

Project, Programme and Policy Evaluation

Module Introduction and Overview

Contents

1	Introduction to the Module	2
2	The Module Author	3
3	Study Resources	3
4	Module Overview	4
5	Learning Outcomes	6
	Glossary of Standard Evaluation Terms	6

1 Introduction to the Module

In this module you will learn about the evaluation of public policies, programmes and projects, and specifically about the types of evaluation that assesses their achievements and uncover the lessons learned which have wider application. Often termed ‘summative’, ‘*ex post*’, or ‘*post hoc*’¹ this sort of evaluation looks back over what has changed over the course of an intervention by a public institution, and tries to answer questions such as:

- What difference has our project, programme or policy made?
- Who has benefitted and who has been left out?
- Did our intervention deliver what we expected and hoped it would?
- Were the resources spent on it justified by the results achieved?
- What else might account for the changes that have happened?
- Should we continue doing this sort of thing, and what have we learned to help us do better in the future?
- Are there lessons from this experience which can help others do better?

In many cases, the provision of public funds for an endeavour brings with it a requirement for an eventual *ex post* evaluation to be carried out – and a concomitant need for data to be collected right from the beginning, so that change over time can be identified. *Ex post* evaluation is of growing importance for governments, donors, international bodies and those involved in delivering projects and programmes ‘on the ground’. It has spawned an industry of researchers, evaluators and consultants who specialise in designing methodologies to answer the sort of questions posed above, and who offer their services to public bodies that want to know the answers. The module is intended to give a grounding in the subject to those who may need to commission, deliver and use *ex post* evaluations of public policies, programme and projects. It has the additional aim of helping those who may be considering building a career in evaluation to appreciate the opportunities it offers – for intellectual excitement, influence over the future direction of policy, rewarding work assignments and conditions. It also points out some of the issues evaluators encounter in their working lives, and how they can overcome them.

You will hear the term evaluation used in many different ways and applied at different times. This module focuses on the type of evaluation that takes stock and forms judgements. It can be contrasted with other types of evaluation that you may encounter, and which are covered to a greater or lesser degree in a number of other CeFiMS *Public Policy and Management* modules².

This module looks in detail at the set of questions that needs to be answered once something has been done. As you will see, there are clear connections

¹ In this module we will use the term *ex post* which means ‘from after’.

² The CeFiMS web pages show the various modules and their differences

between different times and types of evaluation, but *ex post* evaluation has its own particular problems, contexts and methods.

The module seeks to:

- provide a clear explanation of the meaning, uses and techniques of *ex post* evaluation and show where resources to help stakeholders³ in the evaluation can be found
- differentiate the kinds of issues that apply to the evaluation of individual projects, large scale programmes, and strategic policies
- survey typical methods and techniques routinely used by evaluators and provide guidance on their pros and cons in different situations
- deconstruct, analyse and comment upon a number of real evaluation studies
- help you put the ideas in the module into practice through setting practical exercises based on the learning and resources contained here
- offer insights into the work of evaluators in different contexts.

2 The Module Author

John Bell is a Senior Partner with the CurvedThinking partnership, a UK policy and evaluation consultancy working with clients across the world to help make the link between intention and delivery. Earlier in his career he was CEO of leading Anglo-Dutch economic consultancy Ecorys, whilst his early working life was with a variety of NGOs and community organisations. He has particular experience in social, employment and health policy in Britain and Europe, and has been involved in dozens of evaluation assignments from the most local to multi country levels. He is Specialist Advisor on youth unemployment and the European Social Fund to the UK House of Lords European Union Committee. John has tutored with CeFiMS since 2009.

You can find out more about his work and interests at curvedthinking.com.

3 Study Resources

This study guide is your main learning resource for the module as it directs your study through eight study units. Each unit has recommended reading either from the key texts or from supplementary readings.



Key texts

Colin Palfrey, Paul Thomas and Ceri Phillips (2012) *Evaluation for the Real World*. Bristol UK: The Policy Press.

³ These include policymakers; evaluators; evaluation commissioners; project and programme staff and managers; citizens impacted by the intervention; voters, researchers and commentators.

