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Adaptation Fund Board
Ethics and Finance Committee
Thirty-first Meeting
Bonn, Germany, 21-22 March 2023

Agenda Item: 5 b)

**GUIDANCE IN SUPPORT OF THE
OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE EVALUATION POLICY**

**ANNEX 4: DRAFT GUIDANCE NOTE,
COMMISSIONING AND MANAGING AN EVALUATION**

**TECHNICAL EVALUATION REFERENCE GROUP
OF THE ADAPTATION FUND (AF-TERG)**

Comparisons for EPGD topic	
Current practice at the Fund	<p>The 2011 Adaptation Fund Evaluation Framework minimum evaluative requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project/Programme mid-term evaluation 2. Project/Programme final evaluation
Current peer practice (e.g., GCF, GEF, CIF, UNEG or major IEs)	<p>GEF: The 2019 GEF Evaluation Policy identifies eight different types of evaluation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project evaluation 2. program evaluation 3. performance evaluation 4. country and country cluster evaluation 5. process evaluation 6. impact evaluation 7. Cymatic evaluation 8. comprehensive evaluation of the GEF <p><i>Coverage:</i> 100% coverage for independent terminal evaluations of all full- and medium-sized projects</p> <p>GCF: The 2021 GCF Evaluation Policy identifies three types of evaluations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent evaluations 2. Secretariate-led evaluations 3. AE led-evaluations <p><i>Coverage:</i> 100% coverage for all projects and programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project interim evaluations • Final evaluations <p>World Bank Group: The 2019 WBG Evaluation Principles identifies four types of evaluation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent evaluation 2. Self evaluation 3. Mandatory self evaluation 4. Demand driven self evaluation <p><i>Coverage:</i> Only Mandatory self-evaluations are required for lending operations, investments, guarantees, country programs, and advisory services.</p> <p>UNDP: The 2021 UNDP Evaluation Guidelines recognizes two categories of evaluation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent evaluations conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office 2. Decentralized evaluations commissioned by programme units including country offices, regional bureaus and practice and policy bureaus (12 types of evaluation included in this category) <p><i>Coverage:</i> 100% country programme evaluations (implemented by IEO); decentralized project-level final evaluations are carried out as per evaluation thresholds established by the UNDP evaluation guidelines and as per partnership protocols:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects > USD 5 million: midterm + final evaluation; • Projects USD 3 -USD 5 million: either midterm or final evaluation • Projects with a duration > five years: either midterm or final evaluation • Projects entering a second phase: one evaluation • Development initiatives being considered for scaling up: one evaluation before expansion
Proposed Change	<p>The new Fund Evaluation Policy outlines evaluative activities at three levels (Figure 1): Fund-level evaluations, Strategic-level evaluations and Operational-level evaluations. Each level corresponds to different evaluation types and sub-types. Table 2 provides a list of the evaluation types. Of particular significance, the Fund requires Fund IEs to conduct all mandatory operational-level evaluations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baseline data report 2. Mid-term Review 3. Final project and program evaluations

This guidance note is part of a series of technical guidance from the Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG) supporting reliable, useful, and ethical evaluations aligned with the Adaptation Fund's [Evaluation Policy](#). AF-TERG guidance documents are intended to be succinct, but with sufficient information to practically guide users, pointing to additional resources when appropriate. Additional AF-TERG evaluation resources on various topics can be accessed at the online [AF-TERG Evaluation Resource Webpage](#). Feedback is welcome and can be sent to AF-TERG-SEC@adaptation-fund.org.

The Adaptation Fund was established through decisions by the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol to finance concrete adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. At the Katowice Climate Conference in December 2018, the Parties to the Paris Agreement decided that the Adaptation Fund shall also serve the Paris Agreement. The Fund supports country-driven projects and programmes, innovation, and global learning for effective adaptation. All of the Fund's activities are designed to build national and local adaptive capacities while reaching and engaging the most vulnerable groups, and to integrate gender consideration to provide equal opportunity to access and benefit from the Fund's resources. They are also aimed at enhancing synergies with other sources of climate finance, while creating models that can be replicated or scaled up. www.adaptation-fund.org

The Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG) is an independent evaluation advisory group accountable to the Fund Board. It was established in 2018 to ensure the independent implementation of the Fund's evaluation framework, which will be succeeded by the new evaluation policy from October 2023 onwards. The AF-TERG, which is headed by a chair, provides an evaluative advisory role through performing evaluative, advisory and oversight functions. The group is comprised of independent experts in evaluation, called the AF-TERG members. A small secretariat provides support for the implementation of evaluative and advisory activities as part of the work programme.

While independent of the operations of the Adaptation Fund, the aim of the AF-TERG is to add value to the Fund's work through independent monitoring, evaluation, and learning, www.adaptation-fund.org/about/evaluation/

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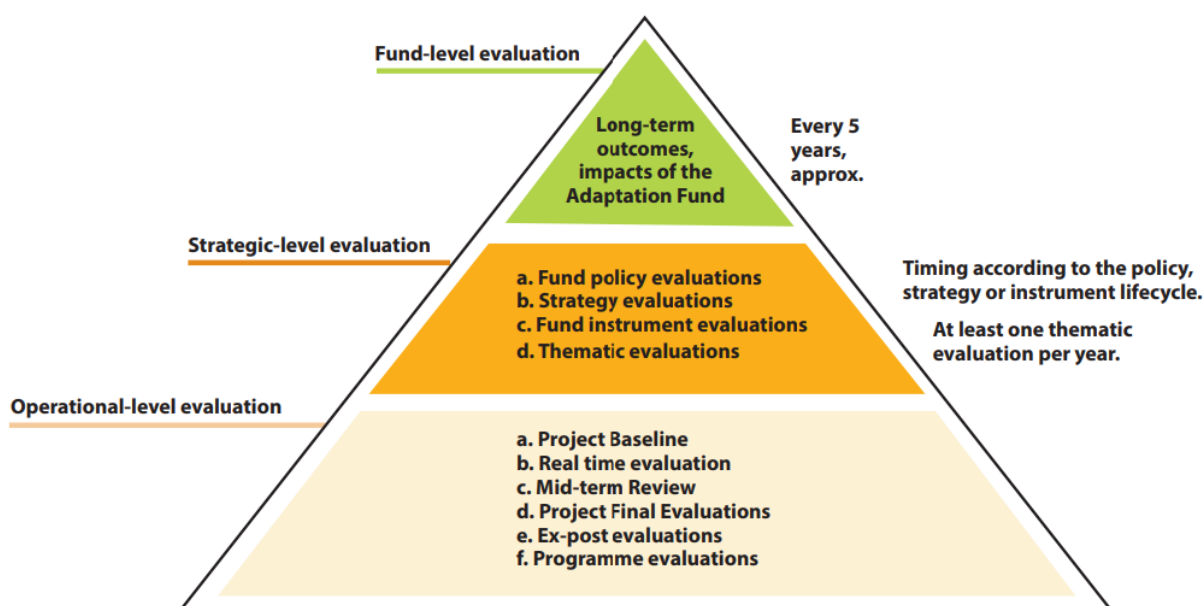
Acronyms

AF-TERG	Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
DA	Designated Authority
EP	Evaluation Policy
EQ	Evaluation Questions
Fund	Adaptation Fund
IEs	Implementing Entities
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation, and learning
MTR	Mid-term Review
PPR	Project Performance Report
RTE	Real-Time Evaluation
ToR	Terms of Reference

1. What is this guidance note?

The purpose of this guidance note is to support the commissioning and managing of an evaluation of a Fund funded operation in accordance with the Adaptation Fund's [Evaluation Policy](#). The guidance note will be most helpful to those who are preparing, commissioning, or managing a Fund evaluative activity (**Figure 1**) contracted by a Fund Implementing Entity or the Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG). The note covers guidance related to commissioning and managing an evaluative activity at all levels included in the Fund's Evaluation Policy. It is important to acknowledge that the discussion is not exhaustive, and additional resources are provided at the end of the guidance note.

