

A high-angle photograph of a group of approximately ten people sitting on the ground under the shade of a large, thick-trunked tree. The people are dressed in a mix of traditional and modern clothing. Some are holding papers or notebooks, suggesting a meeting or a community consultation. The ground is dry and dusty, and there are some scattered items like a blue bag and a red bag nearby. The background shows more trees and a simple structure made of mud and thatch.

Guidelines for Project/Programme Final Evaluations



ADAPTATION FUND

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I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Impetus

According to AF policies and guidelines, “all regular projects and programmes that complete implementation will be subject to final evaluation by an independent evaluator selected by the Implementing Entity.” In addition, at its 10th meeting, the AF Board (AFB) approved the approach to implementing results-based management (RBM).¹ Within this decision, the Board requested the development of an evaluation framework for the Fund, including guidelines for final evaluations.

How to approach these guidelines

These guidelines are based on international best practices and on a literature review of existing guidelines for similar projects and institutions.² They also follow the Adaptation Fund Evaluation Framework minimum requirement on final evaluations.³ These guidelines should complement the Implementing Entities’ own guidelines on final evaluations. These guidelines describe how final evaluations should be conducted, as a minimum, to ensure sufficient accountability and learning for the purposes of the Adaptation Fund.

The guidelines are neither comprehensive nor do they cover all technical issues and processes in conducting an evaluation. Each evaluation should be treated as a distinct research and analytical effort. In no way should these guidelines be interpreted as a prescriptive manual for conducting final evaluations and preparing their reports.

Duration of the guidelines

These guidelines will remain in effect until and unless the AFB decides otherwise. They will be kept under review and updated to conform to the highest international principles, norms, and standards.

Underlying Principles and Objectives of the Final Evaluation

Best practices on evaluation indicate that the final evaluation should be implemented under certain principles, to which the AF subscribes. [\[A specific table containing these principles is included in the AF evaluation framework\]](#). According to this framework and its minimum requirement on final evaluations, these evaluations must provide a comprehensive and systematic description of the performance of a completed project or programme by evaluating its project design (including conceptualization) and implementation.

¹ AFB/EFC.1/3/Rev.1. An Approach to Implement Results-Based Management – RBM (June 2010).

² For example: OECD, CIDA, USAID, GEF, etc.

³ The Evaluation Framework will be presented to the Ethics and Finance Committee at the same meeting as these guidelines.

Specifically, the final evaluation of AF projects and programmes should assess progress towards achievement of increased resilience/reduced vulnerability, and actions taken to achieve sustainability and replicability.

In general, final evaluations have the following objectives:

- To promote accountability and transparency within the Fund, and to systematically assess and disclose levels of project or programme accomplishments. Are programmes and projects achieving what they were intended to achieve? An evaluation validates results and can make overall judgments about the extent to which the intended and unintended results were achieved (e.g. increased resilience, decreased vulnerability, improved cost-effectiveness⁴).
- To organize and synthesize experiences and lessons that may help improve the selection, design, implementation, and evaluation of future AF-funded interventions. What worked or what did not work and why?
- To understand how project achievements contribute to the mandate of the AF. Aggregated analysis and reporting of individual project achievements provide evidence of the effectiveness of AF operations in achieving its goal.
- To provide feedback into the decision-making process to improve ongoing and future projects, programmes, and policies.
- To assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of project design, objectives, and performance.

Audience

These guidelines aim to assist AF National and Multilateral Implementing Entities (NIEs and MIEs) when conducting final evaluations and supervising independent evaluators to assess AF adaptation interventions.

Cost of the Final Evaluation

The cost of the Final Evaluation should be covered by the project; in particular, it should be part of the M&E budget.

Disclosure

All final evaluations should be fully disclosed to relevant policy-makers, operational staff, beneficiaries, and the public in general. The principle behind the disclosure practice is to ensure the transparent dissemination of evaluation reports. The Adaptation Fund, within its knowledge management strategy, should ensure the dissemination of the findings, lessons, and

⁴ UNFCCC 2010. Synthesis report on efforts to monitor and evaluate the implementation of adaptation projects, policies, and programmes, as well as the costs and effectiveness of completed projects, policies and programmes, and views on lessons learned, good practices, gaps, and needs. 1F6C CACpr/iSI B2S0T10A /2010/5.

recommendations extracted from final evaluations. The NIE or MIE should inform the AF Board Secretariat if the evaluation contains issues that, for valid reasons, should not be disclosed. Consistent with the practice of most public sector financial institutions, the Adaptation Fund will not disclose to the public financial, business, proprietary or other non-public information provided to the AF by its NIE or MIE. In these cases, the published version of the final evaluation should remove these confidential sections.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES ON CONDUCTING ADAPTATION FUND EVALUATIONS

Adaptation Fund Implementing Entities (NIEs and MIEs)

Adaptation Fund Implementing Entities are required to conduct an evaluation at project/programme completion and prepare, in English, a final evaluation report.⁵ The report should be submitted to the Ethics and Finance Committee through the Fund's Secretariat within nine months of project completion.

