



## Manage an evaluation or evaluation system

Manage an evaluation (or a series of evaluations), including deciding who will conduct the evaluation and who will make decisions about it.

### 1. Understand and engage with stakeholders

Who needs to be involved in the evaluation? How can they be identified and engaged?

#### *Understand stakeholders*

**Community scoping:** developing a more in-depth understanding of a community of interest by providing information about its social diversity, history, existing networks, and overall socio-economic characteristics.

**Stakeholder mapping and analysis:** identifying different stakeholders' level of interest and influence.

**Understanding and taking into account the priorities and concerns of different stakeholders informs evaluation planning, communication strategies during and after the evaluation and supports the utilization of evaluation findings.**

#### *Engage stakeholders*

**Community fairs:** organising a community event with the aim of providing information about the project and raising the awareness of relevant issues.

**Fishbowl technique:** managing group discussion about relevant issues.

**Formal meeting processes:** guidance on processes for running formal meetings.

**Informal meeting processes:** a conversation between an evaluator and a key stakeholder that is not conducted in a formal way but is still seeking the same outcomes.

### 2. Establish decision making processes

Who will have the authority to make what type of decisions about the evaluation? Who will provide advice or make recommendations about the evaluation? What processes will be used for making decisions?

#### *Types of structures*

**Advisory group:** forming a group to provide advice on evaluations without making any actual decisions.

**Citizen Juries:** using representatives from the wider community to make decisions about possible approaches or options.

**Steering group:** establishing a group to make decisions about an evaluation.

#### *Ways of operating*

**Consensus decision making:** decision making processes that aims to find decisions which everyone can accept.

**Formal meeting processes:** guidance on processes for running formal meetings.

#### **Approaches**

**Participatory evaluation:** involving key stakeholders in the evaluation process.

**Hierarchical decision making:** making decisions on the basis of formal positions of authority.

**Informal meeting processes:** a conversation between an evaluator and a key stakeholder that is not conducted in a formal way but is still seeking the same outcomes.

**Majority decision making:** basing decisions which have the support of the majority of the decision makers.

**Round robin:** a structured process for generating ideas in a group.

**Six Hats Thinking:** promoting holistic and lateral thinking in decision-making and evaluation by using different roles.

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### 3. Decide who will conduct the evaluation

Who will actually conduct the evaluation?

**Community:** conducting an evaluation by using the broader community or groups of intended beneficiaries.

**Expert Review:** conducting an evaluation by using someone with specific content knowledge or expert judgment and professional expertise.

**External Consultant:** contracting an external consultant to conduct the evaluation.

**Hybrid - Internal and External Evaluation:** a combination of internal staff and an external (usually expert) opinion to jointly conduct an evaluation.

#### Approaches

**Horizontal Evaluation:** conducting an evaluation through a structured approach to peer learning.

**Internal Staff:** conducting an evaluation using staff from the implementing agency.

**Learning Alliances:** bringing together different groups to conduct the evaluation.

**Peer Review:** conducting an evaluation using individuals/organizations who are working on similar projects.

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### 4. Determine and secure resources

What resources (time, money, and expertise) will be needed for the evaluation and how can they be obtained? Consider both internal (e.g. staff time) and external (e.g. previous participants' time).

*Determine resources needed:*

**Evaluation budget matrix:** creating a budget using an evaluation budget matrix.

**Evaluation costing:** calculating the costs of an evaluation including time, money and expertise.

**Resources stocktake:** stocktaking resources for an evaluation which can include people's time and expertise, equipment and funding.

*Secure resources needed:*

**Designated staff time for evaluation:** at the proposal or planning stage, ensuring that staff have time to conduct, participate in or reflect on the results of evaluations as part of organizational learning.

**Grant funding for evaluation:** writing evaluation in to grants and/or writing a separate grant to request funding for an evaluation.

**Institutionalized budget allocation:** having a policy where funding allocation for evaluation is built into project and program budgets (either a fixed amount or a percentage of the total budget).

**Reduced evaluation costs:** reducing the costs is an option to consider if evaluation costs outweigh the predicted benefits.

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### 5. Define ethical and quality evaluation standards

What will be considered a high quality and ethical evaluation? How should ethical issues be addressed?

**Cultural Competency:** ensuring the influence of culture on human behaviour is taken into consideration during the evaluation.

**Ethical guidelines:** institutional or organizational rules or norms that guide evaluation practice, especially regarding vulnerable populations.

**Evaluation standards:** core national or internationally agreed best practice for conducting evaluation.

**Institutional review board:** a committee set up by an organization or institution to monitor the ethical and technical research and evaluation conducted by its members.

## 6. Document management processes and agreements

How will you document the evaluation's management processes and agreements made?

*Document setting out what is needed in an evaluation:*

**Terms of Reference:** sets out the purpose(s) of the evaluation and its key evaluation questions, as well as a timeline (and possibly the available budget and existing data resources); for external evaluations this can include contractual arrangements. In some cases this includes an evaluation plan setting out the methodology.

**Request for Proposals (RFP):** RFPs (also known as Request for Application or Request for Quotation) are formal request for evaluators to prepare a response to a planned evaluation and are generally used to select the final evaluator for the evaluation.

*Document setting out how different organizations will work together:*

**Contractual Agreement:** creating formal contracts to engage external evaluators.

**Memorandum of Understanding:** high level agreement between two or more organizations committing to work together.

## 7. Develop an evaluation plan, framework or policy

What is the overall plan for the evaluation? Is there a larger evaluation framework across several related evaluations?

**Evaluation framework:** provides an overall framework across different evaluations, such as individual projects within a program.

**Evaluation plan:** set out the proposed details of an evaluation including what, how and when an evaluation will take place.

**Evaluation policy:** processes, structures and principles which will guide individual evaluation and the development of evaluation capacity within an organization.

## 8. Review evaluation (do meta-evaluation)

How will evaluation reports be reviewed before they are finalized? Will there be a review of the evaluation process to improve this?

**Beneficiary exchange:** seeking feedback from the beneficiaries by discussing the findings with them.

**Expert review:** reviewing the evaluation by using subject experts, either individually or as a panel.

**External review:** garnering feedback from external experts or anonymous reviewers.

**Group critical reflection:** facilitating a group stakeholder feedback session.

**Individual critical reflection:** asking particular individual stakeholders for their independent feedback.

**Peer review:** reviewing the evaluation by using peers from within the organisation or outside of the organisation.

## 9. Develop evaluation capacity

How can the ability of individuals, groups and organizations to conduct and use evaluations be strengthened?

**Conferences:** attendance at professional conferences to understand how other evaluators frame and discuss their findings is a key component of building evaluation capacity.

**Mentoring:** supporting a colleague by sharing professional and personal experiences in order to support their development and growth.

**Peer review:** reviewing the evaluation by using peers from within the organisation or outside of the organisation.

**Training and formal education:** developing people's knowledge and skills in conducting and/or managing an evaluation.

Find options (methods), resources and more information on these tasks and approaches online at [http://betterevaluation.org/plan/manage\\_evaluation](http://betterevaluation.org/plan/manage_evaluation)