Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
Specialist Service Evaluation and Controlling

SDC Guidance for Evaluation

Evaluations provide important insights into relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of projects and programmes (co-)financed by the SDC. They serve the purpose of steering, learning and accountability.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

3ie	The International Initiative for Impact Evaluation
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
CLP	Core Learning Partnership
CPE	Cooperation Programme Evaluation
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
EC	Specialist Service Evaluation and Controlling
EvalNet	Network on Development Evaluation of the OECD-DAC
FDFA	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
GEI	Global Evaluation Initiative
IEG	The Independent Evaluation Group
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
IOCE	International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
PHRD	Peace and Human Rights Division
QD	Quality and Digitalisation
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
ToRs	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
VOPE	Voluntary Organization for Professional Evaluation
WBG	World Bank Group

Contents

Purpose and Coverage of the Guidance 4

Evaluations at SDC

Context, Purpose and Definition 5
Evaluation Architecture and Governance 6
Types of Evaluations 7
Evaluation Principles 8
Evaluation Criteria 10
Evaluation Planning and Obligation 11
Evaluation Process 12

Annexes

Annex 1: Swiss Players in Audit, Monitoring and Evaluation 14
Annex 2: International Organisations Active in Evaluations 15
Annex 3: Reference Documents 17
Annex 4: Visualisation of the Evaluation Process 18
Annex 5: Classifications of Evaluations 19
Annex 6: Decision Tree Evaluation 21

Purpose and Coverage of the Guidance

The present guidance document replaces the former *SDC Evaluation Policy* dated from 2018. Its purpose is to enable SDC staff to understand what evaluations are and how the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) uses them. The guidance states principles and provides an overview of the standard evaluation process.

This guidance is addressed to SDC staff. It can also serve partners and implementers of SDC-financed interventions and the wider general public as a source of information on SDC's principles for evaluations.

The guidance is a normative document. It covers all evaluation activities for all of the organisational units of SDC, including head office and cooperation offices. It applies to all SDC evaluations of projects, cooperation programmes and programmatic frameworks. It also defines when evaluations are mandatory.

In the case of core funding to international organisations and to Swiss NGOs (programme contributions), the responsible SDC unit works to ensure that international standards (e.g., OECD DAC, World Bank Independent Evaluation Group (IEG), United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)) and the spirit of this guidance are reflected in the evaluation policy and the evaluation practice of the international organisation or the Swiss NGO[1].

For projects financed by SDC together with other donors, joint evaluations are strongly recommended in the spirit of donor harmonisation[2]. For joint evaluations, the present guidance serves as a guiding principle for the inputs of the responsible SDC unit regarding the approach, design, process and utilisation of these evaluations.

The guidance describes the evaluation landscape at SDC, in particular the architecture and governance, standard evaluation criteria, and processes.

[1] See also the work of Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN). It is an independent network of donors of multilateral organisation (for more information refer to Annex 2: International Organisations Active in Evaluations).

[2] For details see *DAC Evaluation Series Guidance for Managing Joint Evaluations*

Evaluations at SDC

Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation
Art. 170: The Federal Assembly shall ensure that federal measures are evaluated with regard to their effectiveness.

Federal law on international development cooperation and HA
Art. 9, para. 3: The Federal Council shall monitor the effective use of the funds approved under this Act. It shall report on this to the Federal Assembly when it applies for a new framework credit.

Subsidy Act
Art. 1, para. 1, b.: achieve its purpose in an economical and effective manner.

Figure 1: Legal context in Switzerland

Context, Purpose and Definition

The mandate to measure the effectiveness of the funds used by SDC derives from the Swiss Constitution, laws and the International Cooperation Strategy. The way in which SDC implements this mandate is set out in this guidance and the respective how-to notes. The effective use of resources is of paramount importance; their use must be justified and efficient.

