ADAPTATION FUND

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9 March 2023

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ANNEX 9: DRAFT GUIDANCE NOTE, FINAL EVALUATIONS

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

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Comparisons for Final Evaluation</th></tr>
<tr><td>Current practice at the Fund</td><td>1. The Fund’s 2011 Guidelines for Project/Programme Final Evaluations states that final evaluations have the following objectives:
A. To promote accountability and transparency within the Fund, and to systematically assess and disclose levels of project or programme accomplishments.
B. To organize and synthesize experiences and lessons that may help improve the selection, design, implementation, and evaluation of future AF-funded interventions.
C. To understand how project achievements contribute to the mandate of the AF.
D. To provide feedback into the decision-making process to improve ongoing and future projects, programmes, and policies.
E. To assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of project design, objectives, and performance.
2. The Fund’s 2011 Adaptation Fund Evaluation Framework outlines that final evaluations should provide ratings (i.e. on a Likert scale) on how well the project satisfies (or not) the evaluation criteria and principles of the AF.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Comparative peer practice</td><td><u>GEF</u>: The 2022 GEF Guidelines for Conducting Program Evaluation provides detailed guidance on how to conduct programme evaluations, particularly on:
1. Roles and responsibilities
2. Content of evaluation reports
3. Submission of evaluations
4. Use of evaluations
5. Ratings scales on outcomes, sustainability, implementation, and M&E

<u>GCF</u>: The 2021 GCF Evaluation Policy provides detail on the various responsibilities of the Accredited Entities in ensuring final evaluations are budgeted for and conducted.

<u>USAID:</u> The USAID Guidelines for Final Evaluations details the various sections required in a final evaluation report, including:
1. Assessment of the progress made toward achievement of programme objectives
2. Discussion of programme management issues
3. Conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation team
4. Executive summaries and results highlighted in concise short-form presentation.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Proposed change at the Fund</td><td>1. The Fund’s 2022 Evaluation Policy states that: “All Fund-supported projects and programmes that complete implementation should conduct a final evaluation”. The policy also states that all implementing entities are required to commission an independent final evaluation, submitted to the secretariat and the DA, within 9 months of project completion.
2. This GN focuses specifically on Fund Final Evaluations (FE), in accordance with the requirements outlined in the 2021 Evaluation Policy, the AF Guidelines for Project/Programme Final Evaluations, and the 2011 AF Evaluation Framework. Guidance is provided on: when and how to plan and conduct FEs, who is involved and how to analyse evidence.
3. This GN includes an annexed template/checklist highlighting key tasks to consider when conducting a FE. Also included in the annex are rating scales for each of the nine evaluation criteria outlined in the 2021 Evaluation Policy. This is in response to requirement for all FEs to include ratings as a measure of programme performance.</td></tr>
</table>

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 AF-TERG is an independent evaluation advisory group accountable to the Adaptation Fund Board, established in 2018 to ensure the independent implementation of the Fund's evaluation framework. From October 2023 onwards, the AF-TERG will be responsible for the implementation of the new Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund. 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/

AF-TERG, [2022]. [Title of the Report]. Adaptation Fund Technical Evaluation Reference Group (AF-TERG),
Washington, DC.

The unedited [type] report was finished [Date].

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Acronyms

AF-TERG	Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund
Fund	Adaptation Fund
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MTR	Mid-term review
TOR	Terms of Reference

1. What is this guidance note?

The purpose of this guidance note is to support the planning, design and implementation of project and programme final evaluations in accordance with the Adaptation Fund's Evaluation Policy. The intended audience for this guidance note is people who plan and manage Fund evaluation activities, primarily within Fund Implementing Entities, the Technical Evaluation Reference Group of the Adaptation Fund (AF-TERG), and the Fund secretariat and Board. However, this guidance note may also be useful to others conducting final evaluations or interested in the topic of final evaluations in the climate change adaptation community and wider.

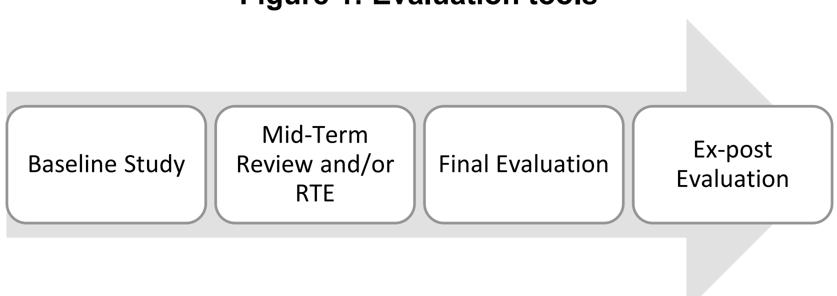
This guidance note outlines what is Final Evaluation at the Fund, when does it occur, who is involved, and how to plan and implement them in accordance with the Fund's Evaluation Policy. The accompanying annexes provide a general checklist for planning (Annex 1), common analytical approaches (Annex 2), evaluation inception report (Annex 3) and the evaluation criteria rating scales (Annex 4). Acknowledging that this guidance note is not exhaustive, recommended resources for selecting an appropriate methodology, collecting evidence, and analysing data are also included in Annex 5.

2. What is a final evaluation?

At the Fund, a final evaluation is a systematic and impartial assessment of project or programme performance and positive and negative impact to support learning and accountability and inform future climate change adaptation interventions. A final evaluation examines the design framework, context, and causality relative to completed results using a set of evaluation criteria, providing recommendations to support evaluation follow-up.

