# The African Evaluation Guidelines: 2002

## A checklist to assist in planning evaluations, negotiating clear contracts, reviewing progress and ensuring adequate completion of an evaluation.

Nairobi M&E Network, African Evaluation Association Secretariat, Réseau Nigérian de Suivi et Evaluation, Cape Verde Evaluation Network, Réseau Malagache de Suivi et Evaluation, Comoros Evaluation Network, Eritrean Evaluation Network, Malawi M&E Network, Réseau National de Chercheurs et Evaluateurs de Burundi, Rwanda Evaluation Network, UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Region M&E Network

## Utility: The utility guidelines are intended to ensure that an evaluation will serve the information needs of intended users *and be owned by stakeholders*.

***U1. (modified) Stakeholder Identification.*** Persons and organizations involved in or affected by the evaluation (with special attention to beneficiaries at community level) should be identified and included in the evaluation process, so that their needs can be addressed and so that the evaluation findings are utilizable and owned by stakeholders, to the extent this is useful, feasible and allowed.

***U2 Evaluator Credibility.***The persons conducting the evaluation should be both trustworthy and competent to perform the evaluation, so that the evaluation findings achieve maximum credibility and acceptance.

***U3 Information Scope and Selection.*** Information collected should be broadly selected to address pertinent questions about the program and be responsive to the needs and interests of clients and other specified stakeholders.

***U4 (modified) Values Identification.*** The perspectives, procedures, and rationale used to interpret the findings should be carefully described, so that the bases for value judgments are clear. The possibility of allowing multiple interpretations of findings should be transparently preserved, provided that these interpretations respond to stakeholders’ concerns and needs for utilization purposes.

***U5 Report Clarity.*** Evaluation reports should clearly describe the program being evaluated, including its context, and the purposes, procedures, and findings of the evaluation, so that essential information is provided and easily understood.

**U6 (*modified*) *Report Timeliness and Dissemination.*** Significant interim findings and evaluation reports should be disseminated to intended users, so that they can be used in a reasonably timely fashion, to the extent that this is useful, feasible and allowed. Comments and feedback of intended users on interim findings should be taken into consideration prior to the production of the final report.

***U7 Evaluation Impact.*** Evaluations should be planned, conducted, and reported in ways that encourage follow through by stakeholders, so that the likelihood that the evaluation will be used is increased.

## Feasibility: The feasibility guidelines are intended to ensure that an evaluation will be realistic, prudent, diplomatic, and frugal.

***F1 Practical Procedures.*** The evaluation procedures should be practical, to deep disruption to a minimum while needed information is obtained.

***F2 (modified) Political Viability.*** The evaluation should be planned and conducted with anticipation of the different positions of various interest groups, so that their cooperation may be obtained, and so that possible attempts by any of these groups to curtail evaluation operations or to bias or misapply the results can be averted or counteracted to the extent that this is feasible in the given institutional and national situation.

***F3 (modified) Cost Effectiveness.*** The evaluation should be efficient and produce information of sufficient value, so that the resources expended can be justified. It should keep within its budget and account for its own expenditures.

## Propriety - The propriety guidelines are intended to ensure that an evaluation will be conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of those involved in the evaluation, as well as those affected by its results.

***P1 Service Orientation.*** Evaluation should be designed to assist organizations to address and effectively serve the needs of the full range of targeted participants.

***P2 (modified) Formal Agreements.*** Obligations of the formal parties to an evaluation (what is to be done, how, by whom, when) should be agreed to through dialogue and in writing, to the extent that this is feasible and appropriate, so that these parties have a common understanding of all the conditions of the agreement and hence are in a position to formally renegotiate it if necessary. Specific attention should be paid to informal and implicit aspects of expectations of all parties to the contract.

***P3 (modified) Rights of Human Participants.*** Evaluation should be designed and conducted to respect and protect the rights and welfare of human subjects and the communities of which they are members. The confidentiality of personal information collected from various sources must be strictly protected.

***P4 (modified) Human Interaction.*** Evaluators should respect human dignity and worth in their interactions with other persons associated with an evaluation, so that participants are not threatened or harmed or their cultural or religious values compromised.

***P5 Complete and Fair Assessment.*** The evaluation should be complete and fair in its examination and recording of strengths and weaknesses of the program being evaluated, so that strengths can be built upon and problem areas addressed.

***P6 (modified) Disclosure of Findings.*** The formal parties to an evaluation should ensure that the full set of evaluation finding along with pertinent limitations are made accessible to the persons affected by the evaluation, and any others with expressed legal rights to receive the results as far as possible. The evaluation team and the evaluating institution will determine what is deemed possible, to ensure that the needs for confidentiality of national or governmental entities and of the contracting agents are respected, and that the evaluators are not exposed to potential harm.