Evaluations serve three interrelated *purposes* at the SDC:

- Evidence-based *steering* of programmes, projects, initiatives, cooperation programmes, programmatic frameworks, networks and policy dialogue;
- *Learning* with a view to improving the quality and results of international cooperation by gathering knowledge about what works, and why it works;
- *Accountability* through reporting and communicating the results of development cooperation to stakeholders, such as the Swiss Parliament and the wider public in Switzerland and abroad, including target populations.

In SDC project evaluations all three purposes are usually present to a certain degree. When planning an evaluation, SDC staff must consider which purpose(s) the evaluation will serve and must mention the purpose(s) in the ToRs.
SDC adheres to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) definition of evaluation:

> **"The systematic and objective assessment of a planned, ongoing or completed intervention, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Evaluation also refers to the process of determining the worth or significance of an intervention."[3]**

At SDC, an evaluation must be *useful*, *credible* and *independent*.[4]

The professional qualification of the evaluator(s), the absence of involvement in the evaluated intervention (independence) of the evaluator(s) and the use of evaluation methods for the generation of evidence are important for conducting a credible evaluation. Stakeholder involvement, e. g., through the use of an (internal) reference group or hybrid evaluation teams (external experts and SDC employees), promotes the usefulness of evaluation.

[3] OECD (2023). *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-based Management for Sustainable Development (Second Edition)*, OECD Publishing, Paris

[4] Based on: United Nations Evaluation Group, UNEG (2016). Norms and Standards for Evaluation. New York. UNEG is an interagency professional network that brings together the evaluation units of the UN system. Further UNEG norms include ethics, professionalism, transparency. See also: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, BMZ (2023). Evaluating German Development Cooperation, BMZ Evaluation Policy, Bonn and Berlin.

Evaluation Architecture and Governance

SDC distinguishes between the decentralised evaluation function (the responsibility of operational units) and the centralised evaluation function (the responsibility of the directorate). SDC's directorate delegates its responsibility for evaluations to the Specialist Service Evaluation and Controlling. The directorate approves the evaluation plan for centralised evaluations for the period of the International Cooperation Strategy. When necessary, the plan is updated. The directorate is also responsible for the elaboration of the senior management responses of thematic and institutional evaluations. The directorate fosters the use of evidence on an institutional level.

On behalf of the directorate, the Specialist Service Evaluation and Controlling (EC) mandates and manages thematic and institutional evaluations, a limited number of cooperation programme evaluations (CPEs) and a few ex-post evaluations. Evaluations conducted by EC are external and are referred to as independent. EC is responsible for the entire process of the evaluations it manages, from conception to completion and tracking of measures. SDC operational units support and participate in these evaluations with best efforts, as they are of primary importance to SDC. EC defines quality standards for decentralised evaluations and regularly assesses the quality of decentralised evaluations.

Operational units are responsible for project and programme evaluations conducted by external evaluators. These evaluations constitute the majority of evaluations at SDC. On average, decentralised evaluations cover around 10 % of on-going projects per year. Operational units in particular have the following role in evaluations:

- The planning and management of evaluations and the follow-up of recommendations.
- Collaborating on evaluations carried out by EC, e. g., in coordination and management tasks, participation in reference or steering groups or core learning partnerships (CLPs), provision of data and information, participation in interviews or focus group discussions.

It is important to note the *differences between audit, monitoring and evaluation*: Evaluations are usually carried out occasionally and externally, examine programme/project objectives and logic, use advanced methods, draw conclusions and make recommendations. Monitoring