As Figure 1 conveys, A final evaluation may be just one of several evaluations or tools used to assess project impacts and outcomes. Findings from other evaluation activities typically inform the final evaluations, and final evaluations may be used to inform other evaluations. If a baseline study was conducted prior to project implementation, the baseline results are compared to final evaluation findings to assess progress and achievement. For projects with four or more years of implementation, findings from the required mid-term review (MTR) can inform the final evaluation and be used to assess progress made since the project midpoint. If, a few years following project completion, an ex-post evaluation is used to assess long-term outcomes and impacts, the final evaluation will serve as a source of comparison for ex-post findings.

Figure 1: Evaluation tools



The scope of final evaluations should be tailored to the specific project/programme context and evaluation needs and identified in the evaluation's ToR. However, an essential part of each final evaluation is the assessment of the project/programme relative to the Fund's nine evaluation criteria:

1. **Relevance**: Is the intervention doing the right thing?
2. **Coherence**: How well does the intervention fit?
3. **Effectiveness**: Is the intervention achieving its objectives?
4. **Efficiency**: How well are resources being used?
5. **Impact**: What difference does the intervention make?
6. **Equity**: Are the benefits of the intervention shared fairly between groups and geographies?
7. **Adaptive management**: Does the intervention make evidence-based decisions?
8. **Scalability**: Can the intervention be replicated at a greater scale?
9. **Human and ecological sustainability and security**: Does the intervention affect the ability of human and natural systems to support the equitable life of all species on the planet? Is the intervention sensitive to conflict and fragility?

If an evaluation commissioner or evaluator considers any of the Fund's evaluation criteria inapplicable to a specific evaluation, this should be justified in the evaluation's ToR or inception report/evaluation design to the AF-TERG.[1]

3. What are the benefits of a final evaluation?

Final evaluation findings serve as an important tool for implementing entities and stakeholders to:

- ✓ **Inform strategic decision-making**. Final evaluations allow management to know whether their project/programme made a difference to inform evidence-based decision-making for future work.
- ✓ **Demonstrate the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of project design, objectives, and performance.** Final evaluations can also serve as proof of concept or inform policy.
- ✓ **Promote accountability and transparency**. This is important towards justifying the cost to donors (*upward accountability*) and being responsible for outcomes in target communities and groups (*downward accountability*).
- ✓ **Organize and synthesize experiences and lessons**. Lessons help to improve and instruct future climate change adaptation interventions.

[1] See the Evaluation Criteria GN for further details.

4. When to conduct a final evaluation?

In accordance with the Evaluation Policy, **all Fund-supported projects and programmes that complete implementation from a single implementing entity are required to conduct a final evaluation**. If a programme consists of multiple projects implemented by multiple implementing entities, all projects are required to have a final evaluation

Final evaluation reports should be submitted within nine months of project completion. **However, planning for the final evaluation should begin as soon as project planning begins**, which is discussed further in Section 6.

5. Who is involved in a final evaluation?

Final evaluations are conducted by independent evaluators, with oversight and management provided by implementing entities. Project beneficiaries and other stakeholders also play an important role by providing their feedback and input during primary data collection and by reviewing and ensuring the use of findings.

Implementing Entities are responsible for commissioning, managing, and reporting on the final evaluation, (and the Fund's Commissioning and Management Guidance Note contains additional information to support evaluation managers in these processes). Implementing entities must provide quality assurance throughout the final evaluation process (see **Box 2**), and therefore their evaluation managers should be familiar with:

- ✓ The Fund's Evaluation Policy, including evaluation principles and criteria,
- ✓ Evaluation norms, standards, and ethical guidelines,
- ✓ The evaluation budget,
- ✓ Procurement requirements for independent evaluators, and
- ✓ All stakeholders who should be consulted during the evaluation.

Independent evaluators are responsible for conducting the final evaluation with support from the implementing entities, and the Commissioning and Management Guidance Note contains additional information on evaluator responsibilities and evaluator selection. At a minimum, independent evaluators should possess the following qualifications:

- ✓ ***Adequate technical evaluation skills*** – The evaluator should have the ability to design useful and feasible evaluations that respond to the specific evaluation questions and criteria, to conduct a thorough analysis using appropriate analytical techniques, to interpret findings and limitations, and to use evidence to draw conclusions and make recommendations. Understanding and/or experience with climate adaptation is preferable.
- ✓ ***Professionalism*** – The evaluator should act ethically throughout the final evaluation, including adherence to data management and safeguarding policies. Evaluators should demonstrate timely and effective communication when working with both the implementing entity and project/programme stakeholders or beneficiaries.

- ✓ ***Cultural and linguistic competencies*** – The evaluator must possess knowledge of the local context, customs, knowledge of gender equality principles, and language(s) to effectively carry out data collection and communicate with project/programme stakeholders and beneficiaries.