Specific responsibilities:

- Select an independent evaluator to complete the final evaluation of the project/programme.⁶ Ensure the evaluation team is composed of individuals with appropriate expertise and experience to assess the project, and who are independent, unbiased, and free of conflicts of interest; otherwise, ensure a quality control review of the final evaluation by its independent evaluation office.
- Develop specific terms of reference for each final evaluation, with an implementation timetable. Relevant stakeholders should be informed about the terms of reference.
- Provide guidance, documentation, and support to evaluation teams.
- Ensure that evaluators identify and consult all stakeholders relevant to the design and implementation of the project. Comments should be requested from key stakeholders on the draft evaluation. These comments should be reviewed and, as appropriate, taken into account in the final version of the evaluation report.
- Ensure that final evaluation reports include, at a minimum, the scope presented in this guideline document. This should include the assessment of AF Standard/Core Indicators selected by projects/programmes during design and measured during implementation.
- Submit final evaluation reports to the EFC, through the AF Secretariat, within nine months after project/programme completion or as stipulated in the agreement between the Board and the Implementing Entities.⁷
- Forward copies of the evaluation reports to the Designated Authority⁸ for information.⁹

⁵ Operations policies and guidelines for parties to access resources from the Adaptation Fund.

⁶ Draft Standard Legal agreement between the Adaptation Fund and the Implementing Entities, report of the 12th meeting of the Adaptation Fund Board, Annex VI.

⁷ Operations policies and guidelines for parties to access resources from the Adaptation Fund and Draft Standard Legal Contract between the Adaptation Fund and the Implementing Entities.

- Facilitate the dissemination and public availability of final evaluation reports among relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries.
- If the Implementing Entity has an independent evaluation unit, it should follow its own procedures on conducting or validating final evaluations.

Evaluators/Evaluation Teams

Implementing Entities shall observe the following principles and guidelines in selecting independent evaluators/evaluation teams to conduct final evaluations:

- Evaluators/evaluation teams will be independent of both the policy-making process and the delivery and management of assistance to the project they are evaluating;
- Evaluators will be impartial and present a comprehensive and balanced appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the project/programme being evaluated;
- The evaluation team should be comprised of professionals with strong evaluation experience, requisite expertise in the project subject matter, and experience in economic and social development issues;
- Evaluators should be knowledgeable about AF operations and strategy, and about relevant AF policies such as those on project life cycle, M&E, etc.;
- Evaluators should take into account the views of all relevant stakeholders in conducting final evaluations;
- Evaluators will become familiar with the project/programme document and will use the information generated by the project including, but not limited to, baseline data and information generated by the project M&E system;
- Evaluators should also seek the necessary contextual information to assess the significance and relevance of results; and
- Evaluators will abide by the Implementing Entity Ethical Guidelines and other policies relevant to evaluations, if available and applicable.

⁸ “Designated Authority” means the authority that has endorsed on behalf of the national government the project proposal by the Implementing Entity seeking access to AF resources to finance the [Project][Programme]; AFB.EFC_3.6 Draft Standard Legal Contract.

⁹ Draft Standard Legal Contract between the Adaptation Fund and the Implementing Entities.

III. SCOPE OF FINAL EVALUATIONS

All final evaluations will assess the following dimensions:

- Achievement of project/programme outcomes, including ratings, and with particular consideration of achievements related to the proposed concrete adaptation measures, if applicable;
- Evaluation of risks to sustainability of project/programme outcomes at project completion and progress towards impacts, including ratings;
- Evaluation of processes influencing achievement of project/programme results, including preparation and readiness, country ownership, stakeholder involvement, financial management, NIE/MIE supervision and backstopping, and project/programme start-up and implementation delays;
- Evaluation of contribution of project/programme achievements to the Adaptation Fund targets, objectives, impact, and goal, including report on AF standard/core indicators; and
- Evaluation of the M&E systems.

In addition, all final evaluation reports should include the following:

- Conclusions, lessons and recommendations;
- Terms of reference for conducting the evaluation;
- An official response from the project/programme management team regarding the evaluation conclusions and recommendations; and
- Other information such as timing and duration of the evaluation, places visited, people involved, key questions, methodology, and references used.

[Annex 1](#) provides a template for the final evaluation report.