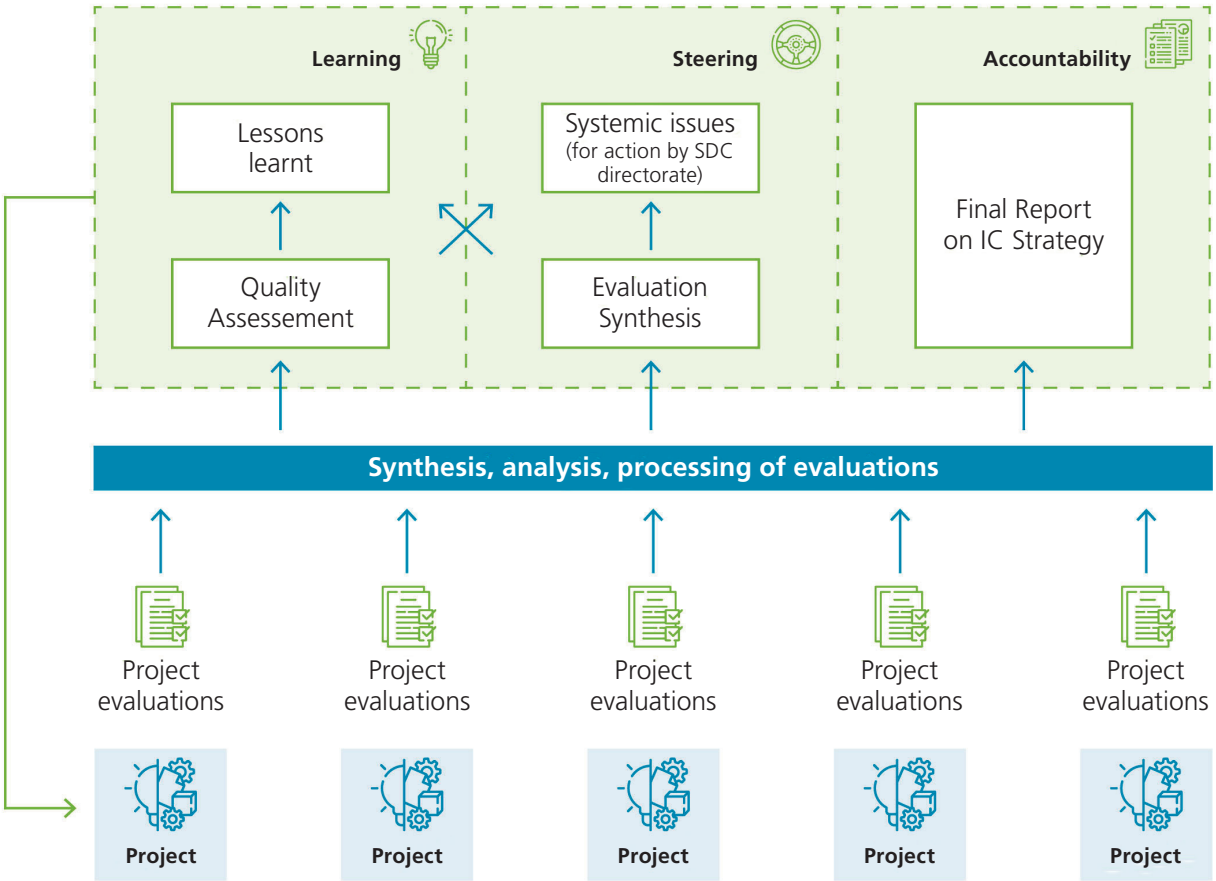

Figure 2: Contribution of decentralised evaluations to SDC's accountability, steering and learning architecture.

is a continuous task to control the implementation process, done inhouse and/or by the implementing organisation, using descriptive data collection according to predetermined indicators. Both should be combined to reach optimal synergies for process and strategic control and learning. Audits ensure compliance. Their main use is for quality assurance and (financial) accountability.

EC and the evaluation units of the other two international cooperation agencies in Switzerland, i. e., Economic Cooperation and Development of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the Peace and Human Rights Division (PHRD), exchange on and, where appropriate, coordinate their efforts. If and where relevant, joint strategic evaluations are conducted. The three units also jointly represent Switzerland in relevant national and international evaluation networks such as the OECD DAC EvalNet.

Decentralised, external evaluations mandated by operational units are important not only for the commissioning entity. Aside from contributing to steering, learning and accountability within the project and programme, they contribute to institutional learning, process improvement and accountability, as shown in Figure 2. In an aggregated way, they are used to inform the success rate of Swiss development cooperation interventions and contribute to the analysis presented in the final report on the implementation of the International Cooperation Strategy.