BOX 2: The importance of quality assurance

Throughout the entire final evaluation process, it is important to take steps to ensure **the credibility, independence and impartiality, and utility** of the evaluation.[2] Quality assurance is important in all evaluations. Following are some important considerations for final evaluations:

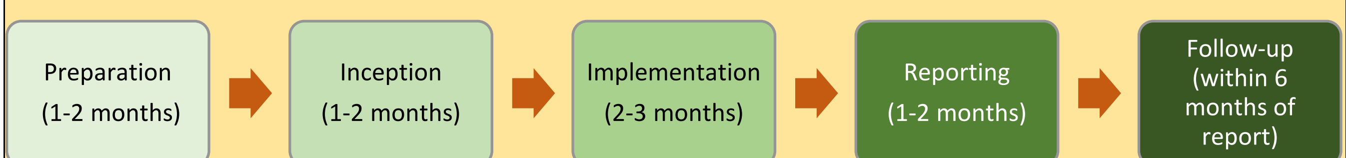
- ✓ When choosing the evaluation methodology, the evaluation principles and cross-cutting themes (e.g., Gender and Environmental and Social Policies) should be considered and incorporated into the evaluation's design and appropriately reflected in its findings and recommendations.
- ✓ Evaluators should consult relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries to ensure their perspectives are incorporated into findings.
- ✓ The findings and conclusions and recommendations should be based on valid analysis and should be logical and coherent. Recommendations should also be practical.
- ✓ Initial findings should be shared with stakeholders and feedback and recommendations should be incorporated into the final report.
- ✓ Reports should be concise, easy to read and understand to facilitate use.

6. How to plan for a final evaluation?

Planning for the final evaluation begins early when the evaluation budget is estimated during the project proposal stage in the project template. In addition to earmarking sufficient funds for the final evaluation, early planning also ensures the utility and feasibility of the exercise. As the conclusion of the project approaches, the implementing entity may refine plans for the final evaluation based on changes made to the project/programme during implementation, changes in the context (e.g., due to crises), and other sources of emergent learning and need.

The Fund identifies five phases for evaluation, as represented in **Figure 2**. While the exact duration of a final evaluation to cycle through these phases will vary depending on the project/programme and contextual factors, the implementing entity should plan between typically 20 to 32 weeks so the final evaluation report can be submitted within the required timeframe.

Figure 2. Illustrative MTR timeline



[2] For further details on evaluation quality assurance, see: UNFPA. 2020. Evaluation Quality; UNEG. 2017. Norms and Standards for Evaluation

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.

Annex 1 includes a Checklist for Final Evaluations, which identifies key tasks organized by the five phases for the evaluation. **Table 1** below describes in more detail key tasks critical for planning the evaluation. These tasks are interrelated, sometimes concurrent, and other times iterative. For example, determining the evaluation's methodologies will inform the ToR development as part of the preparation phase of the evaluation, but once evaluators are recruited, the methodologies used in the evaluation may change based on findings and learning from the inception phase.

Table 1: Key tasks for planning a final evaluation

Task	Description	Link to Additional Resources
Review Fund's Evaluation Principles	The Fund's seven principles encompass the values, norms, and best practices to guide a reliable, ethical, and useful evaluation function that contributes to learning, decision making, and accountability for the Fund to pursue its mission, goal, and vision. It is important to ensure the evaluation principles are upheld throughout all phases of the final evaluation.	• Evaluation Principles Guidance Note
Develop the Evaluation Management Plan	Developed to guide the management of an evaluation, this plan includes management related details, such as roles and responsibilities, and the evaluation's intended timeline and key evaluation outputs and milestones. This plan should be regularly reviewed and revised according to the stage of the evaluation, and emergent needs and learning.	• Commissioning and Managing Guidance Note

Review existing project/programme design framework	The theory of change, logic model, results framework, results chain, or other project design framework, as well as any prior mid-term reviews and/or rapid evaluations, can be reviewed during planning to help inform the evaluation questions, criteria, and indicators to assess, as well as provide a framework for analysis and reporting.	• Describe the theory of change • Developing a Project Logic Model • Designing a Results Framework
Determine evaluation criteria and questions to be evaluated	The Adaptation Fund's Evaluation Policy lists a set of nine evaluation criteria to guide the focus of evaluations. The AF-TERG should approve the design and tailoring of different evaluation criteria for specific evaluation purposes.	• Evaluation Criteria Guidance Note • Specifying Key Evaluation Questions
Confirm indicators to be measured and evaluated	During planning, relevant indicators to inform the final evaluation assessment should be identified from the project/programme design framework.	• Results-based Management (RBM) Framework • Strategic Results Framework (SRF)
Determine methodology	There is not one methodology that is appropriate for all final evaluations. The source linked here provides a list of designs that are useful for final evaluations, including statistical, experimental, theory-based, case-based, participatory, and synthesis-based. Additional resources are listed in Annex 3.	• Impact Evaluation Guide for Commissioners and Managers • Rainbow Framework • UNEG Compendium of Evaluation Methods Reviewed
Develop ToR	A Terms of Reference (ToR) provides an overview of what is expected in an evaluation to communicate a shared understanding and provide the bases for recruiting evaluators.	• Terms of Reference Guidance Note
Select an independent evaluator or team	Independent evaluators should have the technical and cultural expertise and experience to conduct the final evaluation efficiently and effectively according to evaluation purpose and context.	• Commissioning and Managing Guidance Note

7. How to conduct data collection during a final evaluation?

Following the preparation phase of the final evaluation, the inception phase establishes the data collection and analysis methodology and identifies methodological limitations. 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. See the Fund's Inception Report Guidance Note for further detail.

The methods used to collect evidence should be tailored to the evaluation purpose and needs and do not need to mirror the baseline study or MTR, although findings from these exercises can be used to inform a final evaluation. The evaluation team will utilize two general approaches to data collection: **1) primary data collection** and **2) review of secondary data sources,** summarized in **Table 2**. These two processes are often iterative during the final evaluation, although the secondary data review often provides a foundation on which primary data collection builds and elaborates, probing further into relevant areas of inquiry surfaced from the review of secondary data.