Figure 1: Fund-evaluation levels and indicative types



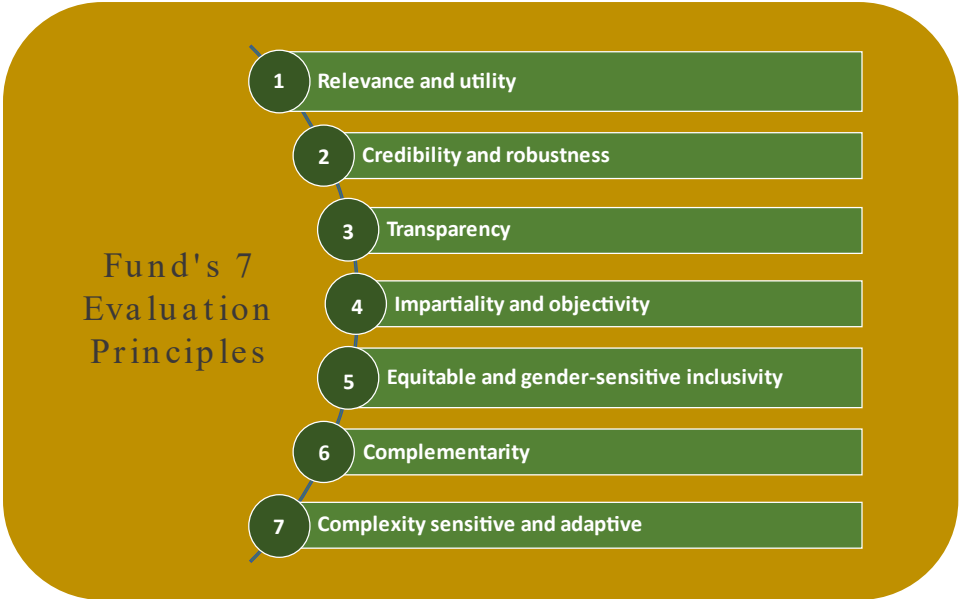
2. What is commissioning and managing an evaluation?

Commissioning an evaluation and managing an evaluation are different but interrelated processes.

- **Commissioning an evaluation** encompasses the activities to initiate a Fund evaluation, largely focused on developing the evaluation's Terms of Reference (ToR) and recruiting and contracting the evaluator(s).
- **Managing an evaluation** encompasses the activities for the oversight of the evaluation after it is commissioned and enters the implementation phase through to the Evaluation Report. Evaluation management ensures the evaluation is conducted according to the deliverables and requirements established in the ToR and detailed in the evaluation's Inception Report.

A critical aspect of both commissioning and managing and evaluation is ensuring that the evaluation exercise upholds the Fund’s Evaluation Policy and its Evaluation Principles. The [Evaluation Policy](#) introduces seven evaluation principles that encompass the values, norms, and best practices to guide evaluation practice – see **Figure 2**. Collectively, they ensure high quality fit-for-purpose evaluation processes and products, and support processes of effective application of practical lessons and recommendations for achieving the aspirations of the Fund. **The Fund expects all those who commission, manage or conduct an evaluation to uphold the principles throughout the evaluation**, and the Fund’s [Evaluation Principles Guidance Note](#) should be consulted for more information.

Figure 2: The Adaptation Fund’s 7 Evaluation Principles



The commissioning and managing an evaluation should also uphold other relevant Fund policies and guidelines. A list of Fund policies and guidelines can be assessed on its [website](#), but of particular importance it the Fund’s [Environmental and Social Policy](#) and [Gender Policy](#).

3. What are the benefits of commissioning and managing an evaluation?

Evaluation is often depicted as a one-sided process that focuses on *conducting* an evaluation. However, commissioning and managing an evaluation is essential to successfully conduct evaluations and should be carefully undertaken. Commissioning an evaluative activity requires time and attention to detail, but the return on investment includes substantive benefits:

- 1. Ensures the evaluation at all stages upholds **the Fund’s Evaluation Policy** and evaluation principles.

2. Ensures that the evaluation is designed to be **relevant** to address the commissioning organization's specific needs and objectives, providing actionable insights.
3. **Sets expectations** for the timely delivery of evaluative evidence, lessons and knowledge.
4. Ensures the evaluation is conducted by qualified, **impartial**, and experienced evaluators capable of providing objective and unbiased findings selected through a transparent process.
5. Underscores the **importance of an evaluation and learning culture** within the evaluand.
6. Ensures **value for money** by maximizing the efficient use of time and resources.
7. Ensures that the evaluation is conducted in a **transparent** and accountable manner, contributing to the evaluation's legitimacy and credibility.

4. When to commission an evaluation?

An evaluation is typically commissioned at the mid- or end- point of an intervention. However, it can be commissioned at any time if there is a compelling reason to do so (e.g., for learning, adaptive management, long-term impact, RTEs, etc.). Regardless of the evaluation type, the planning for an evaluation begins early at the planning or proposal stage of the intervention (e.g., project), when the estimated timing to commission evaluations is identified.

Box 1: What is an evaluation?

Evaluation is an assessment of intervention(s) to determine what works and what does not, and the extent to which intended and unintended results are accrued, as well as their impact on stakeholders. It provides evidence-based information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of findings, recommendations, and lessons into decision-making processes. The Fund recognizes three categories of evaluation:

1. **Independent evaluations** are conducted by individuals and entities independent from those responsible for the design and implementation of the intervention and with no prior operational involvement or conflict of interest in the evaluated intervention.
2. **Self-conducted evaluations** are conducted by personnel within the management or operational structure of the entity implementing the evaluated intervention and may include other stakeholders.
3. **Semi-independent evaluations** are conducted by an evaluation team comprised of a combination of independent evaluators and personnel within the management or operational structure of the entity being evaluated, as well as other relevant stakeholders. All categories need to follow the policy's evaluation, gender policy, principles, and criteria.

Implementing Entities are required to conduct mandatory project and programme evaluations at the operational level as indicated in the [Evaluation Policy](#). These include:

- **Baseline data report:** Baseline data are used for project design, target setting, monitoring implementation progress, and assessing performance, outcomes and impact. Implementing Entities Es are required to submit a project baseline report based on primary data collection and/or relevant and reliable secondary data, per the Fund's "Results Framework and baseline guidance." The baseline report shall be submitted to the secretariat by no later than the submission of the

first PPR. The baseline report may be conducted independently or semi-independently, or self-conducted.

- **Mid-term Review (MTR):** MTRs are formative evaluations that assess project performance and context to inform project management decision-making and course correction during the remaining implementation period. Implementing Entities are required to conduct MTRs of any project with four or more years of implementation, and to submit the MTR report to the secretariat no later than six months after the project midpoint. Implementing Entities are required to submit a management response to the MTR report to the secretariat within six months of receiving the MTR report, describing what, why, and how MTR learning will be utilized. MTRs may be conducted independently or semi-independently. For projects under four years duration, MTRs are optional. The Fund's [Mid-term Review Guidance Note](#) provides more detailed information on preparing for and conducting MTRs.
- **Final project and program evaluations:** Final evaluations assess Fund project/programme performance and impact to support learning and accountability, and inform future climate change adaptation interventions. Final project evaluations are required from all Fund projects and programmes that complete implementation, with the final Evaluation Report submitted to the secretariat and the Designated Authority (DA) within nine months of project completion. For programme evaluations, IEs will be notified within three months of approval of the Fund's evaluation budget if an evaluation is required. All final evaluations are to be conducted independently, and Implementing Entities are required to submit to the secretariat and the Delegated Authority(s) a management response within six months of receiving the final Evaluation Report.