Evaluation capacity development (ECD) in SDC's partner countries is a further priority. It is implemented through dedicated training and capacity-building programmes or through the pairing of expert evaluators and less experienced evaluators. A mixed and diverse composition of evaluation teams makes for more relevant and credible evaluation findings and can contribute to the localisation of aid.

Types of Evaluations

The SDC distinguishes between the following frequently used types of evaluations and their characteristics. Centralised evaluations are mandated and managed by the Specialist Service Evaluation and Controlling (EC). Decentralised evaluations are mandated and managed by SDC's operational units (thematic sections and cooperation offices).

Type	Purpose and process	Centralised vs. decentralised	Frequency
Project/programme evaluations	These evaluations focus on a project or programme, mostly conducted during project implementation for steering purposes. They may also be carried out as ex-post or rigorous impact evaluations. Usually mandated to external experts (external evaluations), sometimes with the support of internal peers (hybrid format).	decentralised	80–100 per year
Cooperation programme evaluations (CPEs)	Cooperation programme evaluations inform the planning of the subsequent cooperation programme cycle and allow for strategic reflection. Usually conducted by a mixed team of external experts and internal peers (hybrid). If centralised: EC contracts the external expert and selects the team of peers.	both	Centralised and decentralised: 2–3 per year
Thematic/institutional evaluations	Thematic evaluations carried out by EC address the performance of thematic portfolios with high relevance for the International Cooperation Strategy. Institutional evaluations address cross-sector institutional issues relevant for the delivery of development cooperation. Thematic/institutional evaluations are accompanied by internal Core Learning Partnerships (CLP) and directed at SDC's senior management to inform decision-making at the strategic level.	centralised	2 per year

Type	Purpose and process	Centralised vs. decentralised	Frequency
Ex-post project evaluations	These evaluations are ideally undertaken 2 – 5 years after the intervention. They assess the sustainability of the results and impacts of a project over time and support reporting on effectiveness and results, hence contributing to accountability. EC selects the projects every two years through a random selection process.	centralised	1 – 2 per year
External evaluations	Evaluations carried out by entities or individuals outside of SDC and its implementing structure.	both	
Impact evaluations	Impact evaluations assess the degree to which an intervention meets its higher-level goals (impact and outcome) and identify the causal effects of the intervention. Rigorous impact evaluations use an experimental or quasi-experimental design to establish the causal link of the intervention to impact. At the SDC, selected project evaluations – some 15 in the past 10 years – have been conducted based on this design.	both	

Other related concepts include the *self-evaluation*, which is an internal assessment, often on the project or organisation level, without an external evaluation expert. The term *review* is used more comprehensively to describe any type of assessment, including evaluations in the sense of the present guidance.

Evaluation Principles

Evaluations are an integral part of SDC's corporate culture and results-based management and contribute to a greater coherence of development cooperation and evidence-based decision-making. To support their triple purpose of steering, learning and accountability, evaluations have to be useful, credible and independent.

Evaluations are carried out in a spirit of partnership and transparency. They align with the priorities and needs of the partner countries and take the interdependence of the social, environmental and economic dimensions of development into consideration. Evaluations consider and disaggregate different groups' perspectives and realities, with particular consideration of vulnerable population groups and gender aspects. Evaluations seek diversity, also by integrating local, regional and international expertise.

Each evaluation should formally adhere to *evaluation standards* defining key principles that serve to strengthen the credibility and quality of evaluations. The Swiss Evaluation Society (SEVAL) has developed the *Swiss Evaluation Standards*. They contain quality requirements for evaluations addressed to both evaluators and those commissioning evaluations[5]. Equally, the *OECD-DAC standards*, dating from 1991, are described in the publication *Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance*[6] and the 2010 *DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation*.[7]

In order to ensure that evaluations provide reliable evidence, evaluations at SDC must comply with the evaluation principles and fulfil minimum standards based on these principles.