Table 2: Approaches to data collection

Approach	Definition and Purpose	Illustrative Examples
Primary Data Collection	***Primary data*** is information collected directly from the source (often project stakeholders and beneficiaries) for the purpose of the MTR. How evaluators collect primary data (e.g., via surveys, interviews, pictures, etc.) will be dependent on the evaluation questions to be answered and the indicators to be analysed. Primary data can be used to illustrate the state of beneficiary communities at the time of the MTR or to better understand the context. This data can be compared to baseline data to assess program achievement and progress made towards targets.	○ Surveys or questionnaires ○ Interviews ○ Focus groups ○ Observations ○ Stories of change or case studies ○ Pictures or videos ○ Direct measurement
Secondary Data Review	***Secondary data*** is information that has been collected or produced for some purpose other than the project MTR. It is imperative that secondary data sources are relevant and reliable. Secondary sources should include the baseline study report, if conducted, and other relevant project monitoring and performance reports. Baseline and monitoring data serve as a point of reference with which to compare primary data from the MTR. They illustrate the state of beneficiary communities at the start of the project and can demonstrate progress and achievements. Secondary data also provide information to examine the project context, which can help ground the significance and relevance of results.	○ Project/programme baseline, mid-term reports ○ Statistics from other agencies such as the United Nations, a government Ministry, or a partner organization (e.g., population census, housing information) ○ Research studies and academic literature

Evaluation good practice recommends combining (**triangulating**)[3] different data sources and using different (mixed)[4] methods to provide different perspectives using different types of analysis for more credible and robust evaluations. Ultimately, the evaluation's methodological design will also be informed

[3] See INTRAC. 2017. Triangulation
[4] USAID. 2013. Conducting Mixed-Method Evaluations

by what is realistic and feasible given the evaluation's specific purpose, scope, timeframe, and existing capacities and resources to support the evaluation.

There is no shortage of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods for evaluation data collection and analysis, and **Annex 4** provides a selected list of recommended resources.

8. How do you analyse evidence during a final evaluation?

The final evaluation's analytical framework or approach is explained in the inception report. There are numerous analytical frameworks used in final evaluations, but ultimately those adopted should be informed by the objectives of the final evaluation, and its evaluation criteria and questions.

Data analysis will involve several components, but throughout, it is important to ensure the quality of evidence is high and it is used appropriately. This entails particular attention to the Fund's evaluation principles for *credibility and robustness*, *impartiality and objectivity*, *equitable and gender sensitive inclusivity*, and *complexity-sensitivity*. For instance, analysed evidence should triangulate multiple perspectives, especially those of potentially marginalized population groups, and then should be presented in a complete and coherent manner, with conclusions well-substantiated by findings.

Depending on the analytical framework and data collection methods and tools, data analysis may employ a number of quantitative or qualitative approaches. **Annex 4** showcases some of these approaches, and it is important to remember that it is not only the independent evaluator(s) who do the analysis, but participatory analysis can meaningfully engage stakeholders to provide additional perspectives and interpretations of day, help validate findings, and sustain their engagement throughout the final evaluation process.

The Fund's Evaluation Criteria play a central role in data analysis. Given the timing of final evaluations, assessment of the impact criterion is especially important; therefore. Data from baseline and any MTR, RTEs, or other assessment activity during project implementation will be valuable to analyse data against earlier findings to help assess progress and impact. However, given the complex nature of climate change adaptation work, it is useful to consider the difference between contribution versus attribution analysis in impact assessment - see **Box 4**.

BOX 4: Attribution versus Contribution Analysis
An essential aspect in assessing the Fund's impact criterion is the degree to which observed changes are due to the evaluated project or programme versus some other factor. In other words, how much credit (or blame) can the observed changes be attributed to the intervention versus other actors (e.g., organizations) or factors (e.g., a recession or political unrest)? In essence, this is the distinction between attribution versus contribution analysis. Both forms of analysis can use quantitative and qualitative methods and tools, but attribution analysis seeks to establish certain causality through statistical analysis by comparing project outcomes on the target population (beneficiaries) with a group (counterfactual) similar in as many characteristics as possible, with the exception that it was not exposed to the project or programme. If a statistically significant difference is measured, then the conclusion can be made that the difference can be credited to the project or programme. However, in the complex operational contexts of climate change adaptation work, this form of controlled comparison is notably limited. Instead, contribution analysis is preferable, using evidence-based narrative to explain how an intervention could be responsible for observed changes.

At the Fund, a mandatory rubrics rating scale is required for final evaluations to support data analysis and communication of project performance. The rubrics rating scale assesses the extent to which the project satisfies the Evaluation Policy's nine evaluation criteria, (with the ninth criterion subdivided into Ecological / Natural sustainability, Human sustainability, Security / Fragility). It utilizes an even-numbered Likert scale of either six or four rating levels, with each level defined by a rubric definition to support consistent assessment of the given criterion. **Annex 3** provides a complete listing of the rubrics rating scale for each of the evaluation criteria.