The Fund's Evaluation Policy also identifies non-mandatory evaluations that Implementing Entities can decide whether to conduct. Specifically, two evaluation types are identified: 1) **real-time evaluations** (RTEs) that occur during project implementation to provide immediate (real time) feedback to those planning or implementing the project; 2) and **ex post evaluations** taking place three to five years after closure of Fund-financed projects to assess longer-term impact, sustainability, and learning.

In addition to these evaluations commissioned and managed by the Implementing Agencies, the Fund's Board and AF-TERG periodically conduct evaluations at the other two levels identified in the Evaluation Policy (see **Figure 1**):

- **Fund-level evaluations** occur when the Board commissions the AF-TERG to assess the long-term outcomes and impacts of the Fund (approximately every five years). As such, the AF-TERG will commission and manage these evaluations, although representatives of Implementing Entities, eligible countries, the donor community, Board members, secretariat, peer organizations, and other stakeholders may provide inputs to such evaluations.
- **Strategic-level evaluations** are conducted by the AF-TERG by request or approval by the Board and include Fund policy, strategy, instrument, and thematic evaluations. These evaluations are also commissioned and managed by the AF-TERG, and may include inputs from Implementing Agencies and other relevant stakeholders according to evaluation purpose and scope.

In summary, at whatever level a Fund evaluation occurs, they will need to be commissioned and managed, and the following section further details the roles and responsibilities for this.

5. Who commissions and manages an evaluation?

The appropriate entity to commission and manage evaluative activities depends on the evaluation level, type, and organizational context. **Table 1** summarizes responsible for commissioning and managing an evaluation, noting that at the operational level, Implementing Entities are often responsible for both, but those within the Implementing Entity who commission versus manage an evaluation may vary (just as the Board may commission an evaluation in the Fund, whilst the AF-TERG may manage it).

It is also important to note that the line between those responsible for managing the commissioning of an evaluation versus those responsible for managing the implementation of an evaluation is often blurred, with the same person(s) often leading both phases. Or a body, like a Board or senior leadership team, may make the official decision to commission an evaluation (and thus be the evaluation commissioner in name), but the same individual(s) who will manage the implementation of the evaluation once commissioned, may also manage the commissioning processes.

Table 1: Who commissions and manages evaluations by evaluation type

Evaluation Level	Evaluation Type	Evaluation Sub-Type	Commissioner	Manager	Category of evaluation		
					Independent	Independent Semi-	Self-Conducted
Fund-level evaluations	Long-Term Outcome and Impact Evaluation		Board	AF-TERG	x		
Strategic-level evaluations	Policy Evaluation		Board	AF-TERG	x	x	
	Fund Strategy Evaluation		Board	AF-TERG	x		
	Fund Instrument Evaluation		Board	AF-TERG	x	x	
	Thematic Evaluation		Board	AF-TERG	x		
Operational-level evaluations	Mandatory Project Evaluation	Baseline Data Report	IE	IE	x	x	x
		Mid-Term Review	IE	IE	x	x	X (<4yr)

		Final Project Evaluation	IE	IE	x		
		Final Programme Evaluation	AF-TERG	AF-TERG	x		
	Non-Mandatory Operational Evaluations	Real-time Evaluations	IE	IE	x	x	x
		Ex-Post Evaluations	Board	AF-TERG	x		

For Fund evaluations, either an individual or team will have oversight of the commissioning and managing responsibilities, which is referred to respectively as the **Evaluation Manager** or **Evaluation Management Team**. This individual or team is assembled depending on the institutional arrangements of the commissioning entity, and the evaluation’s needs and context. For example, a larger multilateral or regional Implementing Entity may have a specific department or unit designated for commissioning and managing their evaluations, just as the Fund has the AF-TERG, whereas smaller national Implementing Entities may appoint an individual or team composed of people with appropriate experience according to the evaluation purpose and needs.

Because the Evaluation Manager or Management Team play a critical role in the evaluative process, they must be formally appointed, and have a clear understanding of their authority and experience to assume oversight of the evaluation’s commissioning and management tasks.

In essence, this guidance note summarizes the roles and responsibilities for the Evaluation Manager/Management Team, but **critical responsibilities of evaluation managers are summarized in Box 3:**

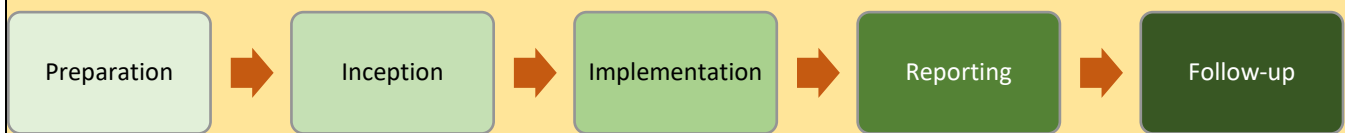
Box 3: Key responsibilities for evaluation managers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide oversight for quality control and assurance throughout the evaluation process, including oversight or the review and approval of deliverables to ensure accuracy, completeness, and robustness. ✓ Uphold the Fund’s Evaluation Policy, Evaluation Principles, and other organizational good evaluation practice, principles, and conduct – see Section 2 above. This includes ensuring that Evaluator(s) understand and uphold these policies, principles, and good practice. ✓ Protect evaluation participants, which includes compliance with data protection laws for privacy and security, and protecting the confidentiality of data in accordance with any consent arrangements agreed with contributors. ✓ Troubleshoot any anticipated and unanticipated problems and limitations, including logistical issues, delays, and potential conflict and complaints. This includes immediately responding to any incident of misconduct and unlawful behavior. ✓ Prepare for the evaluation, including drafting the ToR with meaningful consultation and engagement of relevant stakeholders. ✓ Ensure the evaluation is conducted according the ToR or as revised and approved in the Inception Report. 	

- ✓ **Uphold the independence and impartiality of evaluations** and ensure evaluator(s) have access to all necessary documents and stakeholders.
- ✓ **Ensure evaluation deliverables/output are delivered** in a timely and cost effective manner within the allocated budget.

6. How to commission and manage an evaluation?

The following section provides a summary of key tasks and considerations to guide the commissioning and managing a Fund evaluation. As noted above, these two sets of processes are interrelated. The tasks have been organized by the key phases of evaluation identified by the Fund, (see **Figure 3**), and are summarized in the checklist in **Annex 1**. The tasks reflect good practice, but they should be tailored and adapted according to evaluation context, type, and needs. For example, with a Fund self-conducted evaluation, the recruitment of the evaluator(s) will be different from the tasks outlined for recruiting external evaluators for an independent evaluation.

Figure 3: Illustrative final evaluation timeline



- 1) **Preparation phase:** Scope the evaluation, draft the Evaluation Management Plan, develop and disseminate the evaluations ToR (which provides an overview of what is expected the evaluation), recruit the evaluator(s).
- 2) **Inception phase:** Orient evaluator(s), review background documents, stakeholder/landscape analysis, development inception report (which confirms and details data collection and analysis methodology), and develop data collection tools.
- 3) **Implementation:** Includes data collection, continued review of secondary sources (as required), and data analysis.
- 4) **Reporting phase:** Reporting can occur as relevant findings emerge, but it culminates in the review, approval, and dissemination of the evaluation report.
- 5) **Follow-up phase:** Actions taken, and outlets used to support evaluative learning and use, including the submission of required management response within six months of receiving the final report.