Each evaluation would depend upon project/programme size, specific interventions, sector and country context, among other aspects. Generally, final evaluations would include field visits to determine project/programme achievements and interview key stakeholders at the interventions'

level (national, regional, local, etc.). In all cases, final evaluations should properly examine and assess the perspectives of the various relevant stakeholders¹⁰ and beneficiaries.

(i) Evaluation of Achievement of Project/Programme Outcomes

Adaptation Fund final evaluations will assess and rate the accomplishment of outcomes (including secondary or medium-term). In evaluating project/programme performance, evaluators can focus on achievements in terms of outputs, outcomes, and impacts.

Although the AF is more interested in assessing impacts,¹¹ these can take a long time to be achieved. On the other hand, although output achievement would be easier to evaluate, it gives limited information about whether AF interventions were effective in delivering AF goals. Therefore, final evaluations should focus on evaluating short- to medium-term outcomes.

Evaluators are also encouraged to evaluate long-term outcomes and impacts when appropriate through assessment of risks to sustainability and progress towards impacts (see below).¹² In addition, the Adaptation Fund may consider in the future conducting ex-post evaluations, a few years after project completion, to help evaluate long-term outcomes and impacts.

The Adaptation Fund standard/core outcomes¹³ include the following:

- Reduced exposure at national level to climate-related hazards and threats;
- Strengthened institutional capacity to reduce risks associated with climate induced economic losses;
- Strengthened awareness and ownership of adaptation and climate risk-reduction processes at the local level;
- Increased adaptive capacity within relevant development and natural resource sectors;
- Increased ecosystem resilience in response to climate change and variability-induced stress;
- Diversified and strengthened livelihoods and sources of income for vulnerable people in targeted areas; and
- Improved policies and regulations that promote and enforce resilience measures.

¹¹

¹¹ The Adaptation Fund's RBM defines impact as "the increased resilience at country level to climate change, including climate variability."

¹² UNFCCC, 2010. Synthesis report on efforts to monitor and evaluate the implementation of adaptation projects, policies, and programmes, and the costs and effectiveness of completed projects, policies and programmes, and views on lessons learned, good practices, gaps, and needs. 1F6C CACpr/iSI B2S0T10A /2010/5.

¹³ See "An Approach to Implementing Results-Based Management (RBM)" AFB/B.9/7.

As relevant and appropriate, all, or a selection, of the above outcomes will be evaluated according to two dimensions:

- Achievement of outcomes; and
- Risks to sustainability of outcomes and linkages towards impacts.

Each aspect will be given an overall rating based on a multi-dimensional analysis.

Achievements of Outcomes: Criteria

According to international standards, the following criteria should be used when evaluating levels of achievement of project/programme outcomes and objectives, although not all will apply in every case:

- ***Relevance***
 - Were the project's outcomes consistent with the AF goal, objectives, and strategic priorities,¹⁴ and country/region priorities?
- ***Effectiveness***
 - Are the actual project outcomes commensurate with the original or modified project objectives (as a result of adaptive management)? If the original or modified expected results are merely outputs/inputs, the evaluators should evaluate if the project/programme had real outcomes and, if it did, determine whether these are appropriate with realistic expectations from such projects/programmes (aspects of contribution¹⁵).
- ***Efficiency***
 - Were alternatives considered?
 - How was the process of preparation and implementation compared with other projects?
 - Wherever possible, the evaluator should also compare the costs incurred and the time taken to achieve outcomes with those for similar projects.

¹⁴ Strategic priorities include supporting adaptation priorities determined by and within developing countries; consistency with relevant national development, poverty reduction, and climate change strategies; taking into account existing scientific and political guidance; and special attention to the particular needs of the most vulnerable communities (Operations Policy and Guidance).

¹⁵ Given the complexity and many actors participating in projects dealing with adaptation to climate change, evaluations should concentrate on determining the contribution of the Fund intervention rather than full attribution.

Achievement of Outcomes: Rating

The project will have an overall rating based on ratings of achievements in project outcomes for each evaluation criterion (relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency):

- ***Highly satisfactory (HS)***
 - The project/programme had no shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency;
- ***Satisfactory (S)***
 - The project/programme had minor shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency;
- ***Moderately satisfactory (MS)***
 - The project/programme had moderate shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency;
- ***Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)***
 - The project/programme had significant shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency;
- ***Unsatisfactory (U)***
 - The project/programme had major shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency; or
- ***Highly unsatisfactory (HU)***
 - The project/programme had severe shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency.

When estimating the overall rating for the project/programme's outcomes, relevance and effectiveness will be considered to be critical criteria. "Criticality" in this context implies that satisfactory performance on a specific criterion is essential to satisfactory performance overall.