Note that while most criteria require a mandatory rating, some may not be applicable to certain project/contexts; these optional criteria are highlighted in green. If an evaluation commissioner or evaluator considers any of the *optional criteria* to be inapplicable to a specific evaluation, they may justify this in the inception report's evaluation design presented to the AF-TERG. And as noted above, if any evaluation criteria is determined as inapplicable to a specific evaluation, this must be justified in the evaluation ToR or inception report/evaluation design to the AF-TERG.[5]

9. How do you use a final evaluation?

The following strategies may be used to ensure utility of the final evaluation for the implementing entity, beneficiaries, and relevant stakeholders:

- **Sensemaking / Validation** – Sensemaking is a process in which people jointly make sense of information and develop a shared understanding.[6] As MTRs are intended to provide feedback on the very projects being evaluation, collective sensemaking to inform timely decision making is critical. Evaluators and implementing entities may choose to organize a validation workshop to gather stakeholders and beneficiaries' perspectives. Through sensemaking and validation of the MTR findings, evaluators may develop a deeper and more reliable understanding of the data.
- **Development of Recommendations** – The development of recommendations should involve stakeholders and beneficiaries to ensure recommendations are actionable and concrete. Stakeholders' participation can also increase the likelihood that recommendations will be applied. Final recommendations should be limited to those that are evidence-based and feasible. **Recommendations should be specific, practical, and feasible for implementation**. They should also be relevant for the evaluation's intended purpose and use, written to support management response and other evaluation follow-up and learning
- **Reporting** – A final evaluation report should provide evaluative evidence covering the entire intervention. It should measure the overall impact, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, replicability, scale-up, and lessons learned of a Fund-financed project. Additional information on reporting, including an evaluation report checklist and illustrative template, can be found in the Evaluation Reporting Guidance Note.
- **Within six months of receiving the FE report, implementing entities are required to submit a management response to the Fund secretariat**. The management response should describe what, why, and how MTR learning and recommendations will be incorporated into the remaining project implementation period.

[5] See the Evaluation Criteria GN for further details.
[6] INTRAC. 2017. Sensemaking

- **Presentation / Dissemination** – Dissemination involves the sharing of final evaluation results with stakeholders, beneficiaries, and the wider climate change adaptation community to support wider knowledge sharing and learning from the evaluation. It is important to select a combination of formats to best communicate results and properly internalise conclusions and recommendations with the intended audience. Dissemination of findings typically takes the form of a formal written report; however, evaluation results can also be presented in other formats and mediums. This can include evaluation workshops and meetings, short synthesis briefs, and webinars/videos. The implementing entity may use social or local media, newsletters, conferences, and academic journals to share findings with a wider audience.

Additional information on how to use evaluations can be found in the Evaluation Follow-up and Use Guidance Note.

Annex 1 – Final Evaluation Checklist

This Final Evaluation Checklist provides a more detailed summary of key tasks to consider when conducting a final evaluation. Each evaluation key task is listed in the first (left) column of the checklist, whereas the second (right) column summarizes who will likely lead the task. The Fund's Evaluation Reporting Guidance Note can be referred to for additional considerations related to writing and using a final evaluation report. 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.

FINAL EVALUATION CHECKLIST	
KEY TASKS	**LEAD**
1. PREPARATION (4-8 WEEKS)	
1) **Ensure availability of the final evaluation budget**	Implementing Entity
2) **Review evaluation design: purpose, objectives and scope.**	Implementing Entity
3) **Determine key evaluation questions and evaluation criteria**	Implementing Entity
4) **Confirm the indicators to be evaluated**	Implementing Entity
5) **Develop a Terms of Reference (ToR) document**	Implementing Entity
6) **Develop a work plan**	Implementing Entity
7) **Select independent evaluators**	Implementing Entity
2. INCEPTION (4-6 WEEKS)	
1) **Evaluability assessment**	Independent Evaluator
2) **Agree on methodological approach, roles, responsibilities, and timeline**	Implementing Entity & Independent Evaluator
3) **Develop data collection tools**	Independent Evaluator
4) **Write inception report**	Independent Evaluator
5) **Review the inception report**	Implementing Entity
3. IMPLEMENTATION (8 WEEKS)	
1) **Provide material and criteria to independent evaluators for secondary data review**	Implementing Entity
2) **Collect primary data using agreed upon methodology**	Independent Evaluator
3) **Ensure relevant stakeholders are consulted**	Implementing Entity

4) **Support evaluation team throughout implementation**	Implementing Entity
4. REPORTING (6 - 8 WEEKS)	
1) **Analyse evidence against evaluation criteria, key evaluation questions and indicators**	Independent Evaluator
2) **Prepare a draft final evaluation report following the Fund's evaluation template**	Independent Evaluator
3) **Complete round(s) of review and revision of draft final evaluation report**	Implementing Entity & Independent Evaluator
4) **Present initial findings to stakeholders**	Independent Evaluator
5) **The report undergoes the Fund's quality assurance processes**	Implementing Entity, with on-demand support by the AF-TERG
6) **Revise the report incorporating stakeholder feedback and comments, as applicable and submits final draft**	Independent Evaluator
7) **Shares the final report and evaluation findings with stakeholders, beneficiaries, and promotes usage**	Implementing Entity
5. FOLLOW-UP (6 MONTHS)	
1) **Required management response**	Implementing Entity
2) **Incorporate learning into current or future AF Fund work**	Implementing Entity

Annex 2 – Examples of analytical approaches

The analysis of final evaluation data is guided by the evaluation purpose, criteria, and key evaluation questions. Common quantitative and qualitative analytical approaches used in final evaluations are listed below,[7] though the list is not exhaustive and other approaches may better align with the analytical framework and data collection methods used.