1. EVALUATION PREPARATION PHASE

1) *Identify the Evaluation Manager or Management Team*

It is important to identify upfront who lead and manage the evaluation, ensuring accountability to commission and implement the evaluation in a timely manner. As noted above in Section 5, the individual(s) responsible for commissioning an evaluation are often the same as those responsible for

managing the evaluation once it begins. For relatively small evaluative activities (e.g., optional evaluations at the operational level), decision-making may follow an existing chain of command in which a senior manager acts as the Evaluation Manager with oversight of both commissioning and managing the evaluation. For larger evaluative activities, an Evaluation Management Team is more common. But regardless of whether they are the same or separate individuals, it is best to identify and secure their them upfront.

The decision makers who identify and then approach or appoint the Evaluation Manager or Evaluation Management Team – will vary according to the organizational context of the commissioning entity. And as summarised in Table 1 above, the evaluation commissioners will in turn vary according to the evaluation level and type. However, generic competencies and qualifications for the individuals selected to be the Evaluation Manager or on the Evaluation Management Team can be identified, which are summarized in **Box 4**.

Box 4: Competencies for evaluation managers

- ✓ **Evaluation commissioning and management experience**, preferably with working knowledge of the Fund's Evaluation Policy, Evaluation Principles, and Evaluation Criteria.
- ✓ **Technical evaluation skills**, including knowledge of relevant evaluation approaches, methods and data analysis for the given evaluation type and purpose, and the related evaluation quality assessment skills to provide oversight.
- ✓ **Management skills**, with experience and demonstrated success in coordination, problem-solving, and the supervision of evaluations or projects similar in focus, duration, scope, and complexity.
- ✓ **Interpersonal skills**, including practical experience establishing and maintaining relationships, and in communication, facilitation, building consensus, and knowledge sharing.
- ✓ **Promoting an evaluation culture** for shared understanding, ownership, and support for evaluations, and to deliver evaluations support organizational learning and are useful and used.

2) Review relevant policy, principles, and guidance to competently and successfully commission and manage an evaluation

Even with people experienced in commissioning and managing an evaluation, each organizational and evaluation context (evaluand) is unique, and it is the responsibility of Fund evaluation managers, and all individuals with decision-making authority in an evaluation to understand and uphold the Fund's Evaluation Policy, Evaluation Principles, and related policies, protocol, and guidance for good practice (see **Box 1**). Effectively, this guidance note was specifically developed to support evaluation commissioners and managers, and it lists recommended resources in **Annex 6** to support evaluation commissioning and management at the Fund.

3) Scope the evaluation

Before an evaluation is commissioned, it is critical to scope and understand how the evaluation will be used and by whom. Securing consensus on the evaluation's purpose and scope before it even begins will help align expectations among stakeholders and ensure ownership and support for the exercise. Typically, this early step will entail an iterative process of consultation and reflection, and to a certain extent it will entail a stakeholder analysis that can later serve as background data for the ToR and the

inception phase of the evaluation. Although it is not required, an [evaluability assessment](#) can help support this process.

4) Crosscheck the evaluation budget

It is best to plan the evaluation budget early to ensure that adequate funds are allocated for evaluation needs. For Fund projects, evaluation budgeting occurs at the design stage, first as an estimate in the project concept note and then as an itemized budget during the proposal stage in the project template. However, it may be difficult to detail an evaluation budget upfront; therefore, it is important at the start of commissioning an evaluation to revisit and crosscheck the planned evaluation budget to ensure that it is realistic for the evaluation needs, scope and proposed design to be developed in a ToR (see below) is realistic to the allocated budget. See the Fund's [Evaluation Budget Guidance Note](#) for more detailed information.

5) Draft an Evaluation Management Plan

At the Fund, an **Evaluation Management Plan is used to refer to an internal document developed and used by the Evaluation Manager or Evaluation Management Team to guide the management of an evaluation.**¹ It includes management related details, such as roles and responsibilities, and the evaluation's intended timeline and key evaluation outputs and milestones – e.g., ToR development and dissemination, evaluator recruitment and contracting, inception phase and report, significant data collection and analysis activities (e.g., field visits, surveys, validation workshops, etc.), the review and approval of the final report, the dissemination of evaluation findings and learning, and any management response.

The development of the Evaluation Management Plan is an iterative process and should be regularly reviewed and revised according to the stage of the evaluation, and emergent needs and learning. Developing it early, after scoping the evaluation and its budget, allows it to be used to manage subsequent evaluation commissioning activities, such as the ToR development and recruitment of the evaluators. In practice, content from the Evaluation Management Plan can inform the content in the ToR, such as the illustrative evaluation timeline. However, after the evaluation's inception phase, the Evaluation Management Plan's timeline as well as other content will likely need to be revised to align with that agreed upon in the Inception Report.

An important part of the Evaluation Management Plan is **establishing the governance structure to guide the decision making for the evaluation exercise.** The governance structure provides the oversight for quality assurance and the approval of deliverables and upholds key evaluation principles and practices to ensure that evaluations are credible, inclusive, and transparent. Foremost, the governance structure includes the Evaluation Manager or Evaluation Management Team, discussed above.

An **Advisory Group**² may also be utilized, helping to steer the evaluation as needed and to review and approve draft deliverables. As the first deliverable is typically the evaluation ToR, if an Advisory Group is to be used, it will be important to form it early during the commissioning phase. The composition of an

¹ The **Evaluation Management Plan** prepared by the evaluation manager(s) is not to be confused with the **evaluation workplan** prepared by the evaluator(s). Whereas the Evaluation Management Plan serves the evaluation managers to supervise the overall evaluation exercise, (from commissioning the evaluation to its conclusion and follow-up), an evaluation workplan focuses specifically on the activities the evaluators are responsible for to conduct the evaluation. The evaluation plans is typically included as part of the Evaluation Inception Report.

² Sometimes referred to as a Reference Group in other organizational contexts.

Advisory Group varies depending on context; however, an Advisory Group typically includes key stakeholders, such as project or programme managers, technical experts, representatives from partner and peer organizations, funding partners, and beneficiary groups. When comprised of members representative of different stakeholder groups, Advisory Groups can support transparent decision-making and reinforce the evaluations credibility and legitimacy.

6) *Develop and disseminate an evaluation terms of reference (ToR)*

Evaluation commissioners are responsible for developing a ToR in which the governance structure is made explicit. The commissioners are responsible for ensuring that the ToR encapsulates the purpose and scope so as to meet stakeholders intended needs, and that sufficient time and resources so that a quality evaluation can realistically be pursued. The Fund's [Terms of Reference Guidance Note](#) provides detailed information on how to prepared a ToR, including an example TOR outline for a Fund evaluation that is included in an abbreviated format below in **Annex 2**.

A critical aspect of the ToR development is the identification of evaluation criteria and related evaluation questions. The Fund's [Evaluation Criteria Guidance Note](#) provides more information on working with the Fund's nine evaluation criteria, which collectively refer to results and lessons most valued at the Fund.

Another critical aspect of the ToR development is its strategic review to ensure it meets stakeholders' needs, while also socializing ToR to build understanding and support for the evaluation. Relevant stakeholders should be informed beforehand as to when they are expected to review the draft ToR. The aforementioned Advisory Group can be involved in the review process, providing quality assurance while reinforcing legitimacy and ownership for the evaluation.

Once the ToR is finalized and approved, the ToR can be strategically disseminated.³ Note that this can also serve not only to recruit competent evaluators, (see below), but also to socialize the evaluation, building understanding, ownership, and support. Also, the ToR can later be useful to inform stakeholders of the evaluation before, during and even after it takes place – for example, the ToR can be attached to an email introduction of the evaluators sent out to stakeholders to prepare them to be involved in the data collection.

7) *Recruit the evaluator(s)*

One should not underestimate the amount of required to recruit evaluators. Even when an recruiting evaluators for a self-conducted evaluation, drawing upon personnel within the management or operational structure of the entity implementing the evaluated intervention, it takes time to identify who will conduct the evaluation.