This text was selected in particular for its academic study of the relationships between evaluation and its uses and abuses by policymakers.

Michael Bamberger and Linda Mabry (2020) *RealWorld Evaluation: Working Under Budget, Time, Data, and Political Constraints*. 3rd Edition. London: Sage.

This book was chosen for its thorough presentation of methods, inclusion of practical tools, and strong emphasis on the contextual and practical constraints inevitably encountered by actual evaluation projects, also for its relevance to the developing world.

Module readings

The module readings consist of academic articles, case studies and opinion pieces selected to shed light on different aspects of *ex post* evaluation, and to provide examples of evaluation in practice.

4 Module Overview

The module consists of eight ‘units’ of work, each with an overall narrative, set readings, questions and exercises. There are additional readings available on the Virtual Learning Environment. You also have the opportunity to discuss aspects of the module with your fellow students and tutors through the VLE.

Unit 1 History, Types and Uses of Evaluation

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Evaluation in Public Policy
- 1.3 Judgement: Evaluation, Audit, Inspection, Journalism and Academic Research
- 1.4 Different Types of Evaluation
- 1.5 Conclusion

Unit 2 Designing an *Ex post* Evaluation – Programme Theory and the Importance of Context

- 2.1 *Ex post* Evaluation
 - 2.2 Programme Theory – How Interventions are Supposed to Work
 - 2.3 The Importance of Context
 - 2.4 Sources of Information
 - 2.5 Conclusion
- Exercise: The Influence of Context

Unit 3 Project Evaluation I

- 3.1 Micro Evaluation – Policies at the Coalface
- 3.2 Pilots and the Mainstream – Projects as Experiments or Examples of Basic Delivery
- 3.3 Projects in Context
- 3.4 Drawing Conclusions and the Question of Attribution
- 3.5 Project Evaluation as a Laboratory – the Question of Replicability
- 3.6 Time to Get Going – Scoping the Evaluation
- 3.7 Conclusion

Unit 4 Project Evaluation II

- 4.1 The Case Studies
- 4.2 Purpose and Context
- 4.3 Theory of Change
- 4.4 Evaluation Design and Methodology
- 4.5 Results and Conclusions in the Reports
- 4.6 Conclusion

Exercise: Programme Theory for Healthy Living Pharmacies Project

Unit 5 Evaluation Methods: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Quantitative Evaluation Methods
- 5.3 Qualitative Evaluation Methods
- 5.4 Mixed Method Evaluation
- 5.5 Conclusion

Exercise: Evaluating Two Policy Interventions

Unit 6 Programme Evaluation I

- 6.1 Programmes and Their Evaluation
- 6.2 Evaluation Criteria
- 6.3 The Specification of Impacts
- 6.4 Conclusion

Unit 7 Programme Evaluation II

- 7.1 The Case Studies
- 7.2 End-of-Life Care in Nursing Homes
- 7.3 The Tuungane Community-Driven Reconstruction Project
- 7.4 Conclusion

Exercise: Evaluation Framework Model Answers

Summary Commentary on Tuungane Evaluation

Unit 8 Policy Evaluation, and Being an Evaluator

- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Policy Evaluation
- 8.3 Policy Evaluation in a Development Context
- 8.4 Multinational Policy Evaluation
- 8.5 Maximising the Usefulness of Evaluation
- 8.6 Conclusion

Post Script: Being an Evaluator

Further Learning and Resources

Glossary of Standard Evaluation Terms

5 Learning Outcomes

When you have completed your study of this module, you will be able to:

- outline how *ex post* evaluation informs public policy and management processes
- set the meaning of *ex post* evaluation in the wider context of different ways to assess public intervention
- distinguish between *ex ante*, interim, and *ex post* evaluation, and set *ex post* evaluation in its proper temporal context
- specify the differences between public policies, programmes and projects, and the implications of these for their evaluation
- define a wide variety of evaluation terms and organise them into their purpose, scale, period in time and type of study design
- choose an evaluation methodology that is relevant to the institutional context and resources available
- design and carry out evaluations of different types, with an understanding of likely challenges, including identifying and validating impact, disentangling impacts from other influences; the likelihood of absent baselines, inadequate monitoring data, and insufficient research capacity
- critique evaluation studies in relation to the quality of their design, their conduct and the value of conclusions drawn
- fit evaluation practice into the real world of politics and the question of what those commissioning really want to know, and want to hear
- practically assess timescales, changing questions, and when to look for results
- form a judgement as to whether you yourself would like to consider developing a career as an evaluator
- join in with networking and exchange amongst the evaluation 'community', and identify differences from broader research.