[5] *SEVAL Standards – SEVAL*

[6] OECD (1991). *DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance*, Development Assistance Committee, Paris. *https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/2755284.pdf*

[7] OECD (2010). *Quality Standards for Development Evaluation*, Development Assistance Committee, Paris.

Utility	**Evaluation principle** In commissioning and conducting an evaluation there should be a clear intention to use the resulting analysis, conclusions or recommendations to inform decisions and actions. The utility of an evaluation is manifested in making relevant and timely contributions to organisational learning, informed decision-making processes and accountability for results. Evaluations can also make contributions that go beyond the organisation by generating knowledge and empowering stakeholders.
	Minimum standard • An evaluation takes place before important decisions/changes. Decision-makers are open to evidence. • A reasonable number of clear evaluation questions are formulated. • Recommendations are actionable, addressed and prioritised. • Relevant stakeholders participate in the evaluation process.
Credibility	**Evaluation principle** Evaluations must be credible. Credibility is grounded in independence, impartiality and a rigorous methodology. Key elements of credibility include transparent evaluation processes, inclusive approaches involving relevant stakeholders and robust quality assurance systems. Evaluation findings and recommendations are derived from the use of the best available, objective, reliable and valid data and by accurate quantitative and qualitative analysis of the evidence. Credibility requires that evaluations are conducted ethically and managed by evaluators that exhibit professionalism and cultural competencies.
	Minimum standard • Professional and qualified evaluators are recruited. • A sound evaluation approach, design and methods are employed. • Data collection and analyses use triangulation, are verifiable, transparent and fair. • Intended and unintended results are considered. • Report and management response are published. • Agreed measures are acted upon and tracked.
Independence	**Evaluation principle** The key elements of independence are objectivity, professional integrity and the absence of bias. Independence is required at all stages of the evaluation process, including in planning an evaluation, formulating the mandate and scope, selecting the evaluation team, providing access to stakeholders, conducting the evaluation and formulating findings and recommendations. Evaluators need to be impartial, implying that evaluation team members must not have been (or expect to be in the near future) directly responsible for the policy-setting, design or management of the subject of the evaluation. Independence in evaluation is necessary for credibility, influences the ways in which an evaluation is used and allows evaluators to be impartial and free from undue pressure throughout the evaluation process.
	Minimum standard • Evaluators are independent, impartial and unbiased. • Evaluators are granted access to documents and stakeholders. • There are no conflicts of interest, undue influence and pressure. • The evaluation processes consistently adhere to ethical and legal standards at every stage. • It is recommended that evaluations embrace and harness diversity (in the team, approach, data collection).

Table 1: Evaluation principles and minimum standards

Evaluation Criteria

As most members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee, SDC bases evaluations on the six criteria elaborated by DAC. First published in 1991 and reviewed several times since, most recently in 2019, the DAC Evaluation Criteria – relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact – have become the international standard for planning and conducting development evaluations.[8]

"The criteria are not intended to be applied in a standard, fixed way for every intervention or used in a tick-box fashion. Indeed, the criteria should be carefully interpreted or understood in relation to the intervention being evaluated. This encourages flexibility and adaptation of the criteria to each individual evaluation."[9]

Best international practice suggests that the criteria are applied according to the purpose and importance of the specific evaluation and of the concerned project's or programme's particular characteristics. That means: a given evaluation does not have to apply all criteria. For example, when evaluating a cooperation programme, focus on assessing relevance, coherence and effectiveness while discussing the potential of its impact.

To ensure that evaluation findings can be linked for accountability purposes to the objectives of Switzerland's International Cooperation Strategy, evaluations have to address the degree of alignment with the IC strategy under the criterion of *coherence*.