The recruitment process actually begins with drafting the ToR, which typically includes a section outlining the **evaluator(s) competencies** relevant for the specific evaluation needs. The ToR also has a section summarizing the **application and selection process** for the evaluation assignment, clarifying the specific procedures, materials, and deadlines for potential applicants to submit their application. (Again, the Fund's ToR Guidance Note describes this in more detail).

Once the ToR is disseminated, it is good practice for the stated application deadline to **allow for at least two weeks for applicants to respond to the ToR**. If it is a self-conducted evaluation recruiting internal

³ See the Fund's [Evaluation Terms of Reference Guidance Note](#) for common outlets for disseminating evaluation ToRs.

evaluator(s) from the commissioning entity, it may not be a matter of them applying, but securing the approval for their participation from their management.

After evaluator(s) applications are received, **applicants need to be reviewed, shortlisted, and candidates typically interviewed** (and sometimes more than one round of interviews). Depending on the number of evaluators to be interviewed, and the availability of both the applicants and those reviewing them, this phase of the recruitment process can take as long as a month. Again, do not underestimate how much time this process can take, such as trying to find times to schedule interviews, and then the possibility that one or more needs to be rescheduled due to unforeseen circumstances.

It is recommended to use a **Selection Committee** for these processes with representation from relevant stakeholder groups, often drawing from any Advisory Group (discussed above) able for the evaluation. While stakeholder representation in any Selection Committee helps ensure legitimacy and credibility of the selection process, it is also important to ensure that the committee has members knowledgeable and experienced in evaluation practices, the object or subject matter of the evaluation, and the local, cultural, and institutional contexts relevant for the evaluation. This will provide the Selection Committee with the expertise to competently assess and select the best applicants for the evaluation.

The use of a **matrix, table, or checklist to rate and score evaluation applicants** is a useful way to prepare and guide a consistent and fair recruitment process. Typically, the contents of a rating matrix will draw upon those qualifications and competencies identified in the ToR, as well as other considerations in the application process, such as interview performance, daily rate, quality and relevance of any writing samples, and responses from provided references. **Box 6** provides an example of an illustrative Evaluator Recruitment Rating Matrix that can be tailored accordingly to evaluation context and need.

Box 6: Evaluator Recruitment Rating Matrix																
Example Consultant Recruitment Checklist																
Consultant Name	Fee: Daily Rate or Total Amount	Dates Available	Application fully completed according to instructions: 1, 2, 3, 4	Education: 1, 3	Evaluation Experience: 1, 4	Consultancy Experience: 1, 4	Subject matter or sector experience: 1, 4	Fund - Implementing Entity Experience: 1, 4	Writing Samples: 1, 4	Work Independently & Team: 1, 4	Languages (quality and quantity): 1, 4	Cultural competence: 1, 4	Interview performance: 1, 4	References: 1, 10	Comments from the screening	Total Score
3																
4																
5																
6																
7																
8																
Etc.																

Throughout the recruitment and selection process, it is imperative to uphold the Fund's **evaluation principles for transparency, credibility, and impartiality** – see **Box 7**. A fair and open recruitment process that selects evaluators based on merit, competencies, and experience establishes legitimacy of the evaluation to support it during and after its implementation.

Box 7: Evaluation Principle 4, Impartiality and Objectivity

“(T)he selection and behaviour of evaluators, and transparency of decisions, should minimize bias in data collection and analysis. Any pre-existing interests of evaluation personnel to the Fund, the evaluated intervention, or entity should be avoided for independent evaluations and declared in planning and reporting for semi-independent and self-conducted evaluations”.

8) Contract the evaluator(s)

As appropriate, and typically when using external consultants for independent evaluations, a contract will need to be drawn up to legally formalize the agreement between the evaluation commissioners and the evaluator(s). This is usually based on standard legal document format used by the commissioning entity, and includes the evaluation’s purpose, scope, criteria, questions, agree deliverables, and timeframe - often the ToR is annexed and referenced in the agreement to cover this information. Contracts also stipulate other obligations of each party, such as ethical behaviour and confidentiality requirements, intellectual property rights, term and termination, indemnification, project management, dispute resolution, and more.

Although evaluation commissioners may be able to adopt an organization’s contract template, **one should not underestimate how long the contract sign-off and approval process can take**. It is recommended to **ascertain beforehand how long this can take** so as to provide sufficient time before the intended start date for the evaluators to begin the evaluation assignment.

2. EVALUATION INCEPTION PHASE

9) Orient the evaluator(s)

A first step during the inception phase is to orient the evaluator(s), typically done through one or more **orientation meetings** between the evaluator(s), the Evaluation Manager or Evaluation Management Team, and any other relevant stakeholder, such as the manager of the project being evaluated. The purpose of the orientation meeting(s) is to have a deeper discussion about the evaluation’s ToR, background, objectives, stakeholders, timeframe, and other factors to prepare the evaluator(s). It is also important to ensure there is a clear understanding of the evaluation’s roles and responsibilities, any communication protocol, and other logistical and administrative practicalities for the evaluation.

10) Provide relevant background documents/literature, including the Fund’s evaluation principles and evaluation criteria

Concurrent with the onboarding of the evaluator(s) is assembling and providing them with relevant background documentation for the evaluation::

- ✓ **The Fund’s [Evaluation Policy](#), [Environmental and Social Policy](#), and [Gender Policy](#).**
- ✓ **Relevant Fund [evaluation guidance notes](#)** – e.g., the Evaluation Principles Guidance Note, Evaluation Criteria Guidance Note, Evaluation Inception Report Guidance Note, and Evaluation Reporting Guidance Note, and the guidance note for the appropriate evaluation type if available (e.g., final evaluation, MTR, RTE, ex post evaluation).
- ✓ **Background on evaluated intervention** (e.g., project, programme, strategy, policy, etc.) – this can include project proposal, design frameworks, reports, and any stakeholder or landscape analysis, survey reports, and previous evaluation or monitoring reports or updates, etc.

- ✓ **Background documents on the organization/s** implementing the evaluated intervention.
- ✓ **Any relevant external literature on the sector/program area** for the evaluated intervention.

11) Agree on methodological approach, roles, responsibilities, and timeline

During the inception phase, once the evaluator(s) have become more directly familiar with the evaluation context, and before they draft the evaluation inception report, it is important to ensure that both commissioners and the evaluator(s) share a common understanding and agreement on the overall evaluation approach, timeframe, roles and responsibilities. This is typically achieved through a joint meeting.

12) Review and approve the Inception Report

The Inception Report is typically the first major deliverable for the evaluation. It should demonstrate a clear understanding and realistic plan of work for the evaluation, checking that the evaluation plan is in agreement with the TOR, or if changes are proposed, that they are in agreement with the evaluation commissioners and other stakeholders.

Annex 3 provides an abbreviated outline recommended for Fund inception reports, and the Fund’s [Inception Report Guidance Note](#) provides further detail to support the preparation of inception reports, (such as the inclusion of an **evaluation matrix** to align evaluation criteria, questions, indicators, sources, and methods), Once the Inception Report is finalized and approved, it should be strategically shared with relevant evaluation stakeholders, i.e., the Fund posts its evaluation Inception Reports on its website.

As with the ToR, the review of the draft Inception Report should be carefully planned, and one should not underestimate the time involved. In addition to the evaluation’s methodology and design, the Inception Report typically includes draft versions of data collection tools that need to be reviewed for quality assurance. Relevant stakeholders, (e.g., and Advisory Group members), should be informed beforehand as to when they are expected to review the draft ToR. The reviews process typically takes two rounds of review and revision, and is useful to use a feedback comments matrix to compile written comments and responses on the draft report to consolidate, share, and compare reviewer input in an open and transparent manner – see **Table 2**.