***P7 Conflict of Interest.*** Conflict of interest should be dealt with openly and honestly, so that it does not compromise the evaluation processes and results.

***P8 Fiscal Responsibility.*** The evaluator’s allocation and expenditure of resources should reflect sound accountability procedures and otherwise be prudent and ethically responsible, so that expenditures are accounted for and appropriate.

## Accuracy - The accuracy guidelines are intended to ensure that an evaluation will reveal and convey technically adequate information about the features that determine worth of merit of the program being evaluated.

***A1 (modified) Program Documentation.*** The program being evaluated should be described clearly and accurately, so that the program is clearly identified, with attention paid to personal and verbal communications as well as written records.

***A2 (modified) Context Analysis.*** The context in which the program exists should be examined in enough detail, including political, social, cultural and environmental aspects, so that its likely influences on the program can be identified and assessed.

***A3 Described Purposes and Procedures.*** The purposes and procedures of the evaluation should be monitored and described in enough detail, so that they can be identified and assessed.

***A4 (modified) Defensible Information Sources.*** The sources of information used in a program evaluation should be described in enough detail, so that the adequacy of the information can be assessed, without compromising any necessary anonymity or cultural or individual sensitivities of respondents.

***A5 (modified) Valid Information.*** The information gathering procedures should be chosen or developed and then implemented so that they will assure that the implementation arrived at is valid for the intended use. Information that is likely to be susceptible to biased reporting should be checked using a range of methods and from a variety of sources.

***A6 Reliable Information.*** The information gathering procedures should be chosen or developed and then implemented so that they will assure that the information obtained is sufficiently reliable for the intended use.

***A7 Systematic Information.*** The information collected, processed, and reported in an evaluation should be systematically reviewed and any errors found should be corrected.

***A8 Analysis of Quantitative Information.***  Quantitative information in an evaluation should be appropriately and systematically analyzed so that evaluation questions are effectively answered.

***A9 Analysis of Qualitative Information.*** Qualitative information in an evaluation should be appropriately and systematically analyzed so that evaluation questions are effectively answered.

***A10 Justified Conclusions.*** The conclusions reached in an evaluation should be explicitly justified, so that stakeholders can assess them.

***A11 Impartial Reporting.*** Reporting procedures should guard against distortion caused y personal feelings and biases of any party to the evaluation, so that evaluation reports fairly reflect the evaluation findings.

***A12 Meta-evaluation.*** The evaluation itself should be formatively and summatively evaluated against these and other pertinent guidelines, so that its conduct is appropriately guided and, on completion, stakeholders can closely examine its strengths and weakness.

## Annex 2: African Evaluation Guidelines – Checklist for Discussion between Contractor and Evaluator at Start of Evaluation

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| **Guidelines** | **Relevant** | **Irrelevant** | **Details of Type of Coverage or Consideration of this Issue Required** |
| **UTILITY GUIDELINES** |  |  |  |
| U1 Stakeholder Identification |  |  |  |
| U2 Evaluator Credibility |  |  |  |
| U3 Information Scope and Selection |  |  |  |
| U4 Values Identification |  |  |  |
| U5 Report Clarity |  |  |  |
| U6 Report Timeliness and Dissemination |  |  |  |
| U7 Evaluation Impact |  |  |  |
| **FEASIBILITY GUIDELINES** |  |  |  |
| F1 Practical Procedures |  |  |  |
| F2 Political Viability |  |  |  |
| F3 Cost Effectiveness |  |  |  |
| **PROPRIETY GUIDELINES** |  |  |  |
| P1 Service Orientation |  |  |  |
| P2 Formal Agreements |  |  |  |
| P3 Rights of Human Participants |  |  |  |
| P4 Human Interactions |  |  |  |
| P5 Complete and Fair Assessment |  |  |  |
| P6 Disclosure of Findings |  |  |  |
| P7 Conflict of Interests |  |  |  |
| P8 Fiscal Responsibility |  |  |  |
| **ACCURACY GUIDELINES** |  |  |  |
| A1 Program Documentation |  |  |  |
| A2 Context Analysis |  |  |  |
| A3 Described Purposes and Procedures |  |  |  |
| A4 Defensible Information Sources |  |  |  |
| A5 Valid Information |  |  |  |
| A6 Reliable Information |  |  |  |
| A7 Systematic Information |  |  |  |
| A8 Analysis of Quantitative Information |  |  |  |
| A9 Analysis of Qualitative Information |  |  |  |
| A10 Justified Conclusions |  |  |  |
| A11 Impartial Reporting |  |  |  |
| A12 Metaevaluation |  |  |  |