Quantitative Analytical Approaches	
Approach	**Description**
Summary statistics	A summary of data which allows evaluators to make comparisons. For example, evaluators can compare projects, interventions, or differences in indicators at baseline versus project/programme conclusion.
Multivariate descriptive	A summary of data which allows evaluators to analyse the relationship between two or more variables. For example, evaluators can compare how Results are often displayed using graphs, scatterplots, etc.
Parametric inferential statistics	A technique which allows evaluators to make inferences about a population based on a sample from the population. To use this technique, the data must follow certain parameters: the data must have a normal distribution, the sample is large and was randomly selected, etc.
Qualitative Analytical Approaches	
Approach	**Description**
Thematic coding	A technique which allows evaluators to develop a framework of thematic ideas by identifying passages of text, images, etc. that are linked by a common theme or idea.
Framework matrices	A technique which allows evaluators to summarize and analyse data in a table of rows and columns. Often, cases are sorted in rows and themes to which the data have been coded are in columns. A summary of the data that relates to the intersecting case and theme is included in each cell.
Timelines and time-order matrices	A technique which allows evaluators display and analyse connections between events and other time-related data.

[7] Better Evaluation. 2022. Analyse data.

Annex 3 – Illustrative FE 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
☐ **Preface** ☐ **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
☐ **Evaluation features** – provides an introductory overview of the evaluation's purpose, scope, audience, intended use, time period, geographic coverage, and target population groups. ☐ **Report introduction** – introduces the report structure and contents ☐ **Object of evaluation** – describes the intervention being evaluated (e.g., project, programme, or strategy) ☐ **Implementation context** – describe the larger context in which the intervention is being implemented
7. Evaluation scope and objectives
☐ **Evaluation scope** clearly delineating what is and is not to be included in the evaluation ☐ **Evaluation criteria** that specify the standards that provide the basis for evaluative judgment. ☐ **Evaluation questions** that elaborate the evaluation criteria, specifying what is to be assessed ☐ **Evaluation Matrix** that details how each evaluation is answered, what indicators to measure and which data collection tool will be applied – see **Annex 4**.
8. Evaluation approach and methods
☐ **Evaluation principles** – the Fund's seven evaluation principles are identified in its Evaluation Policy and elaborated in its Evaluation Principles Guidance Note ☐ **Evaluation data sources** – primary and secondary information sources for the evaluation ☐ **Evaluation data collection methods** – quantitative and qualitative collection methods and their procedures, including a discussion of the rational 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:	
✓ 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	✓ 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)

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Annex 4 – Evaluation Criteria Rating Scales

This section provides details on the rating scales to be included in final evaluation reports. These ratings detail the extent to which the project satisfies (or not) the 9 evaluation criteria detailed in the AF Evaluation Policy. Ratings should be accompanied by a narrative, which provides appropriate substantiation based on analyses.

Note that while most criteria require a mandatory rating, some may not be applicable to certain project/contexts; these optional criteria are highlighted below where appropriate. If an evaluation commissioner or evaluator considers any of the *optional criteria* to be inapplicable to a specific evaluation, they may justify this in the inception report/evaluation design to the AF-TERG.

Criteria 1: Relevance

Were the project's outcomes consistent with the AF goal, objectives, and strategic priorities and country/region priorities?

Highly unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Highly Satisfactory
The project had severe shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **relevance**. The project had substantial negative consequences that outweighed any benefits. Project severely undermined AF goals and strategic priorities.	The project had major shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **relevance**. The expected outcomes were not achieved or significantly lower than expected.	The project had some significant shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **relevance.** Although some areas met expectations, the overall level of outcomes were lower than expected.	The project had moderate shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **relevance**, and level of outcomes were close to expectations.	The project had minor shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **relevance**, and level of outcomes was expected. Project was generally aligned with AF goals and strategic priorities.	The project had no shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **relevance** and outcomes exceed expectations. Project was aligned with and further AF goals and strategic priorities.

Criteria 2: Coherence How well the intervention is compatible with other interventions in a country, sector, or institution. Do the theory of change, governance structure, interventions and M&E system align with project objectives?					
Highly unsatisfactory	**Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Satisfactory**	**Satisfactory**	**Highly Satisfactory**
The project had severe shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **coherence**. The project had substantial negative consequences that outweigh any benefits. Project undermined other interventions in the country or sector. Project elements (e.g. ToC, governance structure, M&E systems) work against each other and were ineffective.	The project had major shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **coherence**. The expected outcomes were not achieved or significantly lower than expected. Project had no alignment with wider interventions in the country or sector. Project components (e.g. ToC, governance structure, M&E systems) were not in alignment with one another.	The project had significant shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **coherence.** Although some areas met expectations, the overall level of outcomes were lower than expected. Interventions were generally not aligned with wider interventions in the country or sector. Project components (e.g. ToC, governance structure, M&E systems) were generally not complementary but do not contradict one another.	The project had had moderate shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **coherence**, and level of outcomes were close to expectations. Some elements of the project were compatible with wider interventions in the country and sector. Few project components (e.g. ToC, governance structure, M&E systems) were complimentary	The project had minor shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **coherence**, and level of outcomes was expected. Most elements of the project were compatible with wider interventions in the country and sector. Some, but not all, project components (e.g. ToC, governance structure, M&E systems) were complimentary.	The project had no shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **coherence** and outcomes exceed expectations. Project was totally compatible with wider interventions in the country and sector. Project components (e.g. ToC, governance structure, M&E systems) complemented each other and worked towards project objectives.