Table 2: Example of a Feedback Matrix

Selected Draft Text	Reviewer Comment / Feedback	Evaluator Response
<i><insert text></i>		
<i>Add rows as required</i>		

3. EVALUATION IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

13) Revisit/revise the Evaluation Management Plan (based on the Inception Report)

At this stage it is important to review the Evaluation Management Plan to ensure it is fit for purpose and aligned with what is framed in the approved Inception Report. As the Inception Report specifies in more

detail the evaluation design, often the timeline for the exercise will need to be adjusted according to the specific data collection analysis methods and events. The Evaluation Management Plan should be revised accordingly to reflect these changes.

14) Socialize the evaluation

With the approval of the Inception Report, data collection and analysis is ready to begin. As such, it is important to inform stakeholders who will participate in this process about the evaluation. Some may already be aware of the ToR, but an update is recommended to specifically introduce the evaluator(s), remind people of the purpose and importance of the exercise, prepare them to participate, and thank them for their support. Often this involves an email with either a hyperlink to or attached ToR or Inception Report. Taking the time for such communication can help set up the

15) Provide support, oversight, and quality assurance

A key responsibility of the evaluation manager/s is to ensure compliance with the Fund's Evaluation Policy, Evaluation Principles, and other relevant policy and good practice, (see boxes 1 and 3), and to provide overall support and enhancement during the evaluation. It is particularly critical to monitor these priorities as the evaluator(s) start to interface with stakeholders to collect and analyze data.

Evaluation management needs to be proactive in planning and communication to ensure a smooth process. For instance, stakeholder availability and schedules can also shift during data collection, pushing back interviews and delaying the planned evaluation timeline. As a result, (and underscored above), the evaluation management and work plans should be iterative, and may entail a degree of contingency planning to ensure overall deadlines and deliverables are met.

It is helpful to anticipate potential roadblocks or challenges to troubleshoot as an evaluation manager, and **Table 3** below summarizes some common risk and potential responses encountered when managing evaluation data collection and analysis.

Table 2: Common risks and remedies for evaluation management

Risk	Mitigation Measure
Conflicts or differences of opinion	Conflicts of interest and differences of opinion or interpretation should be dealt with in a transparent manner so as not to compromise the evaluation process or results. Differences of opinion should be noted in written feedback to the evaluator(s), but the evidence-based opinion of the evaluator(s) should ultimately inform evaluative judgements.
Missing or incomplete data	If it becomes apparent that required data for the evaluation is missing or incomplete, this should be noted in the methodological limitations section of the eventual Evaluation Report, and if necessary, the evaluation scope and methods can be reconsidered in consultation with the evaluation manager(s) and commissioning entity.
Stakeholder resistance	Stakeholders may be hostile to the idea of 'being judged' and consequently regard the evaluation as a policing or bureaucratic burden. Effective communication is essential to help stakeholders understand its value, how it will be used, and the importance of and their input. Socializing the evaluation prior to data collection helps defuse potentially uncooperative stakeholders. But if they remain unsupportive and limit access to data or obstruct the evaluation in another form, evaluators should be briefed to report such restrictions immediately to the evaluation manager(s), who then can approach senior leadership to troubleshoot.
Evaluator confusion	Evaluation of large projects or programmes can be extremely challenging, particularly in complex evaluation contexts with multiple factors and actors at different levels. It is helpful to anticipate and mitigate this by ensuring the evaluator selection criteria are appropriate, so evaluators have the required competencies to complete the evaluation. Also, regular communication and check-ins through planned and informal meetings (e.g., weekly progress updates) can also help clarify issues and defuse misunderstandings.
Narrowly focussed evaluation findings	Climate change adaptation work occurs in complex contexts. This needs to be acknowledged in the evaluation ToR and integrated into all aspects of the evaluation process. It is embodied in the Fund's evaluation principle for Complexity, as well as its evaluation criteria Human and Ecological Sustainability and Security. Throughout the evaluation process, evaluators should be supported to consider how unintended consequences may influence attaining desired positive results. Evaluations that fixate on intended results and overlook unintended consequences can lead to misguided evaluation recommendations.
Bias data collection	Bias in an evaluation occurs when the accuracy and precision of data is threatened by the experience, perceptions, and assumptions of the evaluator(s), or by the tools and approaches used in data collection and analysis. Bias is best addressed by recruiting competent evaluators, and ensuring the proposed methods in the Evaluation Report are robust and fit-for-purpose, with particular attention on: Selection bias that results from the a sample population or time period that is not representative of the larger population or condition being evaluated; Measurement bias that results from poor data measurement either due to a fault in the data collection tool (e.g., incorrectly translated/back-translated interviews and surveys) or the way in which the evaluator(s) collected the data (i.e., at the wrong time of the day or insensitive to cultural norms); and Analytical bias resulting from the poor analysis of collected data.

4. EVALUATION REPORTING

16) Validate initial findings

Prior to the evaluator(s) drafting the evaluation report, it is recommended that **validation meetings or workshops** are conducted to collectively check the accuracy of evaluation findings and share different opinions on evaluation conclusions and recommendations. These can be facilitated by the manager(s) with the evaluator(s) presenting findings, and are also useful to identify further lessons and co-create recommendations for the Evaluation Report. They can also help sensitise stakeholders to preliminary evaluation findings prior to the report's formal approval and dissemination, supporting timely evaluative learning that can inform more immediate decision making.

17) Review and approve the Evaluation Report

The Evaluation Report is typically the primary output of the evaluation, conveying key findings, conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations. Evaluation reports differ based on the type of evaluation being conducted, (see Section 4 above). **Annex 4** provides an abbreviated outline recommended for Fund evaluation reports, and the Fund's [Evaluation Reporting Guidance Note](#) provides further detail to support the preparation of evaluation reports.

Ample time for feedback on the draft Evaluation Report is critical for accuracy, credibility, ownership, and ultimately its utility. Feedback rounds are often where most bottlenecks exist. Plan for at least two review and revision rounds. The first round should be substantive, and reviewers should be expected to provide detailed feedback. The second round of feedback is to conduct a final revision review and inputs before submission. It will be important to work within the availability of reviewers, and to provide adequate forewarning prior to the review so that they can schedule time accordingly.

As with the review of the inception report, utilizing an **online shared version of both the evaluation report and a feedback matrix** (see Table 2) can help consolidate and streamline reviewer feedback in an open and transparent manner. . If an Advisory Group has been formed, its members (or a sub-group of them) can be tasked to provide written and verbal feedback to the evaluator(s).

18) Strategically disseminate and share the evaluation report and its findings

The evaluation report should be shared with key stakeholders, including any intended beneficiaries. This is a critical part of evaluation reporting that helps to set-up the evaluation use and follow-up. Whether it is iterative reporting during the evaluation or a formal written evaluation report at the completion of the evaluation, identify appropriate platforms to disseminate evaluation reporting, contributing to evaluation use and follow-up. Related, tailor evaluation reporting formats and outlets to different stakeholder audiences, and remember that evaluation need not be restricted to the formal written evaluation report – see **Box 8**.

BOX 8: Evaluation reporting can take multiple forms

Evaluation reporting typically takes the form of a **written report** at the end of the evaluation. However, evaluation learning can also be presented in other formats and mediums that can occur prior to the end of the evaluation to provide immediate (real time) feedback to inform timely decision making. Related, evaluation reporting can occur after the evaluation and its formal evaluation report. These additional forms of evaluation reporting can occur through workshops and meetings, short synthesis briefs, webinars/videos, conference presentations, and articles in climate change adaptation publications.