Lack of performance on such criteria is not compensated by better performance on other criteria. If Implementing Entities provide separate ratings on relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency, the overall outcomes rating of the project may not be higher than the lowest rating on relevance and effectiveness. As a result, to have an overall satisfactory rating for outcomes, the project must have at least satisfactory ratings on both relevance and effectiveness.

(ii) Evaluation of Risks to Sustainability of Project/Programme Outcomes and Progress towards Impacts

An AF final evaluation should assess the likelihood of sustainability of outcomes and progress towards impact at project/programme completion, and provide a rating for this.

- *Sustainability* is understood as the likelihood of the achieved outcomes continuing after funding from the Fund ends. The outcomes, according to the chain of results and logical framework of the project, will contribute to achieve the desired impacts.

- *Progress towards impacts* is understood as the likelihood of clear connections between the achieved outcomes and impacts, as presented in the chain result or logical framework of the project. Given the long-term nature of impacts in the case of most projects financed by the Fund, it might not be possible for the evaluators to identify or fully assess these at the time of project completion. Nonetheless, evaluators will indicate the steps taken to assess the likelihood of achieving long-term project/programme impacts, replication effects, and other effects. One way to do this could be to understand the risks and assumptions that could undermine or strengthen the likelihood of the existence of clear linkages between mid-term or secondary outcomes and impacts (see next section).

Assessing the sustainability of outcomes includes evaluating at least four dimensions of risks to sustainability and how these risks comprise linkages from outcomes to impacts:

- **Financial and economic risks and assumptions**
 - Are there any financial or economic risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project/programme outcomes?
 - What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources being available once the AF grant ends?
- **Socio-political risks and assumptions**
 - Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes?
 - What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained?
 - Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that project/programme benefits continue to flow?
 - Is there sufficient public/stakeholder awareness in support of the project's long-term objectives?
- **Institutional framework and governance risks and assumptions**
 - Do the legal frameworks, policies, and governance structures and processes within which the project operates pose risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project benefits?
 - Are requisite systems for accountability and transparency, and required technical know-how, in place?

- **Environmental risks and assumptions**
 - Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project/programme outcomes?
- **Uncertainties on climate change Impacts—baselines (including reference and adaptation scenarios)** Uncertainties in climate models and vulnerability assessments may have caused the project design and implementation to be inappropriate. The evaluation should consider the quality of the models used and the relevance and appropriates of the design:
 - What is the risk that vulnerability assessments, existing adaptive capacity assessments, reference and scenario development, and other assessments would be insufficient to allow interventions to be sustained or linkages to impacts analyzed?
 - Vulnerability assessments require value judgements, and any attempt to define and measure vulnerability must be the result of a consultative, stakeholder-driven process, rather than the result of sole technical analysis resulting in a simple metric.¹⁶ Was the vulnerability assessment conducted at the beginning of the project appropriate, scientifically based?

Each of the above dimensions of risks to sustainability and linkages towards impacts and goals of project/programme outcomes will be rated based on an overall evaluation of the likelihood and magnitude of the potential effect of the risks considered within that dimension. The following ratings will be provided:

- **Likely (L)**
 - There are no or negligible risks that affect this dimension of sustainability/linkages;
- **Moderately likely (ML)**
 - There are moderate risks that affect this dimension of sustainability/linkages;
- **Moderately unlikely (MU)**
 - There are significant risks that affect this dimension of sustainability/linkages;
or
- **Unlikely (U)**
 - There are severe risks that affect this dimension of sustainability/linkages.

All the risk dimensions of sustainability and linkages are critical. Therefore, overall rating for sustainability/linkages will not be higher than the lowest rated dimension. For example, if a project has an “unlikely” rating in any dimension, its overall rating cannot be higher than “unlikely.”

¹⁶ For further information on determining vulnerability see Klein RJT. 2009. “Identifying countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change: an academic or a political challenge?” *Carbon and Climate Law Review*. 3: pp. 284-291. UNFCCC 2010.

(iii) Evaluation of Processes Influencing Achievement of Project/Programme Results

The evaluator should consider the following aspects influencing project/programme implementation and achievement of project/programme results. Note that evaluators are not expected to provide ratings or separate evaluations on these issues, but these should be considered in the performance and results sections of the report:

- *Preparation and readiness*
 - Were the project/programme's objectives and components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
 - Were the capacities of the executing entities and its counterparts properly consulted when the project/programme was designed?
 - Were lessons from other relevant projects/programmes properly incorporated into the project design?
 - Were the partnership arrangements properly identified and roles and responsibilities negotiated prior to project/programme approval?
 - Were climate models considered and vulnerability assessments conducted? What was the quality of the models used?
- *Country ownership*
 - Was the project concept in line with the national sectoral and development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects/programmes)?
 - Are project outcomes contributing to national development priorities and plans?
 - Were the relevant country representatives from government and civil society involved in the project/programme?
 - Has the government — or governments in the case of multi-country projects/programmes — approved policies or regulatory frameworks in line with the project/programme's objectives?
 - When appropriate, what was the role of local communities?

