

C4D: Establish Decision making processes

What is it?

Many decisions will need to be made in the course of planning and implementing research monitoring and evaluation. To think about and implement effective decisions it is useful consider the following: a) to be explicit about and agree on what structures and processes will be used to make decisions, b) which specific participants should be/could be involved in the various decision making processes, c) to distinguish between the decision-making group (which might be labelled a [steering group](#) or a task force) and an [advisory group](#) (which can provide technical or cultural advice, but cannot make decisions), d) to be clear about how decisions will be made, which could be on the basis of [consensus](#) (which aims to find decisions which everyone can accept), [hierarchical](#) (on the basis of formal positions of authority) or [majority](#), e) establish the extent to which each group will be involved or informed of each decision.

General information

The Rainbow Framework page "[Establish decision making processes](#)" outlines generalist methods in relation to types of decision making structures, processes for exploring issues, and processes for making decisions.

[Step 1 of the BetterEvaluation Manager's Guide to Evaluation](#) guides the development of the following products:

- Evaluation management plan
- Decision-making matrix
- List of responsibilities for the evaluation manager
- List of responsibilities for the evaluator
- Information about Joint Evaluations towards an Evaluation Partnership Agreement

These pages are recommended background reading before considering methods to apply to C4D.

Applying the C4D principles

Participatory

The C4D Evaluation Framework would encourage participatory decision making processes where possible. This means that stakeholders are actively engaged in decision making about the framing and design of R,M&E. This task is an opportunity to formalise the involvement of stakeholders in decision making.

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Learning-based

Decision-making processes and structures (such as an ongoing technical working group) should emphasise leadership and responsibilities for knowledge management, exchange and utilisation to ensure continuous

learning, mutual understanding and creative ideas and thinking.

Complex

Decision-making about how the evaluation will be done (including framing its purpose and questions, choosing an evaluation team, approving an evaluation plan and an evaluation report) may need to include different stakeholders. If the key stakeholders change, the decision making structures and processes might need to be flexible. Sometimes we may need to revisit decisions that have already been made.

Recommended methods and adaptations for C4D

Advisory and working groups/committees:

- Consider the creation of one or more of the following:

- [Steering group](#)

An M&E/evaluation/study steering committee or 'technical working group' to work through decisions and take forward actions (this could include representatives from all stakeholder groups).

- [Advisory group](#)

A technical advisory committee or ad hoc technical advisors to provide expert advice and recommendations (this may include local/regional experts) .

- [Citizen juries](#)

A community jury or consultation committee to review proposals, work through decisions and take forward actions (this may include, for example, local NGOs, Faith-Based Groups, activists, children's/adolescents/parents/etc. committees).

Joint evaluations

- [Address particular evaluation management issues relating to joint projects, including donor partnerships](#)

This page of the Manager's Guide provides useful information for thinking about different kinds of joint evaluations and how this influences decision-making processes.

Decision making matrix

- Consider creating a decision-making matrix as outlined in the example below. This can be useful to:
 - set out the kinds of decisions that will need to be made about the R,M&E (in this case, an evaluation).

- clarify the roles of different groups in the different decisions
- clarify the roles of each group in the different decisions, for instance, are they:
 - consulted
 - informed
 - integral to the discussions
 - required to approve

For instance, when deciding the focus of the evaluation, a technical sub-group might *propose* the focus, the technical working group might *discuss* and *meet consensus agreement*, and the evaluation team might be *informed* of the decision.

For more information see [Step 1 of the Manager's Guide to Evaluation](#).