

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.