Glossary of Standard Evaluation Terms

In the early 2000s, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) came up with a standardised set of definitions of key terms for development assistance evaluation. First published in 2004, their glossary remains the standard used throughout the development 'industry', and has been translated into many different languages.

The terms defined below are drawn from the original DAC list, with a number of additional terms introduced by the UK Department for International Development.

Throughout this module many of these terms have been used, and of course there is never any one hard and fast definition. Where our use of terms is not identical to this glossary it is because we felt our point was best made in a

different way. Overall, however, we agree with this glossary as a being a good, standard reference point.

Glossary

Accountability

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

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 responsibility to provide accurate, fair, credible monitoring reports and performance assessments. For public sector managers and policy-makers, accountability is to taxpayers/citizens.

Activity

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

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.

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 corporate 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 can also be understood as hypothesised conditions that bear on the validity of the evaluation itself, *eg* about the characteristics of the population when designing a sampling procedure for a survey. Assumptions are made explicit in theory-based evaluations where evaluation tracks systematically the anticipated results chain.

Attribution

Ascribing 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 partners, taking account of other interventions, (anticipated or unanticipated) confounding factors, or external shocks.

Baseline 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 organisations, or what can be reasonably inferred to have been achieved in the circumstances.

Beneficiaries

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

Related terms: reach, target group

Cluster evaluation

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

Conclusions

Conclusions point out the factors of success and failure of the evaluated intervention, with special attention paid to the intended and unintended results and impacts, and more generally to any other strength or weakness. A conclusion draws on data collection and analyses undertaken, through a transparent chain of arguments.

Counterfactual

The situation or condition, which hypothetically may prevail for individuals, organisations, or groups, were there no development intervention.

Country Programme 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.

Data Collection Tools

Methodologies used to identify information sources and collect information during an evaluation.

Note: Examples are informal and formal surveys, direct and participatory observation, community interviews, focus groups, expert opinion, case studies, literature search.

Development Intervention

An instrument for partner (donor and non-donor) support aimed to promote development.

Note: Examples are policy advice, projects and programmes.

Development Objective

Intended impact 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 economical when the costs of the scarce resources used approximate the minimum needed to achieve planned objectives.

Effect

Intended or unintended change due directly or indirectly to an intervention.

Related terms: results, outcome

Effectiveness

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

Note: Also used as an aggregate measure of (or judgement about) the merit or worth of an activity – *ie* the extent to which an intervention has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives efficiently in a sustainable fashion and with a positive institutional development impact.

Related term: efficacy

Efficiency

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

Evaluability

The extent to which an activity or a programme 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 systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.

Evaluation also refers to the process of determining the worth or significance of an activity, policy or programme. An assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of a planned, on-going, or completed development intervention.

Note: Evaluation in some instances 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.

Related term: review

Evaluation Design

The logical model or conceptual framework and the methods used to collect information, analyse data and arrive at conclusions.

***ex ante* Evaluation**

An evaluation that is performed before implementation of a development intervention.

Related terms: appraisal, quality at entry

***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 identify 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/or individuals outside the donor and implementing organisations.

Note: For some agencies the term 'evaluation' automatically assumes externality and independence. Other agencies reserve the term evaluation for evaluation studies which take place after the development intervention is completed.

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.

Finding

A finding uses evidence from one or more evaluations to allow for a factual statement.

Formative Evaluation

Evaluation intended to improve performance, most often conducted during the implementation phase of projects or programmes.

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

Related term: process evaluation

Goal

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

Immediate Objective

The effect which an activity is expected to achieve if completed successfully and on time.