- *Stakeholder involvement*
 - Did the project involve the relevant stakeholders through information sharing and consultation and by seeking their participation in project/programme design, implementation, and M&E? For example, did the project/programme implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?
 - Did the project consult with, and make use of, the skills, experience, and knowledge of the appropriate government entities, nongovernmental organizations, community groups, private sector entities, local governments, and academic institutions in the design, implementation, and evaluation of project/programme activities?
 - Were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account while taking decisions?
 - Were the relevant vulnerable groups (including women, children, elderly, disabled, poor) and powerful supporters and opponents of the processes properly involved?
 - Were gender balance perspectives of those affected and involved in the project/programmed assessed?
- *Financial management*
 - Did the project/programme have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allowed management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allowed for timely flow of funds?
 - Was there due diligence in the management of funds and financial audits? Financial audits of the project, if available at the time of the evaluation, should be used as a source of information.
- *Implementing Entity supervision and backstopping*
 - Did Implementing Entity staff identify challenges in a timely fashion and accurately estimate their significance?
 - Did Implementing Entity staff provide quality support and advice to the project/programme, approve modifications in time, and restructure the project/programme when needed?

- Did the Implementing Entity provide the right staffing levels, continuity, skill mix, and frequency of field visits for the project/programme?
- *Delays in project/programme start-up and implementation*
 - If there were delays in project/programme implementation and completion, what were the reasons?
 - Did the delays affect project/programme outcomes and/or sustainability, and, if so, in what ways and through what causal linkages?

(iv) Evaluation of Contribution of Project/Programme Achievements to the Adaptation Fund Targets, Objectives, Impact, and Goal

To ensure the integration of Adaptation Fund strategic outcomes into the project or programme level M&E system and their contribution to RBM, project objective(s) should be aligned with the Adaptation Fund strategic framework. Final evaluations should assess how project outcomes and possible impacts have aligned with, and how they have contributed to, Adaptation Fund goals, impacts, and outcomes.¹⁷

AF Strategic Framework		General assessment questions
Goal:	Assist developing-country <i>Parties to the Kyoto Protocol</i> that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change in meeting the costs of concrete adaptation projects and programmes, in order to implement climate-resilient measures.	<p>Was the project designed and implemented in and by a developing-country <i>Party to the Kyoto Protocol</i> that is particularly vulnerable to adverse effects of climate change?</p> <p>Through this project, would the country be able to achieve concrete adaptation measures and increase its resiliency? If yes, how? What have been the main challenges or risks to attain increased resilience?</p> <p>Assessment of results from other sections should be used to further discussions in this section.</p>

¹⁷ AF. 2010. Project-Level Result Frameworks and Baseline Guidance Document. AFB/EFC.2/3.

Impact:	Increased resiliency at the community, national, and regional levels to climate variability and change.	<p>Were the project’s results increasing resilience at the community, national, and/or regional levels to climate variability and change? If yes, how? What have been the main challenges or risks to attain increased resilience?</p> <p>Discuss resilience aspects at all levels.</p> <p>Assessment of results from other sections should be used to further discussions in this section.</p>
Objective:	Reduce vulnerability and increase adaptive capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change, including variability at local and national levels.	<p>Has the project reduced vulnerability to climate change impacts? How did the project reduce vulnerability to climate change at the different levels?</p> <p>Has the project increased adaptive capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change, including variability at local and national levels?</p> <p>How did the project increase the adaptive capacity to respond to climate change impacts and variability? What have been the main challenges or risks to attain reduced vulnerability and increased adaptive capacity?</p> <p>Assessment of results from other sections should be used to further discussions in this section.</p>

In addition, final evaluations should conduct an assessment of AF standard/core indicators found in Annex 1 and 2 of the AF RBM. Specifically, the evaluation should assess how project/programme indicators have aligned with Adaptation Fund Strategic outcomes and outputs indicators and targets.

