefit the development intervention is undertaken.

Terms of reference

The purpose and scope of the evaluation, the methods to be used, the standard against which performance is to be assessed or analyses are to be conducted, the resources and time allocated, and reporting requirements, generally conveyed in a written document.

Thematic Evaluation

Evaluation of a selection of development interventions, all of which address a specific development priority that cuts across countries, regions, and sectors.

Triangulation

The use of three or more theories, sources or types of information, or types of analysis to verify and substantiate an assessment.

Note: by combining multiple data-sources, methods, analyses or theories, evaluators hope to overcome the bias that comes from single informants, single-methods, single observer or single theory studies.

Validity

The extent to which the data collection strategies and instruments measure what they purport to measure.