Humanitarian programmes have long been considered to have different evaluation priorities than development interventions. Accordingly, the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) has promoted the amendment of the DAC criteria by three additional criteria, namely coverage, coordination and connectedness.[10]

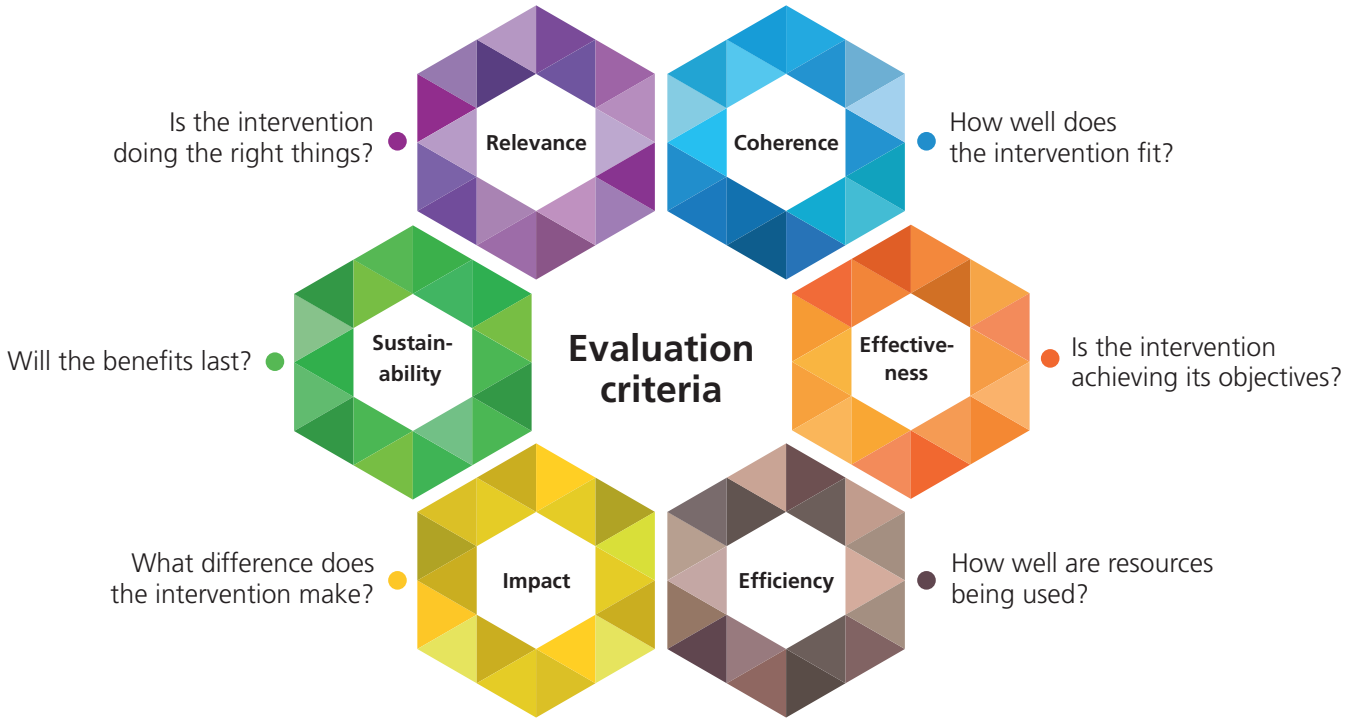

Figure 3: The DAC Evaluation Criteria (Source: Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully, OECD 2021)

[8] The DAC Network on Development Evaluation has originally suggested only five evaluation criteria. Coherence was newly added in the last comprehensive review in 2019.

[9] *Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully*, OECD 2021, pg. 24

[10] *See Evaluating humanitarian action using the OECD DAC criteria*, ALNAP 2006

However, current evaluation practice demonstrates that the existing set of criteria and the above-mentioned flexible approach leave ample room to cover the evaluation of humanitarian interventions without extra requirements. Recent research shows that the additional criteria are seldom applied and can easily be incorporated into the DAC criteria for effectiveness (coverage and coordination) and sustainability (connectedness).[11]

In the spirit of a *nexus approach* in development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, EC recommends that evaluations of humanitarian interventions are based on the DAC criteria, adapted to the purpose of a particular evaluation and integrating the specific evaluation questions where necessary.