5. EVALUATION FOLLOW-UP

While the evaluation manager(s) may not be responsible for, or even involved in, the evaluation follow-up, they can nevertheless have considerable bearing on setting it up for success. Ultimately, **evaluation follow-up will vary according to evaluation type and purpose**. For instance, an MTR or RTE will largely be used to inform ongoing implementation of the project they are assessing, whereas a final evaluation will largely be used to inform future projects and related strategic planning.⁴

In practice, **the support for evaluation follow-up starts early in the evaluation management** by properly socializing the evaluation's purpose when it commences and findings when it concludes. This can reinforce stakeholder understanding, ownership, and support for the evaluation, reinforcing its legitimacy and thus the prospect that evaluation learning and recommendations will be used. Although not exhaustive, below are two additional steps that can be taken to support evaluation follow-up and use.

19) Utilize a recommendations matrix

One critical point where evaluation managers can support evaluation follow-up is during the review and quality assurance of the evaluation report. **Recommendations should respond to the evaluation's intended purpose and use**, written to support management response (see below) and other evaluation follow-up and learning. Recommendations should be specific, practical, and feasible for implementation, presented in a logical, coherent manner, individually numbered for cross-referencing with substantiating findings and conclusions. One way to support this is to have evaluator(s) present recommendations using a table formatted with columns to specify the recommendation, as illustrated in **Table 4** below:

Table 4. Example recommendation matrix

Recommendation	Justification	Responsibilities	Priority	Timeframe	Budget Implications

20) Support a management response

For Fund final evaluations and MTRs, implementing entities are required to submit a **management response** to the Fund secretariat and the delegated authority(s) within six months of receiving the evaluation report. The management response should describe what, why, and how evaluation learning

⁴ Each of these evaluations also serves accountability.

and recommendations will be incorporated into the remaining project implementation period. **Annex 5** provides an example template for an evaluation management response.

Annex 1: Evaluation Management Checklist

This checklist provides a quick reference of key tasks and responsibilities typically assumed by the Evaluation Manager or management team, including those associated with commissioning the evaluation. Each task in the checklist is explained in further detail in **Section 6** above. When using the checklist, it is important to remember that it is not exhaustive, and it should be tailored according to the final evaluation context and needs.

CHECKLIST FOR MANAGING A FINAL EVALUATION CHECKLIST	
1. PREPARATION	
1)	Identify the Evaluation Manager or Management Team
2)	Review relevant policy, principles, and guidance to competently and successfully commission and manage an evaluation
3)	Scope the evaluation
4)	Crosscheck the evaluation budget
5)	Draft an Evaluation Management Plan
6)	Develop and disseminate an evaluation ToR
7)	Recruit the evaluator(s)
8)	Contract the evaluator(s)
2. INCEPTION – see the Fund’s Evaluation Inception Report Guidance Note for more detail	
9)	Orient the evaluators
10)	Provide relevant background documents/literature, including the Fund’s evaluation principles and evaluation criteria
11)	Agree on methodological approach, roles, responsibilities, and timeline
12)	Review and approve the inception report
3. IMPLEMENTATION	
13)	Revisit and revise the Evaluation Management Plan (based on the Inception Report)
14)	Socialize the evaluation
15)	Provide support, oversight, and quality assurance
4. REPORTING – see the Fund’s Evaluation Reporting Guidance Note for more detail	

16) Validate initial findings
17) Review and approve the evaluation report
18) Strategically disseminate and share the evaluation report and its findings
5. EVALUATION FOLLOW-UP
Evaluation follow-up will vary according to evaluation type and purpose, and may not be the responsibility of the evaluation manager, but
19) Utilize a recommendations matrix
20) Support an evaluation management response (see template Annex 5)

Annex 2: Evaluation ToR Checklist

This checklist provides a quick reference of the primary sections typically in a Fund evaluation term of reference (ToR), which are discussed in more detail in the Fund's [Evaluation Terms of Reference Guidance Note](#). When using the outline, it is important to remember that it should be tailored according to the final evaluation context and needs.

Illustrative ToR Outline for Adaptation Fund Evaluations	
1. <u>SUMMARY</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Title<input type="checkbox"/> Summary of the evaluation's purpose, scope, audience, timeframe, location/s, who is commissioning it, the activity/purchase order number,⁵ and any other essential information
2. <u>BACKGROUND / CONTEXT</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Institutional setting about the Fund and any implementing entity for the evaluation<input type="checkbox"/> Funding budget and source<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention design and current status<input type="checkbox"/> Key stakeholders, including the target population, implementing partners, etc.<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention's temporal and geographic scope<input type="checkbox"/> Additional contextual information, such as relevant cultural, political, legal, economic, and environmental factors<input type="checkbox"/> Relevant background documents, such as any prior baseline or midterm review reports
3. <u>EVALUATION PURPOSE, SCOPE, & AUDEINCE</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Purpose providing a clear and concise statement of why the evaluation is to be conducted, why it is important, and how it will be used<input type="checkbox"/> Audience(s) who will use the evaluation<input type="checkbox"/> Scope, including the timeframe to be evaluated, location(s), population groups, thematic focus
4. <u>EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation criteria – see the Evaluation Criteria Guidance Note for more detail<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation questions that specify what is to be assessed
5. <u>EVALUATION OUTPUTS</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation deliverables, such as a draft and final inception report, final evaluation report, any debrief, validation, or lessons learned workshops, etc.<input type="checkbox"/> Timing and responsibility for deliverables, with deadlines and responsibilities identified
6. <u>EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODS</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation principles – see the Evaluation Principles Guidance Note for more detail

⁵ The activity/purchase order (PO) number is a unique number at the Fund used to identify the activity, although some IE's may also use another nomenclature.

Illustrative ToR Outline for Adaptation Fund Evaluations

- Methodological approach** for both data collection and analysis or the role the evaluator(s) will play in selecting the methodology
- Mixed methods** using qualitative and quantitative methods (when feasible)
- Data sources**, including secondary and primary data sources with attention to *triangulation*

7. (ILLUSTRATIVE) EVALUATION TIMELINE

- Milestones and deadlines presented in a table or diagram**
- Adaptability and manageability** acknowledging the possibility to revise the evaluation plan

8. EVALUATION MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

- Roles and responsibilities**
- Additional resources** and support that will be provided for the activity
- Review and approval of deliverables**

9. EVALUATOR(S) COMPETENCIES

- Evaluation team composition** if there is a [reference for an evaluation team versus an individual evaluator
- Evaluator(s) qualifications and experience**

10. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- Application instructions**, i.e., Curricula Vitae (CV) for all applying evaluators, cover letter or proposal for the evaluation, any relevant writing sample(s), professional references
- Impartiality** – Per the Fund’s Evaluation Policy, clarify that applicants for independent evaluations should not have any pre-existing interests to the Fund, the evaluated intervention, or entity

11. ANNEXES

- Bibliography of background documents (preferably hyperlinked) including the Fund’s [Evaluation Policy](#), [Evaluation Principles Guidance Note](#), [Evaluation Criteria Guidance Note](#), and [Evaluation Reporting Guidance Note](#)
- A theory of change, logic model, or other existing framework summarizing the intervention’s design
- A geographic or stakeholder map for the project to be evaluated
- A list of persons/organizations to be interviewed (as applicable)
- An evaluation schedule (if felt more appropriate to presented here rather than above)
- A suggested report outline (see [Evaluation Reporting Guidance Note](#)).
- Etc.

Annex 3: Illustrative Evaluation Inception Report Template

This template provides an illustrative structure for an evaluation inception report for the Fund. The template can be tailored according to the evaluation needs and structure. Please refer to the Fund's [Inception Report Guidance Note](#) for more detailed on each item in the outline.

