

Identify who are the primary intended users of the evaluation and what will they use it for

In most cases, the evaluation will have multiple uses. By clarifying and making explicit the intended use(s) of the evaluation for each user, it is easier to have transparent and informed discussions and decisions about the priorities for the evaluation, to focus its attention, and to ensure that all methodological and procedural decisions are made with attention being paid to their likely effect on the utilization of the evaluation.

The primary **intended users** are *not* all those who have a stake in the evaluation, nor are they the general audience. They are the specific people, in a specific position, in a specific organization who will use the evaluation findings and who have the capacity to effect change. From start to end, the evaluation process should be designed and carried out around the needs of the primary intended users. They have the responsibility to do things differently (e.g., make decisions, change strategies, take action, change policies, etc.), because of their engagement in the evaluation process and/or with the evaluation findings.

Determining the **intended use(s)** of an evaluation typically involves a negotiation between the evaluator(s) and the primary intended user(s). By involving all primary intended users in this negotiation, the various perspectives are better represented and consensus can be reached about the priority use(s).

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.

- List of primary intended users and their uses for the evaluation

IDRC-specific information

See: [Identifying Intended Use\(s\) and User\(s\) of an Evaluation](#) – this IDRC guideline highlights the importance of identifying the primary intended user(s) and the intended use(s) of an evaluation and outlines a variety of methods that can be used to achieve this in the initial planning stage.

Resources

- [Identify primary intended users](#)
Clarify who will actually use the evaluation—not in vague, general terms (e.g. "decision makers") but in terms of specific identifiable people (e.g. the manager and staff of the programme; the steering committee; funders deciding whether to fund this programme or similar programmes in the future).
- [Decide purposes](#)
Clarify the intended uses of this evaluation—is it to support improvement, for accountability,

for knowledge building? Is there a specific timeframe required (for example, to inform a specific decision or funding allocations)? If there are multiple purposes, decide how you will balance these.