

Better Criteria for Better Evaluation

National perspectives on the revised evaluation criteria

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How can evaluation contribute to achieving sustainable development while not leaving anyone behind?

- We need both **more** and **better** evaluation
- Better evaluation requires asking the right questions
- Better evaluation also means attention to quality and focus on use
- For all three, criteria can help, but we must start with the **purpose**:
 - Why are you doing the evaluation?
 - Who will use the results?
 - Who is learning?
 - Who is being held accountable?



What are evaluation criteria?

First set out by the OECD/DAC in 1991, defined in Glossary in 2002, and have become very widely used:

relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability

- Focus on results instead of input and activities
- Cornerstone of evaluation practice
- Broad guides to help us think about and explain changes occurring because of an intervention
- Criteria are normative: they describe the desired attributes of an intervention



Why do criteria matter?

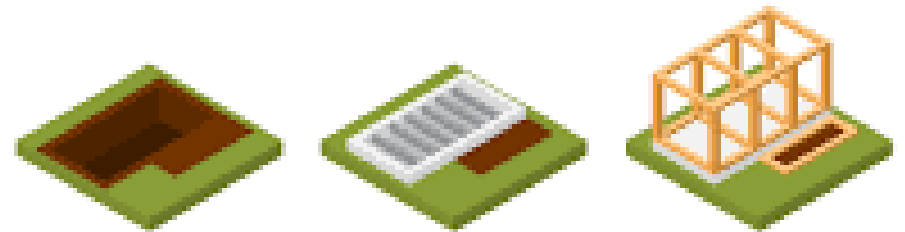
*“If they can get you **asking the wrong questions**, they don't have to worry about answers.”*

- Thomas Pynchon



Updating criteria definitions: An important first step

- Evaluation criteria are important, but they are just the foundation!
- Also about *who* is asking questions
 - Strengthening national evaluation systems
 - Capacity of evaluation users
- *How* questions are answered
 - Need for diverse, suitable methods



DRAFT NEW DEFINITIONS:
IMPROVING CLARITY AND USE

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Each criteria is a lens, giving a different perspective on the intervention – both the implementation process and the results...



...together, they provide a more complete picture.



New criteria: Key features

- New and improved definitions
- Retaining conceptual clarity and keeping the definitions as simple as possible – need to communicate widely
- One major new criterion: Coherence – to better capture synergies, linkages, partnership dynamics, and complexity.
- Supporting use and addressing confusion:
 - an introduction on the intended purpose of the criteria;
 - guiding principles for use; and
 - an accompanying guidance (forthcoming).



New criteria: Key features

- Better responding to equity, gender equality and the leave no one behind imperative.
- Reflecting the integrated nature of sustainable development and current policy priorities – yet high-level enough to ensure they will remain relevant as policy priorities and goals change.
- Promoting a more interconnected approach to the criteria, including examination of synergies, trade-offs, and transformational potential.
- Ensuring applicability across diverse interventions (beyond projects) and beyond development co-operation.



EVALUATION CRITERIA



ARE WE DOING THE RIGHT THINGS?

Relevance



The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and remain so if circumstances change.

Relevance assessment involves looking at differences and trade-offs between different priorities or needs.





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HOW WELL DOES THE INTERVENTION FIT?

Coherence

The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.

The extent to which other interventions support or undermine the intervention, and vice versa.

External coherence

Consistency with other actors' interventions in the same context. Adding value while avoiding duplication of effort.

Internal coherence

Synergies and interlinkages within one institution/government (policy coherence). Including relevant international norms and standards.



IS IT WORKING?

Effectiveness

The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its immediate objectives. Involves determining the intervention's direct outcomes, including any unintended or differential outcomes across groups.



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The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its **immediate objectives**. Involves determining the intervention's direct outcomes, including any **unintended or differential outcomes** across groups.



ARE RESOURCES BEING USED WELL?

Efficiency

The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.

Conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, natural resources, time) into outputs, outcomes and impacts, in the most cost-effective way possible, as compared to feasible alternatives in the context. Including operational efficiency.



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IS THE INTERVENTION
MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

Impact



The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.

Impact addresses the ultimate significance and potentially transformative effects of the intervention. It does so by examining the holistic and enduring changes in systems or norms, and potential effects on people's well-being, human rights, gender equality, and the environment.



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Sustainability

The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue.

Includes an examination of the financial, economic, social, environmental, and institutional, capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time.



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How to use the new criteria?

- Be thoughtful and selective: Evaluation purpose is the guide
- Contextualize and prioritize the criteria
- Keep digging – look beyond averages, expected effects



Moving forward

- New definitions end of the year
- Developing working draft guidance, which we will revisit in 3 years based on experience in applying the new criteria.
- Supporting learning and uptake, partnering for translations (previous Glossary in 14 languages)
- We look forward to hearing from you about the houses you have built, so that we can continue to work together to maximize the contribution of evaluation in achieving sustainable development goals, equity, and averting climate crisis!



Thank you

Please continue the discussions this week and we look forward to working with you going forward!

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