Evaluation Planning and Obligation

Evaluation planning is part of the planning stage of a project (project document, credit proposal) or programme. Evaluations are permitted at each project stage, for each project financial volume, for each type of project, etc.

Evaluations can explore a limited number of key questions in depth. Evaluations engender a fair amount of work for the commissioning entity, the intervention being evaluated, consulted stakeholders, and the evaluators. Questions to be explored through an evaluation should be of sufficient importance to justify the effort. The evaluation questions should be evaluable, that is, they have the following characteristics:

1. It is possible to answer the questions through an evaluation.
2. The findings of the evaluation become available in a timely manner, that is in time to be considered for changes, new projects, decisions, etc.
3. Necessary data for the evaluation exist and are available and/or can be gathered/collected.
4. A sufficient budget is available.
5. Necessary conditions for an independent evaluation exist.

In support of accountability, steering and learning, evaluations are encouraged after each project phase, as necessary. In certain cases, evaluations are mandatory for purposes of accountability. The obligation to carry out an evaluation is determined by the cumulative budget of all phases.

- *CHF 20 million or more:* an evaluation is *mandatory for each phase* of the project.
- *CHF 10 million or more:* an evaluation is *mandatory once* during the project.

When a project is only evaluated once, the evaluation ideally takes place towards the end of the first phase (during the first four years of a project) in order to inform subsequent phases. Alternatively, the evaluation can take place at the end of the project.

Cooperation programme and programmatic framework evaluations are recommended, but not mandatory. Ideally, they take place during the second to last year of the cooperation programme/programmatic framework, so that they can provide input for the formulation of the new cooperation programme/programmatic framework.

The overall *responsibility for the evaluation process* lies with the respective management of the operational unit. It ensures that

1. the evaluation is concluded with a management response signed by the management of the responsible operational unit. The management also ensures that agreed measures are implemented and followed up.
2. the evaluation report together with the management response is published.

[11] See *Review of OECD DAC criteria for evaluating humanitarian action*, ALNAP 2023.

Evaluation Process

Table 2 below provides a brief summary of the main steps of the evaluation process. In-house evaluation trainings are available as part of the QD training cycle or through EC.

Step	Evaluations of Projects, Cooperation Programmes and Programmatic Frameworks
0	**Choice of tool** Before starting an evaluation process, it is crucial to determine if an evaluation is the right tool. Other tools include, for example, an expert opinion and a feasibility study. An evaluation builds on existing analyses, expert opinions, and data. It is not and cannot be a substitute for a monitoring system, risk management system, project appraisal, etc. Consider whether the intervention at hand is evaluable. ➔ Issues to be clarified are defined. An appropriate tool for the objective is used.
1	**Conceiving the evaluation** Definition of an appropriate approach, design, evaluation questions, projects or programmes to be included, timespan covered, geographic scope, timeline, field visits, and stakeholders to be consulted, in written form in the ToRs or the approach paper. If applicable, constitution of an advisory group or selection of SDC colleagues to participate as members of the evaluation team (peers). ➔ The evaluation is clearly defined in a way that is easy to understand by stakeholders and evaluators.
2	**Selecting evaluators** Writing of ToRs and following mandatory procurement procedures. ➔ Qualified and competent evaluators are selected.
3	**Initiating the evaluation** Organisation of a kick-off meeting. Evaluators conduct an initial document review. During the inception phase, evaluators clarify design, method, scope, coverage, evaluation questions, field visits and timeline and submit these in an inception report. The inception report is discussed in a meeting and finalised thereafter. ➔ There is a shared and documented understanding of the purpose, scope, coverage, design and method of the evaluation.
4	**Conducting the evaluation** Evaluators review documents, collect data, conduct interviews and focus group discussions, etc., visit project sites and consult other relevant sources. They then present the findings in a debriefing (or capitalisation) meeting. The focus is on presenting findings and ensuring that they are factually correct and that stakeholders understand and can relate to them. ➔ Solid and documented findings are produced, shared and understood.