Impacts

Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

Impact Assessment

An assessment of impact using before/after and/or with/without comparisons.

Impact Monitoring

The systematic, on-going assessment of impact (intended and unintended) during project implementation.

Implementation

The process of realising a project 'on the ground' in line with the agreed work plan. It involves project management and monitoring – both financial and non-financial.

Independent Evaluation

An evaluation carried out by entities and persons free of the control of 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. Independence implies freedom from political influence and organisational pressure. It is characterised by full access to information and by full autonomy in carrying out investigations and reporting findings.

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 for the development intervention.

Institutional Appraisal

Examination of the organisation that will receive funds and support to look at the organisational structure, management, staffing, policies and procedures, in order to ensure that these are sound. It also looks at the way government policies impact on the organisation's operating environment. Institutional appraisal looks at whether the organisation's structure is adequate to carry out the project and whether policy or institutional changes outside the organisation are required if the project objectives are to be achieved. It also looks at whether local capabilities and expertise are being employed to maximum advantage. Institutional appraisal is only possible with an extensive understanding of the cultural, political and social operating environments of the given locality.

Institutional Development Impact

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

Internal Evaluation

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

Related term: self-evaluation

Joint Evaluation

An evaluation in which different donor agencies and/or partners participate.

Note: There are various degrees of participation, 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 programmes and strategies, the complementarity of efforts supported by different partners, the quality of aid co-ordination *etc.*

Lessons Learned

Generalisations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programmes, or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome and impact.

Logical Framework (Logframe)

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

Related term: results-based management

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 or Review

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

Related term: formative evaluation

Monitoring

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

Related terms: performance monitoring, indicator

Objectively Verifiable Indicators – OVIs

OVIs are the measures to verify accomplishment of all stages of the project through the Logical Framework. OVIs should be targeted in terms of quantity, quality, time.

Indicators at the purpose-level measure end-of-project impact

Ongoing Evaluation

An evaluation designed to help the development of a project as it proceeds. It is more wide-ranging and thorough and objective than an internal review. Sometimes referred to as 'concurrent' or 'formative' evaluation. Contrast *ex post* or terminal evaluations.

Output to Purpose Review – OPRs

The periodic review of on-going projects, focusing on progress at the purpose level, and whether the performance of the project implementation in terms of the achievements under each output are sufficient to reach the purpose at the end of the project. Additional outputs may be added as a result of the OPR. Other Impacts (*eg* at the goal level and unplanned impacts) should also be considered. OPRs may be carried out by DFID⁴ staff and/or consultants. They usually involve the participation of stakeholders either directly or indirectly by assessing their views. OPRs require information on which to base judgements. The collection of that information requires a synthesis of monitoring data and related studies, as well as the commissioning of specific evaluation and impact studies. Building in the necessary information systems to deliver monitoring data will be a part of project design. The likelihood of success is scored at the Output and Purpose level on a five-point scale.

Outcome

The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs.

Related terms: result, outputs, impacts, 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.

Ownership

Appropriation or taking of responsibility for a certain endeavour. Ownership implies formal or real authority as well as effective self-authorisation to assume management responsibility (Danida⁵).

Claiming as one's own; possession; the idea that an organisation is more likely to be committed to a project if it has been involved in its development (DFID).

Participatory Evaluation

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

Partners/Partnership

The individuals and/or organisations that collaborate to achieve mutually agreed objectives.

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

⁴ The UK's Department for International Development.

⁵ Danish Development Assistance Program.

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 analysing data to compare how well a project, programme, or policy is being implemented against expected results.

Process Evaluation

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

Process Indicator

A measure or sign of whether planned activities are being carried out, and how they are being carried out.

Programme Evaluation

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

Note: a development programme is a time-bound intervention involving multiple activities that may cut across sectors, themes and/or geographic areas.

Related term: Country programme/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 programme.

Note: Cost-benefit analysis is a major instrument of project evaluation for projects with measurable benefits. When benefits cannot be quantified, cost effectiveness is a suitable approach.