Rating of Contribution

The project/programme will have an overall rating in the contribution of project/programme achievements to the Adaptation Fund targets, objectives, impact, and goal. This rating is based on ratings of contribution:

- **Highly satisfactory (HS)**
 - The project/programme has made clear contributions to the Adaptation Fund targets, objectives, impact, and goal;
- **Satisfactory (S)**
 - The project/programme had minor shortcomings in achieving contribution to the Adaptation Fund targets, objectives, impact, and goal;

- **Moderately satisfactory (MS)**
 - The project/programme had moderate shortcomings in achieving contribution to the Adaptation Fund targets, objectives, impact, and goal;
- **Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)**
 - The project/programme had significant shortcomings in achieving contribution to the Adaptation Fund targets, objectives, impact, and goal;
- **Unsatisfactory (U)**
 - The project/programme had major shortcomings in achieving contribution to the Adaptation Fund targets, objectives, impact, and goal; or
- **Highly unsatisfactory (HU)**
 - The project/programme had severe shortcomings in achieving contribution to the Adaptation Fund targets, objectives, impact, and goal.

Evaluation of M&E Systems

The final evaluation should assess the quality of the project/programme M&E systems according to the following four dimensions: (1) M&E plans; (2) indicators, (3) baselines; and (4) alignment with national M&E frameworks.

1) M&E plans

- *Design*
 - What is the assessment of the M&E plan to monitor results and track progress toward achieving project objectives?
 - Was the plan based on the project/programme RBM framework?
 - Did the plan provide a timetable for various M&E activities, such as specific evaluations, reviews, and supervisions, as well as an appropriate budget?
- *Implementation*
 - The final evaluation should verify the following:
 - an M&E system was in place and facilitated timely tracking of progress toward project/programme objectives by collecting information on chosen indicators (which include selected AF standard/core indicators) continually throughout the project implementation period;
 - annual project/programme reports (PPR) were complete and accurate, with well-justified ratings;

- the information provided by the M&E system was used during the project/programme implementation to improve performance and to adapt to changing needs (adaptive management); and
 - projects/programmes had an M&E system in place with proper training for parties responsible for M&E activities to ensure that data will continue to be compiled and used after project/programme closure.
- *Budgeting and funding for M&E activities*
 - The evaluators will determine whether the M&E plan was sufficiently budgeted for at the project/programme planning/design stage and whether M&E was funded adequately and in a timely manner during implementation.

2) Indicators

Regarding the type of adaptation indicators that planners and practitioners should select, it is suggested that a mix of quantitative, qualitative, and narrative tools be used, including surveys and scorecards, so that results can be triangulated to give the most accurate picture possible of progress towards adaptation and the factors involved.¹⁸

Even though attention should be given to all indicators defined in the project and programme in an integral manner, specific assessment on the incorporation and use of AF standard/core indicators is expected, as these would form the data from which information will be gathered to assess the Adaptation Fund.

3) Project/programme baselines

In adaptation projects, baselines have two primary uses:

First, there is the project baseline: where is the project starting from? Who is vulnerable? What is vulnerable? And what is currently being done to reduce that vulnerability? Project baselines are site-specific and limited to the duration of the project. Depending on the approach used in an adaptation project, a project baseline could be described by a set of quantitative or qualitative indicators, and may take the form of, for example, a vulnerability baseline, a climate-risk baseline, an adaptive capacity baseline, or an adaptation baseline. Project baselines can later be used in the monitoring and evaluation process to measure change (in, for example, vulnerability, adaptive capacity, climate risk) in the priority system, and the effectiveness of adaptation strategies, policies, and measures.

¹⁸ UNFCCC. 2010. Synthesis report on efforts undertaken to monitor and evaluate the implementation of adaptation projects, policies, and programmes and the costs and effectiveness of completed projects, policies, and programmes, and views on lessons learned, good practices, gaps, and needs. 1F6C CACpr/iSI B2S0T10A /2010/5.

Second, depending on project needs and design, project proponents may choose to develop reference scenarios that represent future conditions in the priority system in the absence of climate adaptation. Scenarios may also be developed in which various adaptation measures are applied. Both reference scenarios and adaptation scenarios may be compared with baselines to evaluate the implications of various adaptation strategies, policies, and measures. Scenarios differ from project baselines in that they deal with the longer term and are used for informing policy decisions concerned with various development pathways at the strategic planning level.

Therefore, the review of baselines is a significant part of AF project/programme evaluations:

- Have baselines been designed through a participatory approach, using cost-effective and accessible information?
- Were reference and adaptation scenarios considered by the project/programme?
- Have vulnerability baselines, climate-risk baselines, and adaptive capacity baselines been described and assessed?
- Have baselines (specifically vulnerability, climate risks, and reference and adaptation scenarios) been reviewed during project/programme implementation?

4) Alignment of Project/Programme M&E Frameworks to National M&E Frameworks

The monitoring and evaluation of long-term changes should be incorporated into AF-supported projects/programmes as a separate component and may include determination of baselines, scenarios, and their probability; specification of indicators; and provisioning of equipment and capacity building for data gathering, analysis, and use.