## Annex 3: African Evaluation Guidelines – Matrix to Check Adequacy of the First Draft of an Evaluation

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| **Guidelines** | **Adequate** | **Inadequate** | **Irrelevant** | **Suggestions on How to Achieve Adequacy** |
| **UTILITY GUIDELINES** |  |  |  |  |
| U1 Stakeholder Identification |  |  |  |  |
| U2 Evaluator Credibility |  |  |  |  |
| U3 Information Scope and Selection |  |  |  |  |
| U4 Values Identification |  |  |  |  |
| U5 Report Clarity |  |  |  |  |
| U6 Report Timeliness and Dissemination |  |  |  |  |
| U7 Evaluation Impact |  |  |  |  |
| **FEASIBILITY GUIDELINES** |  |  |  |  |
| F1 Practical Procedures |  |  |  |  |
| F2 Political Viability |  |  |  |  |
| F3 Cost Effectiveness |  |  |  |  |
| **PROPRIETY GUIDELINES** |  |  |  |  |
| P1 Service Orientation |  |  |  |  |
| P2 Formal Agreements |  |  |  |  |
| P3 Rights of Human Participants |  |  |  |  |
| P4 Human Interactions |  |  |  |  |
| P5 Complete and Fair Assessment |  |  |  |  |
| P6 Disclosure of Findings |  |  |  |  |
| P7 Conflict of Interests |  |  |  |  |
| P8 Fiscal Responsibility |  |  |  |  |
| **ACCURACY GUIDELINES** |  |  |  |  |
| A1 Program Documentation |  |  |  |  |
| A2 Context Analysis |  |  |  |  |
| A3 Described Purposes and Procedures |  |  |  |  |
| A4 Defensible Information Sources |  |  |  |  |
| A5 Valid Information |  |  |  |  |
| A6 Reliable Information |  |  |  |  |
| A7 Systematic Information |  |  |  |  |
| A8 Analysis of Quantitative Information |  |  |  |  |
| A9 Analysis of Qualitative Information |  |  |  |  |
| A10 Justified Conclusions |  |  |  |  |
| A11 Impartial Reporting |  |  |  |  |
| A12 Metaevaluation |  |  |  |  |

## Annex 4: African Evaluation Guidelines – Matrix to Check Adequacy of Completion of Contract/Work at the End of Evaluation

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| **Guidelines** | **Met** | **Partly Met** | **Not Met** | **Irrelevant** | **Suggestions for Ideas for improvement** |
| **UTILITY GUIDELINES** |  |  |  |  |  |
| U1 Stakeholder Identification |  |  |  |  |  |
| U2 Evaluator Credibility |  |  |  |  |  |
| U3 Information Scope and Selection |  |  |  |  |  |
| U4 Values Identification |  |  |  |  |  |
| U5 Report Clarity |  |  |  |  |  |
| U6 Report Timeliness and Dissemination |  |  |  |  |  |
| U7 Evaluation Impact |  |  |  |  |  |
| **FEASIBILITY GUIDELINES** |  |  |  |  |  |
| F1 Practical Procedures |  |  |  |  |  |
| F2 Political Viability |  |  |  |  |  |
| F3 Cost Effectiveness |  |  |  |  |  |
| **PROPRIETY GUIDELINES** |  |  |  |  |  |
| P1 Service Orientation |  |  |  |  |  |
| P2 Formal Agreements |  |  |  |  |  |
| P3 Rights of Human Participants |  |  |  |  |  |
| P4 Human Interactions |  |  |  |  |  |
| P5 Complete and Fair Assessment |  |  |  |  |  |
| P6 Disclosure of Findings |  |  |  |  |  |
| P7 Conflict of Interests |  |  |  |  |  |
| P8 Fiscal Responsibility |  |  |  |  |  |
| **ACCURACY GUIDELINES** |  |  |  |  |  |
| A1 Program Documentation |  |  |  |  |  |
| A2 Context Analysis |  |  |  |  |  |
| A3 Described Purposes and Procedures |  |  |  |  |  |
| A4 Defensible Information Sources |  |  |  |  |  |
| A5 Valid Information |  |  |  |  |  |
| A6 Reliable Information |  |  |  |  |  |
| A7 Systematic Information |  |  |  |  |  |
| A8 Analysis of Quantitative Information |  |  |  |  |  |
| A9 Analysis of Qualitative Information |  |  |  |  |  |
| A10 Justified Conclusions |  |  |  |  |  |
| A11 Impartial Reporting |  |  |  |  |  |
| A12 Metaevaluation |  |  |  |  |  |