Criteria 3: Effectiveness Are the actual project outcomes commensurate with the original or modified project objectives? 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.					
Highly unsatisfactory	**Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Satisfactory**	**Satisfactory**	**Highly Satisfactory**
The project had severe shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **effectiveness**. The project had substantial negative consequences that outweigh any benefits. Project failed to meet its goals and objectives and caused harm to the target community(ies) and/or environment.	The project had major shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **effectiveness**. The expected outcomes were not achieved or significantly lower than expected. Project failed to meet its goals and objectives.	The project had significant shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **effectiveness.** Although some areas met expectations, the overall level of outcomes was lower than expected. Project failed to meet most of its goals and objectives.	The project had had moderate shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **effectiveness**, and level of outcomes was close to expectation. Project met some of its overall goals and objectives.	The project had minor shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **effectiveness**, and level of outcomes was expected. Project met most of its goals and objectives.	The project had no shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **effectiveness** and outcomes exceed expectations. Project met and exceeded objectives and goals

Criteria 4: Efficiency How well the resources available to the project/intervention were used. Were alternatives considered? The evaluators should compare, wherever possible, the costs incurred and the time taken to achieve outcomes with those for similar projects.					
Highly unsatisfactory	**Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Satisfactory**	**Satisfactory**	**Highly Satisfactory**
The project had severe shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **efficiency**. The project had substantial negative consequences that outweigh any benefits. The project was unacceptably expensive and time inefficient.	The project had major shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **efficiency**. The expected outcomes were not achieved or significantly lower than expected. The project was neither cost-effective *nor* time efficient.	The project had significant shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **efficiency.** Although some areas met expectations, the overall level of outcomes was lower than expected. The project was generally cost-effective *or* time efficient.	The project had moderate shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **efficiency**, and level of outcomes was close to expectation. The project was somewhat cost-effective *or* time efficient.	The project had minor shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **efficiency**, and level of outcomes was expected. The project was cost-effective and/or time efficient, particularly when compared similar projects/interventions	The project had no shortcomings in outcome achievement in terms of **efficiency** and outcomes exceed expectations. The project was extremely cost-effective and time efficient, particularly when compared similar projects/interventions.

Criteria 5: Impact The overall difference the intervention has made to the community(ies) and/or environment. This can be 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 assess these at the time of evaluation. Evaluators should attempt to understand the steps taken to assess the likelihood of realising long-term project impact and replication effects					
Highly unsatisfactory	**Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Satisfactory**	**Satisfactory**	**Highly Satisfactory**
The project only had negative impacts on the target community(ies) and/or the environment.	The project had mostly negative impact on target community(ies) and/or the environment at the time of evaluation or in the feasible future. No steps were taken to establish connections between interventions and outcomes.	The project failed to have any impact on target community(ies) and/or the environment at the time of evaluation or in the feasible future. The project did not establish connections between interventions and outcomes.	The project had some positive impact on target community(ies) and/or the environment. The project did not fully establish connections between interventions and outcomes.	The project had a positive impact on target community(ies) and/or the environment. The project established good connections between interventions and outcomes.	The project had meaningful and observable impact on target community(ies) and/or the environment. The project established clear connections between interventions and outcomes.

Criteria 6: Equity How well the benefits of the intervention are shared fairly between groups and geographies? The extent to which the programme is consistent with the Fund's Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) and Gender Policy (GP). How does the design and implementation of the project consider input from vulnerable groups women, youth, persons with disability, Indigenous Peoples, minorities, and other potentially marginalized groups or locations?					
Highly unsatisfactory	**Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Satisfactory**	**Satisfactory**	**Highly Satisfactory**
The project was completely misaligned with the Fund's ESP and caused harm to community groups.	The project was not inconsistent with the Fund's ESP and no steps were taken to involve vulnerable and marginalised target groups within the project.	The project had some inconsistencies with the Fund's ESP. Some effort was made to include vulnerable and marginalised target groups, however this may have been token representation.	The project was somewhat consistent with the Fund's ESP. Input from vulnerable and marginalised target groups were considered in some of the project phases (design, implementation, follow-up) but not all.	The project aligned with most of the Fund's ESP. Input from vulnerable and marginalised target groups were mostly considered in the design, implementation and follow-up of the project.	The project furthered the Fund's ESP and appropriately considered input, views and perspectives from vulnerable and marginalised target groups in the design, implementation and follow-up of the project.

Criteria 7: Adaptive Management How well the project overall is responsive to changing in context and implementation conditions. The extent to which lessons and reflections learned during implementation were actioned. How intervention supported the use and development of innovative practices and tools.					
Highly unsatisfactory	**Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Satisfactory**	**Satisfactory**	**Highly Satisfactory**
The project failed to be adaptive or caused negative changes in the context and/or implementation conditions.	The project was not adaptive and no lessons were recorded.	The project was generally not adaptive and lessons were not likely to be recorded. As a result, limited action was taken.	The project was somewhat adaptive, with some – but not all – lessons recorded. Some appropriate action was taken as a result but outcomes were not aways documented.	The project was adaptive and lessons were observed and recorded at some point in the project cycle. Some appropriate action was taken as a result and its outcomes were documented.	The project was highly adaptive and lessons were quickly observed and recorded. Appropriate action was taken as a result and its outcomes were well documented.