This section of the final evaluation report will describe project/programme interventions and accomplishments toward establishing or using long-term monitoring systems. The review will address the following questions:

- Did this project/programme monitoring and evaluation system make the best use of existing (local, sectoral, national) monitoring and evaluation systems, including existing indicators? Could these systems be used as they are, do they need to be revised, or are new and additional systems required?
- Did this project/programme contribute to the establishment of a long-term monitoring system? If it did not, should the project have included such a component? What were the accomplishments and challenges in establishment of this system? Is the information generated by this system being used as originally intended? Is the system mainstreamed—that is, is it embedded in a proper institutional structure and does it have financing?
- Did the project include plans for feedback and to disseminate results from monitoring and reporting implementation as to allow for lessons learned and good practices

identified to be shared with the wider community of adaptation planners and practitioners at all levels and other existing M&E systems?

Ratings for Evaluation of M&E systems

The above aspects should be assessed using the following ratings:

- ***Highly satisfactory (HS)***
 - There were no shortcomings in the project M&E system;
- ***Satisfactory (S)***
 - There were minor shortcomings in the project M&E system;
- ***Moderately satisfactory (MS)***
 - There were moderate shortcomings in the project M&E system;
- ***Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)***
 - There were significant shortcomings in the project M&E system;
- ***Unsatisfactory (U)***
 - There were major shortcomings in the project M&E system; or
- ***Highly unsatisfactory (HU)***
 - The project had no M&E system.

The overall rating of M&E will be based on the overall quality of the four dimensions described above.

Conclusions, Lessons, and Recommendations

The evaluators should present conclusions, lessons, and recommendations in the final evaluation report on all aspects of the project/programme that they consider relevant. Conclusions represent the evaluators' interpretations and judgments based on findings and the empirical data gathered and analyzed. Evaluators will be expected to give special attention to analyzing lessons and proposing recommendations on aspects related to factors that contributed to, or hindered, achievement of project/programme objectives, sustainability of benefits, innovation, replication, and project M&E.

Recommendations should be specific and practical. While developing recommendations, evaluators should take into consideration the socio-economic and political context of the project, programme, or policy evaluated, the strengths and weaknesses of the Implementing and Executing Entities, available resources, and the possibility of change and innovation.

Evaluators should refrain from providing recommendations to improve the project/programme. Instead, they should seek to provide a few well-formulated lessons applicable to the type of project/programme at hand or to the AF overall portfolio. Final evaluation reports should not be undertaken with the motive of appraisal, preparation, or justification for a follow-up phase.

Wherever possible, final evaluation reports should include examples of good practices for other projects/programmes in the area, sector, country, or region.

IV. CRITERIA FOR RATING QUALITY OF FINAL EVALUATION REPORTS

The EFC and Board Secretariat will use the following criteria to assess the overall quality of final evaluation reports (no rating for each criterion is expected):

- The final evaluation report presented an assessment of all relevant outcomes and achievement of project/programme objectives in the context of AF strategic priorities, sector, and project/programme indicators, if applicable.
- The final evaluation report was consistent, the evidence presented was complete and convincing, and the ratings were well substantiated.
- The final evaluation report presented a sound assessment of sustainability of outcomes.
- The lessons and recommendations listed in the final evaluation report are supported by the evidence presented and are relevant to the AF portfolio and future projects. Do the recommendations directly follow from the evaluation's findings and the conclusions? Are they supported by sound analysis and reasoning? Are they "actionable," in the sense that they can be implemented in existing circumstances? And lessons: does the report mention lessons that may be used in designing new projects and programmes? Are they adequately explained?
- The final evaluation report included the actual project costs (totals, per activity, and per source).
- The final evaluation report included an assessment of the quality of the M&E plan at entry, the operation of the M&E system used during implementation, and the extent M&E was sufficiently budgeted for during preparation and properly funded during implementation.
- The final evaluation report clearly states the quality of data used in the design and implementation of the evaluation: What is the quality of data and information gathered by the team? Are there serious questions about their reliability and validity? Does the report mention, in a transparent manner, the relative strengths and weaknesses of the data obtained?
- The final evaluation report covers defined evaluation questions: Are all evaluation questions answered in the report? Are the data and evidence presented clearly? Are alternative explanations of findings explicitly considered and explored?