Project Appraisal

A comprehensive and systematic review of all aspects of the project – technical, financial, economic, social, institutional, environmental – to determine whether an investment should go ahead.

Project Cycle

A useful tool for understanding the various stages that any project will probably go through. The same logic applies to simple project ideas within one organisation and complex projects supported by a number of external funders.

The basic model includes the following stages:

1. Project Identification – ideas for potential projects are identified and explored.
2. Project Preparation – the project idea is carefully developed.
3. Project Appraisal – the project is rigorously assessed.
4. Project Implementation – the project is progressed in the agreed manner.

The more detailed version of the cycle, used by many funding agencies, emphasises decision-making with feedback loops and includes aspects of negotiation, effectiveness, supervision and completion:

5. Negotiations and Presentation – at the stage where a project proposal has been developed, the parties involved (usually the recipient/ borrower and the donor/funder) negotiate the detailed requirements for implementation.
6. Monitoring – the project will be monitored throughout the implementation period in order to make sure that everything is going according to plan and that corrective action can be taken where necessary.
7. Evaluation – the project is assessed against its objectives in terms of performance, efficiency and impact.

Project Memorandum

The paper that records all details of a project.

Project Monitoring

Measuring how the project is being implemented and how it is operating – essential for evaluation and measuring performance. Reporting on costs, savings, other benefits, reporting to decision-makers, may support the generation of new projects. Continuous tracking of a project's development through the collection of specified variables. Progress is monitored according to the planned methodology and time-scale. Monitoring covers both financial and non-financial aspects of the project – the use of resources, measurement of performance and outputs (see also: Project Cycle).

Programme

A group of related projects or services directed toward the attainment of specific (usually similar or related) objectives.

Purpose

The publicly stated objective of the development programme 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, Results Based Management (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.

Related term: beneficiaries

Recommendations

Proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality or efficiency of a development intervention; at redesigning the objectives; and/or at the reallocation of resources. Recommendations should be linked to conclusions.

Relevance

The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, 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.

Results

The output, outcome or impact intended or unintended, positive and/or negative of a development.

Related terms: outcome, effect, impacts

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. In some agencies, reach is part of the results' chain.

Related terms: assumptions, results framework

Review

An assessment of the performance of an intervention, periodically or on an ad hoc basis

Note: Frequently 'evaluation' is used for a more comprehensive and/or more in-depth assessment than 'review'. Reviews tend to emphasise operational aspects. Sometimes the terms 'review' and 'evaluation' are used as synonyms.

Related term: evaluation

Results Framework

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

Related terms: results chain, logical framework

Results-Based Management – RBM

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

Related term: logical framework

Risk analysis

An analysis or an assessment of factors (called assumptions in the logframe) that affect or are likely to affect the successful achievement of an intervention's objectives. 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

A coherent set of activities which can be relevantly distinguished in terms of policies, institutions and finances, and which needs to be looked at together to make a meaningful assessment.

Sector Programme Evaluation

Evaluation of a cluster of development interventions in a sector 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.

Sector Programme Support (SPS)

A longer-term framework for a broader assistance to a national endeavour (called a National Sector Framework), including various and flexible modalities of support at different levels within agreed objectives and management procedures.

Stakeholders

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

Strategic Framework

The overall aims and objectives of a country's approach to development based on analysis of problems, and including a statement of priorities. This sets the context for programme and project development.

Summative Evaluation

A study conducted at the end of an intervention (or a phase of that intervention) to determine the extent to which anticipated outcomes were produced. Summative evaluation is intended to provide information about the worth of the program.

Related term: impact evaluation

Sustainability

The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.

Sustainability Factors

Six areas of particular importance to ensure that development interventions are sustainable, *ie* institutional, financial and economic, technological, environmental, socio-cultural and political.

Target Group

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

Terms of Reference

Written document presenting the purpose and scope of the evaluation, the methods to be used, the standard against which performance is to be assessed or how analyses are to be conducted, the resources and time allocated, and reporting requirements. Two other expressions sometimes used with the same meaning are 'scope of work' and 'evaluation mandate'.

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 seek 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.