Criteria 8: Scalability The likelihood to which the interventions can be replicated on a broader scale, as well as in other contexts.			
Unlikely	**Moderately Unlikely**	**Moderately Likely**	**Likely**
The project cannot be scaled beyond its existing scope.	The project required significant change if it were to be replicated on a broader scale.	The project could be replicated on a broader scale, across contexts and stakeholders, if certain components were adjusted.	The project can be replicated on a broader scale, across contexts and stakeholders.
Optional Criterion: Not all projects can or should be scaled. Some projects and interventions are appropriately relevant to local levels, for example, and not suitable for wider implementation. If evaluation teams do not provide a rating on this criterion, it must be sufficiently justified to the AF-TERG.			

Criteria 9a: Ecological / Natural Sustainability The degree to which the project is likely to generate continued positive (or negative) intended and unintended impacts on environmental and natural systems. This is relevant only to projects that have a specific and intentional ecological/environmental component.			
Unlikely	**Moderately Unlikely**	**Moderately Likely**	**Likely**
The project will not generate positive impacts on the **environment**, following completion. Environmental risks have a significantly high probability to materialise.	Unless the project is adjusted significantly, the project will not generate positive impacts on the **environment**, following completion. Environmental risks have a high probability to materialise.	The project may continue to generate positive impacts on the **environment**, following completion. Some environmental risks may undermine the future flow of project benefits.	The project is likely to continue generating positive impacts on the **environment**, following completion. Environmental risks that undermine the future flow of project benefits are low.
Optional Criterion: This criterion is only relevant to projects with an ecological or environmental component. If evaluation teams do not provide a rating on this criterion, it must be sufficiently justified to the AF-TERG.			

Criteria 9b: Human Sustainability The degree to which the project will continue to contribute to targeted communities' livelihoods and wellbeing? The evaluators should be holistic in their approach to this rating, considering changes in context, socioeconomic and socio-political factors and project timespan.			
Unlikely	**Moderately Unlikely**	**Moderately Likely**	**Likely**
The project will not have positive impacts on **target community(ies), their livelihoods and wellbeing** in the future.	The project requires significant adjustment in order for future positive impacts on **target community(ies), their livelihoods and wellbeing** to be realised. There was little ownership of the project among stakeholders and further risks that undermine future benefits are likely to occur.	The project may generate positive impacts on **target community(ies), their livelihoods and wellbeing**, following completion. Stakeholder ownership was present but some risks existed that may undermine future project benefits.	The project is likely to continue generating positive impacts on **target community(ies), their livelihoods and wellbeing**, following completion. There were sufficiently high levels of stakeholder ownership and support of the project.

Criteria 9c: Security / Fragility Is the intervention sensitive to conflict and fragility, i.e., to what extent does it consider the political context and the sharing of natural resources?					
Highly unsatisfactory	**Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Unsatisfactory**	**Moderately Satisfactory**	**Satisfactory**	**Highly Satisfactory**
The project caused harm to those in conflict and fragile contexts.	The project was not sensitive to conflict settings and fragility issues. It did not consider changes in the political context/realities and its potential impact on the project.	The project was not fully sensitive to conflict settings and fragility issues. The project minimally acknowledged any impact that may occur as a result of changing political context/realities.	The project somewhat sensitive to conflict settings and fragility issues. Changes in the political context/realities may be acknowledged but its impact on the project were not fully considered.	The project is generally sensitive to conflict settings and fragility issues. Changes in the political context/realities were considered, as were its potential impact on the project.	The project was highly sensitive to conflict settings and fragility issues. It thoroughly considered the changing political context/realities and its potential impact on the project.
Optional Criterion: This criterion is only applicable to projects in conflict or fragile contexts. If evaluation teams do not provide a rating on this criterion, it must be sufficiently justified to the AF-TERG.					

Annex 5 – Recommended Resources

There exist many resources for each phase of the evaluation process. The following are recommended for readers to find additional guidance.

- Adaptation Fund. 2016. Environmental and Social Policy
- Adaptation Fund. 2017. Guidance Document for Implementing Entities on Compliance with the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy.
- Adaptation Fund. 2022. Evaluation Policy
- Adaptation Fund. 2023. Commissioning and Management Guidance Note
- Adaptation Fund. 2023. Evaluation Budgeting Guidance Note
- Adaptation Fund. 2023. Evaluation Follow-up and Use Guidance Note
- Adaptation Fund. 2023. Evaluation Principles Guidance Note
- Adaptation Fund. 2023. Evaluation Reporting Guidance Note
- Adaptation Fund. 2023. Inception Report Guidance Note
- Adaptation Fund. 2023. Terms of Reference Guidance Note
- Better Evaluation. 2022. Evaluation Methods and Approaches
- Better Evaluation. 2022. Manager's guide to evaluation
- Independent Evaluation Group (IEG). 2012. Designing a Results Framework for Achieving Results: A How-to Guide.
- INTRAC. 2019. M&E Universe
- Stern, E. 2015. Impact Evaluation: A Guide for Commissioners and Managers. Prepared for the Big Lottery Fund, Bond, Comic Relief and the Department for International Development.
- UNEG. 2016. Norms and Standards for Evaluation
- UNEG. 2020. Compendium of Evaluation Methods Reviewed (Volume 1)
- USAID. 2017. How-To Note: Developing a Project Logic Model