

Definitions of evaluation types, approaches and fields

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Category 1: Types of evaluation

Term	Definition
Internal evaluation or self- evaluation	An evaluation carried out by members of the organisation(s) who are associated with the programme, intervention or activity to be evaluated.
Ex-ante evaluation or impact assessment	An assessment which seeks to predict the likelihood of achieving the intended results of a programme or intervention or to forecast its unintended effects. This is conducted before the programme or intervention is formally adopted or started. Common examples of ex-ante evaluation are environmental and/or social impact assessments and feasibility studies.
Mid-term or interim evaluation	An evaluation conducted half-way through the lifecycle of the programme or intervention to be evaluated.
Monitoring	An ongoing activity aimed at assessing whether the programme or intervention is implemented in a way that is consistent with its design and plan and is achieving its intended results.
Ex-post or summative evaluation	An evaluation which usually is conducted some time after the programme or intervention has been completed or fully implemented. Generally its purpose is to study how well the intervention served its aims, and to draw lessons for similar interventions in the future.
Meta-evaluation	Two processes are often referred to as meta-evaluation: (1) the assessment by a third evaluator of evaluation reports prepared by other evaluators; and (2) the assessment of the performance of systems and processes of evaluation.
Formative evaluation	An evaluation which is designed to provide some early insights into a programme or intervention to inform management and staff about the components that are working and those that need to be changed in order to achieve the intended objectives.

Category 2: Evaluative approaches

Term	Definition
Outcome evaluation	An evaluation which is focused on the change brought about by the programme or intervention to be evaluated or its results regarding the intended beneficiaries.
Impact evaluation	An evaluation that focuses on the broad, longer-term impact or effects, whether intended or unintended, of a programme or intervention. It is usually done some time after the programme or intervention has been completed.
Performance evaluation	An analysis undertaken at a given point in time to compare actual performance with that planned in terms of both resource utilization and achievement of objectives. This is generally used to redirect efforts and resources and to redesign structures.

Participatory evaluation	An evaluation that actively involves all or selected stakeholders in the evaluation process. Different approaches involve varying degrees of participation, inclusion, capacity-building, ownership, etc.
Empowerment evaluation	An approach that aims to improve programs through using specific tools for assessing the planning, implementation and self-evaluation of programs, and by incorporating evaluation into a program or organization's planning and management. It involves a high level of participation by stakeholders in the evaluation process and is guided by ten key principles.
Collaborative evaluation	An evaluation which aims for a significant degree of collaboration or cooperation between evaluators and stakeholders.
Utilization-focused evaluation	A process that assists the primary intended users of an evaluation to select the most appropriate content, model, methods, and theory for the evaluation, focusing on their intended use of the evaluation. Use refers to how people apply evaluation findings and experience the evaluation process.
Feminist evaluation	An evaluation that commonly involves adapting or redesigning relevant evaluation theories and methodologies so that they are compatible with feminist theories and methodologies. Feminist evaluations aim to be inclusive and empowering for women in particular.
Theory-based evaluation	An evaluation based on the theories of change that underlie a given programme or intervention. Its major aim is to examine the extent to which these theories hold and to validate their underlying assumptions.
Most Significant Change	A form of participatory monitoring and evaluation which involves the collection and systematic review and analysis of change stories by panels of designated stakeholders or staff. It is mainly used to assess intermediate program impacts and outcomes.

Category 3) Fields of evaluation

Term	Definition
Programme or project evaluation	The evaluation of a programme or project.
Policy evaluation	The evaluation of policies and procedures.
Evaluation of legislation	The evaluation of a piece of legislation.
Evaluation of technical assistance	The evaluation of technical assistance provided by international, bilateral or multilateral donors.
Organisation or institutional evaluation	An evaluation of an organization's or other institution's capacity for innovation and change. It involves examining its decision-making processes and organisational structures.
Proposal assessment	The assessment of bids presented by tenderers following a specific call for tenders/bids.
Financial audit	The scrutiny of accounts of an organization or other institution against a set of standards.
Personnel evaluation	A systematic method of evaluating an employee's or staff member's performance. This involves tracking, evaluating and providing feedback in relation to specific predetermined standards which are consistent with the organization's overall



	mission.
Products or services evaluation	This refers to (1) the process of reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness, and economic value of products or services; or (2) a decision made about the overall significance, value, or quality of products or services based on this process.
Data quality audits	An audit examining an organization's data management system to assess validity, reliability, integrity, precision and timeliness.

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