Ratings on Quality of Final Evaluation Reports

The rating on the overall quality of the final evaluation reports will be as follows:

- ***Highly satisfactory (HS)***
 - There were no shortcomings in the final evaluation report;
- ***Satisfactory (S)***
 - There were minor shortcomings in the evaluation report;
- ***Moderately satisfactory (MS)***
 - There were moderate shortcomings in the final evaluation report;
- ***Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)***
 - There were significant shortcomings in the evaluation report;
- ***Unsatisfactory (U)***
 - There were major shortcomings in the evaluation report; or
- ***Highly unsatisfactory (HU)***
 - There were severe shortcomings in the evaluation report.

The first two criteria (of all relevant outcomes and achievement of project objectives and report consistency and substantiation of claims with proper evidence) are critical. A satisfactory assessment of at least these two criteria is necessary to receive a satisfactory rating of the overall quality of the final evaluation.

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USAID. 2009. *Evaluation Guidelines for Foreign Assistance.* Planning and Performance Management Unit Office of the Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance Final Version: March 25, 2009.

USAID. 2009. *Evaluation Standards.* Planning and Performance Management Unit Office of the Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance Final Version: March 25, 2009.

Van den Berg, R. D., and O. Feinstein (Eds.). 2009. *Evaluating Climate Change and Development.* World Bank Series on Development, Volume 8.

ANNEX 1. Final Evaluation Report Template:

Project/Programme General Information

- Adaptation Fund Project ID:
- Project/programme category:
- Country/ies:
- Title of project/programme:
- Type of Implementing Entity:
- Implementing Entity:
- Executing Entity/ies:
- Amount of financing requested (In U.S Dollars):

Projected/Programme Timetable:

Indicate the dates of the following milestones for the proposed project/programme

Project timetable	Expected Date	Actual Date
Start of Project/Programme Implementation		
Mid-term Review (if planned)		
Project/Programme Closing		
Final Evaluation		

Project Components	Expected Concrete Outputs	Expected Outcomes	Amount (US\$)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4. Project/ Programme Execution cost			
5. Total Project/Programme Cost			
6. Project Cycle Management Fee charged by the Implementing Entity (if applicable)			

Project/Programme Components and Financing:

	Approved	Actual
Amount of Financing Requested		

Evaluation General Information

All final evaluations will include a description of the following aspects:

- When, and for how long, the evaluation took place;
- Places visited;
- Who was involved in the evaluation; and
- Methodology and Evaluation key questions.

Evaluation Results

All final evaluations will report on the following dimensions:

- Achievement of outputs and outcomes, providing ratings for targeted project objectives and outcomes;
- Likelihood of sustainability of outcomes at project completion, providing a rating for this;
- Processes Influencing Achievement of Project/Programme Results;
- Contribution of project achievements to the Adaptation Fund targets, objectives, impact, and goal; and
- M&E Systems.

1. Evaluation of project/programme outcomes: criteria for assessing achievement of outcomes and ratings:

- Relevance (discussion and rating);
- Effectiveness (discussion and rating);
- Efficiency (discussion and rating); and
- Overall Rating.

2. Risks to sustainability and progress towards impacts: dimensions and ratings

- Financial and economic (discussion and rating);
- Socio-political (discussion and rating);
- Institutional framework and governance (discussion and rating);
- Environmental (discussion and rating);
- Uncertainties on climate change impacts—baselines (discussion and rating); and
- Overall Rating.

3. Evaluation of Processes Influencing Achievement of Project/Programme Results (Note that evaluators are not expected to provide ratings on these issues)

- Preparation and readiness (discussion);
- Country ownership (discussion);
- Stakeholder involvement (discussion);
- Financial management (discussion);
- Implementing Entity supervision and backstopping (discussion); and
- Delays in project/programme start-up and implementation (discussion).

4. Evaluation of Contribution of Project/Programme Achievements to the Adaptation Fund Targets, Objectives, Impact, and Goal: elements and ratings

- Contributions towards AF Goal (discussion and rating);
- Contributions towards AF Impact (discussion and rating); and
- Contributions towards AF Objective (discussion and rating).

5. Evaluation of M&E Systems: dimensions and ratings

- M&E plans (discussion and ratings):
 - Design (discussion and rating);
 - Implementation (discussion and rating); and
 - Budgeting and funding for M&E activities (discussion).
- Indicators (discussion and rating);
- Project/programme baselines (discussion and rating);
- Alignment of Project/Programme M&E Frameworks to National M&E Frameworks (discussion and rating); and
- Overall rating.

Conclusions, Lessons Learned, and Recommendations

Final evaluation reports should include a section synthesizing findings, final conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations.

References

Final evaluations should include, in text and as a main section, all materials and bibliography, as well as a list of stakeholders/persons consulted during their design and implementation.

Annexes

In addition to other technical annexes, the final evaluation report should include the following two annexes:

- Official response from the project/programme management team regarding the evaluation findings or conclusions; and
- Terms of reference for conducting the evaluation.



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