

## **Distribution and learnings**

Make evaluation reports available and engage with primary intended users to make the results accessible.

Archive the evaluation report and data (if appropriate). Use effective strategies to support use of the findings.

### **Products**

The following items are potential outputs from this step. Where possible, it might be useful to research other deliverables that have also been shown to be effective.

- Evaluation report
- Products tailored to different audiences: Evaluation Summary, Policy Brief, newsletter, conference presentation, poster, video etc.
- Archive of evaluation reports and/or evaluation data
- Evaluation use documentation

## **Make evaluation reports available and engage with primary intended users to make the results accessible**

Actual use of the evaluation findings often depends on how well the report meets the information needs of the primary intended users.

Hence, it is important to discuss the content, sharing, and use of the evaluation report and other dissemination products during the initial planning of the evaluation, even though it may be one of the last evaluation tasks.

Findings can also be communicated to those who do not have a direct 'stake' in the evaluation. For example, lessons learned from the evaluation can be helpful to other evaluators or program staff working in the same field; or, it may be worthwhile sharing some of the findings through articles or stories to attract wider attention to the organization's work, or to spread news about a particular situation.

Sharing evaluation findings through a report is only one way to distribute findings. Depending on the audience targeted and the available budget, other options may include:

- Presenting findings at staff fora and subject matter conferences
- Developing a short video version of the findings
- Sharing stories, pictures and drawings from the evaluation (depending on the methods used to collect the data)
- Creating posters or infographics for display
- Producing a series of short memos

### **Products**

The following item is a potential output from this sub-step. Where possible, it might be useful to research other deliverables that have also been shown to be effective.

- Evaluation report

- Products tailored to different audiences: Evaluation Summary, Policy Brief, newsletter, conference presentation, poster, video etc.

## Resources

- [Develop reporting media](#)  
Produce appropriate written, visual, and/or verbal products that communicate the findings.

## Archive the evaluation report and data (if appropriate)

There are benefits of an archive of evaluation data and/or reports in the way they can be used.

Such as:

- to provide examples of well-conducted and well-reported on evaluations
- to identify common weaknesses in evaluations which may indicate the need for specific guidance or training
- to synthesize data across different evaluations (to answer questions such AS “Do these types of interventions work?” or “For whom, in what ways and under what circumstances do they work?”)
- to share data (if appropriate) with other stakeholders such as to contribute to a larger data set on a particular theme or area of shared interest for further analysis

## Product

The following item is a potential output from this sub-step. Where possible, it might be useful to research other deliverables that have also been shown to be effective.

- Archive of evaluation reports and/or evaluation data

## IDRC-specific information

IDRC maintains, in its online open-access digital library, a [repository of evaluations](#) conducted throughout IDRC’s history. The repository currently holds close to 1000 evaluations.

## Support the use of evaluation findings

Following up on the organisation’s response to evaluation findings is an essential part of supporting use.

This is often a management responsibility but it is recommended to build time into the evaluation plan and budget for the evaluator(s) to provide support beyond just delivering the evaluation report.

There are a range of options that can be used to provide support for the use of evaluation findings. For example:

- *Annual reviews*: reviewing major evaluation findings and conclusions based on evaluation studies completed during the preceding year (see, for example, [How to conduct an annual review?](#))

- *Data use calendar*: guides the collection of data and reporting requirements, as well as ensuring that analysis and evaluation data is actively used (see, for example, [a data use calendar](#) that includes the key recommendations and issues for a range of stakeholders, and provides clear next steps and time frames for follow up actions to take place).
- *Management response*: a written response to the recommendations made in the evaluation report. The response might agree, partially agree or disagree with a recommendation and should provide an explanation for any partial acceptance or rejection of a recommendation. For recommendations that have been accepted, or partially accepted, key follow-up actions should be identified, with a time frame specified and the responsible unit named. It is important to identify an individual to coordinate the management response and an agreed deadline by which comments must be provided. The management should respond timely, for example, within two months of receiving the final evaluation report (see, for example, [guidance on preparing management responses](#))
- *Recommendations tracking*: keeping a transparent record of the responses to and action from recommendations (see, for example, a [recommendation tracking matrix](#) and how it can be used).

## Product

The following item is a potential output from this sub-step. Where possible, it might be useful to research other deliverables that have also been shown to be effective.

- Evaluation use documentation

## IDRC-specific information

IDRC programs can include a range of ways in which the use of evaluations is supported. Below are some examples for disseminating evaluation findings and engaging users and influencing change. Keep in mind supporting use is, typically, an additional step after comments have been invited on a draft evaluation report or other output. When people comment on a draft report, they are providing additional data, sharpening analysis, and, generally focusing on critiquing the consultants' report.

### Examples of dissemination of evaluation findings:

- When programs inform grantees that a program evaluation is underway and solicit their participation in data collection, the program also lets the grantees know when and how they will be able to access the final evaluation report. See, for example, [an email](#) sent out alerting grantees to an external review report.
- Sharing the evaluation findings with users can be done in many different formats: as a summary document, full report, a [website](#), a news piece on a program's website, and/or a blog.

### Examples of engagement of users and influencing change:

- Users may write the recommendations: some evaluations limit the work of external consultants to collecting data and providing the evaluation findings and conclusions. The users of the evaluation themselves decide what recommendations they draw from the evaluation.
- Some programs have invited their evaluators to present the evaluation in a team meeting in which the team discusses the recommendations and decides priority actions based on the evaluation findings.
- Program and/or management responses: some evaluations have formally documented the reflections of the users of the evaluation. For example, the Pan Asia Networking team wrote a response to both the

process and findings of the evaluation of the program's networking approach and included it as an annex in the publicly-available report (see: <https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/handle/10625/39270>, p.47 onwards). Management responses are filed among each set of documents from the 2015 external reviews (see, for example: <https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/handle/10625/54112>).

- Evaluations are often used repeatedly over time. Some IDRC staff wanted to situate the new Climate Change Program as part of trajectory of programming on climate change adaptation that had started more than ten years earlier. So, they started their [annual meeting](#) by revisiting their evaluations and their own recollections about major achievements and areas for improvement from three previous climate change programs. They used these as inputs for the new strategy development.

## Resources

- [Support use](#)  
Plan processes to support primary intended users to make decisions and take action on the basis of the findings.
- [UNESCO guidelines for follow-up to evaluation findings](#)

This four-page paper provides an overview to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) procedures for evaluation follow up and a template for managers to detail their action plans in response to evaluation findings.