Adaptation Fund Illustrative Evaluation Inception Template and Checklist	
1. Title page	
2. Optional front material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Preface <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgements
3. Table of contents	
4. Acronyms	
5. Executive summary – standalone, concise overview of the essential parts of the report in two to five pages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Introductory overview of the evaluation's purpose, scope, audience, intended use, time period, geographic coverage, and target population groups. <input type="checkbox"/> Summary of the report and contents (to assist readers to navigate the document)
6. Evaluation background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Object of evaluation – describes the intervention being evaluated (e.g., project or strategy), and why <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation context – describe the larger context in which the intervention is being implemented <input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder analysis – describes the needs, expectations, and potential risks associated with relevant stakeholder groups for the evaluation
7. Evaluation criteria and questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation purpose and scope <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation criteria that specify the standards that provide the basis for evaluative judgment <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation questions that elaborate the evaluation criteria, specifying what is to be assessed <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation Matrix that details how each evaluation is answered, what indicators to measure and which data collection tool will be applied.
8. Evaluation approach and methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation principles – the Fund's seven evaluation principles are identified in its Evaluation Policy and elaborated in its Evaluation Principles Guidance Note <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation data sources – primary and secondary information sources for the evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation data collection methods – quantitative and qualitative collection methods and their procedures, including a discussion of the rationale for their selection

- Evaluation data analysis** – the analytical framework or approach that will be used to synthesize and interpret evaluation findings
- Evaluation stakeholder engagement**, including the level and type of engagement
- Ethical considerations** related to data collection and use
- Methodological limitations** –, their implications for the evaluation, and any mitigation measures taken in response.

9. Evaluation work plan and management

- Evaluation work plan**
- Evaluation timeline, milestones, and deliverables**
- Roles and responsibilities**
- Quality assurance**
- Risk management and mitigation measures**
- Outreach and dissemination plan**

10. Annexes

- Evaluation's ToR**
- Detailed timeline** (if applicable)
- Detailed methodology** (if applicable)
- Evaluation matrix**
- Data collection tools**
- Evaluation timeline**
- Evaluability assessment** (if applicable)
- Detailed ToC/Results Framework**
- Detailed stakeholder analysis** (if applicable)
- Bibliography / reference list**
- Any other information relevant to the final evaluation report**

Annex 4: Illustrative Final Evaluation Report Template

This template provides an illustrative structure for an evaluation inception report for the Fund. The template can be tailored according to the evaluation needs and structure. Please refer to the Fund's [Evaluation Reporting Guidance Note](#) for more detailed on each item in the outline.

Adaptation Fund Illustrative Evaluation Report Template and Checklist	
1. Title page	
2. Optional front material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Preface <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgements
3. Table of contents	
4. Acronyms	
5. Executive summary	– standalone, concise overview of the essential parts of the report in two to five pages.
6. Introduction and background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation features – provides an introductory overview of the evaluation's purpose, scope, audience, intended use, time period, geographic coverage, and target population groups. <input type="checkbox"/> Report introduction – introduces the report structure and contents <input type="checkbox"/> Object of evaluation – describes the intervention being evaluated (e.g., project, programme, or strategy) <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation context – describe the larger context in which the intervention is being implemented
7. Evaluation scope and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation scope clearly delineating what is and is not to be included in the evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation criteria that specify the standards that provide the basis for evaluative judgment. <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation questions that elaborate the evaluation criteria, specifying what is to be assessed <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation Matrix that details how each evaluation is answered, what indicators to measure and which data collection tool will be applied.
8. Evaluation approach and methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation principles – the Fund's seven evaluation principles are identified in its Evaluation Policy and elaborated in its Evaluation Principles Guidance Note <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation data sources – primary and secondary information sources for the evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation data collection methods – quantitative and qualitative collection methods and their procedures, including a discussion of the rationale for their selection

- Evaluation data analysis** – the analytical framework or approach that will be used to synthesize and interpret evaluation findings
- Evaluation stakeholder engagement**, including the level and type of engagement
- Ethical considerations** related to data collection and use
- Methodological limitations** –, their implications for the evaluation, and any mitigation measures taken in response.

9. Evaluation findings and conclusions

- Findings and conclusions should respond to the evaluation criteria and questions.**
- Findings and conclusions should provide insights to inform solution analysis and recommendations**
- Findings should include unanticipated outcomes and impacts.**
- Findings and conclusions should be presented in a logical, coherent format**
- The logical relationship between findings and conclusions should be reinforced**
- Findings and conclusions should be individually numbered**, so they can be readily cross-referenced elsewhere

10. Optional lessons learned – a section devoted to lessons learned can be a useful way to highlight learning that is not specific to the evaluated intervention and context (evaluand), but applicable to the wider Fund and climate change adaptation community.

- Lessons should be concise and presented in a logical, coherent manner**, individually numbered for cross-referencing
- Clearly identify the relevance of the lesson and intended audience/use.**
- If appropriate, explain **how and why the lesson was learned.**

11. Evaluation recommendations

- Recommendations should respond to the evaluations intended purpose and use**, written to support management response and other evaluation follow-up and learning
- Recommendations should be supported by evidence** linked to the evaluation’s findings and conclusions that substantiates the proposed actions
- Recommendations should be specific, practical, and feasible for implementation**
- Recommendations should identify who is responsible for follow-up and by when.**
- Additional information can be used to elaborate recommendations**, such as prioritizing recommendations or the resources and budget required to achieve a recommendation.
- Recommendations should be presented in a logical, coherent manner**, individually numbered for cross-referencing. Consider using a table to format and present recommendations, as illustrated below

Example recommendation matrix

Recommendation	Justification	Responsibilities	Priority	Timeframe

12. Report Annexes

Examples of annexes include:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Evaluation Terms of Reference (or Evaluation Inception Report)✓ Additional methodological information✓ Theory of change, logframe, or results framework✓ Stakeholder or landscape analysis / mapping✓ Summary of performance data to date✓ Summary of budget data to date | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ List of secondary data sources consulted (e.g., background documents)✓ List of primary data sources, (e.g., participant/stakeholder list or interview schedules)✓ Data collection tools✓ Evaluation timeline✓ Bibliography / reference list (consistently use a suitable style or format, e.g., APA) |
|--|--|

Annex 5: Illustrative Management Response Template

Implementing Entities are required to submit a Management Response to the secretariat and the DA or DAs within six months of receiving the final report, describing what, why, and how evaluation learning will be utilized. An example template is presented below:

Evaluation title:			
Commissioning entity:			
Evaluation report submission date:			
Recommendation #: < insert recommendation >			
Management Response	Actions Planned	Responsibility	Timeframe
<p><i>Indicate if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Accepted</i> • <i>Partially accepted</i> • <i>Rejected</i> <p>(If recommendation is partially accepted or rejected, an explanation must be provided in the ‘Comments’ section below).</p>	<p><i>Indicate the concrete actions/deliverables planned to implement the recommendation</i></p>	<p><i>Specify the entity responsible for implementing the planned actions</i></p>	<p><i>Specify the completion date for the planned actions.</i></p>
<p>Comments: <i>provide any additional information or clarification regarding the recommendation and how it has been interpreted, any progress already made, or actions taken to address the recommendation, or the reasons for not accepting or partially accepting the recommendation.</i></p>			

Annex 6: Recommended Resources

While not exhaustive, the additional resources below provide further guidance and insights to support commissioning and managing an evaluation:

- Adaptation Fund. 2021. [Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund..](#)
- Adaptation Fund. 2021. [Guidance Document for Implementing Entities on Compliance with the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy](#)
- Better Evaluation. 2016. [Manager's Guide to Evaluation.](#)
- European Commission. 2021. [Better Regulation Toolbox.](#)
- Office of Evaluation and Internal Oversight Independent Evaluation Division. 2018. [Evaluation Manual.](#)
- United Nations Development Programme. 2021. [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines.](#)
- United Nations Evaluation Group. 2016. [Evaluation Competency Framework.](#)
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation. 2017. [The Step-by-Step Guide to Evaluation.](#)