Step	Evaluations of Projects, Cooperation Programmes and Programmatic Frameworks
5	**Writing the evaluation report** **Draft Evaluation Report** Based on the findings and the feedback from the meeting the evaluators elaborate conclusions and, based on conclusions, recommendations. The context, evaluation approach, design and method, the limitations of the evaluation, evaluation questions, findings, conclusions and recommendations are submitted in a draft evaluation report. The report is discussed in a meeting. The focus is on factual accuracy, clarity as well as concise and actionable recommendations. Recommendations must indicate their priority and the entity they are addressed to. The report should not be negotiated. It is an independent view; SDC might agree or disagree. It is OK to disagree. **Final Evaluation Report** Based on the feedback to the draft evaluation report the evaluators write the final evaluation report. ➔ A factually correct report that is easy to read and understand is produced. Recommendations are actionable, addressed and prioritised.
6	**Using and communicating the evaluation results** **Management Response** Based on the final evaluation report, management writes the management response. The management response provides an assessment of the evaluation and the evaluation process, takes position on individual recommendations (agree, partially agree, disagree) and defines measures in response to recommendations, including deadlines and responsibilities. **Dissemination** The evaluation report together with the management response is published. The evaluation must be transmitted to the Specialist Service Evaluation and Controlling to be included in *SDC's evaluation inventory* and published on *ARAMIS*. Further dissemination activities, such as workshops, presentations, webinars, mailing-lists, etc., are encouraged where appropriate. These measures should consider the institutional learning potential of an evaluation. **Follow-up** The programme manager follows up the implementation of the measures that have been decided upon up to a certain threshold, e. g. when 80 % of the measures have been implemented. ➔ The results of the evaluation are published and are known to relevant stakeholders. They are used for steering, learning and accountability. Measures are defined and implemented.

Table 2: Evaluation process

Annexes

Annex 1: Swiss Players in Audit, Monitoring and Evaluation

At SDC, players involved in this area are (national) programme officers, line management, SDC's Specialist Service Evaluation and Controlling, FDFA's Internal Audit, the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) and the Parliamentary Control of the Administration (PCA).

Function	Responsibilities
SDC's operational units	Management of the operational units is responsible for project evaluations and programme evaluations, including timing, scope, design, implementation, management response and follow-up.
Specialist Service Evaluation and Controlling (EC)	Responsible for the Evaluation Guidance, and jointly with QD for the How-to Note and trainings. Mandated by the SDC directorate, EC conducts thematic, institutional and cooperation programme evaluations.
Internal Audit of the FDFA	Checks reliability and integrity of financial and operational reporting and compliance with internal and external requirements of projects and cooperation programmes. Issues statements on the efficiency and economical use of resources. Provides advice on risk management, internal control systems, and leadership and management.
Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO)	The Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) is the supreme financial supervisory body of the Swiss Confederation. It is independent and autonomous and bound only by the Federal Constitution and the law. It supervises the financial management of the Federal Administration, with a particular focus on the economical use of resources, on cost-benefit considerations and impact achievement.[12]
Parliamentary Control of the Administration (PCA)	The Parliamentary Control of the Administration (PCA) is the evaluation service of the Federal Assembly (legislative) and directed by parliament's Control Committees (CC). PCA conducts evaluations with a focus on the legality, expediency and effectiveness of the activities of the executive.[13]
Swiss Evaluation Society (SEVAL)	Swiss Evaluation Society (SEVAL) is the Swiss association of professional evaluators and evaluation stakeholders.

Table 3: Swiss players in audit, monitoring and evaluation

[12] *https://www.efk.admin.ch/en/*, accessed on 24.08.2023 and Federal Audit Office Act, FAOA of 28 June 1967 (status as of January 1, 2018)
[13] *https://www.parlament.ch/en/organe/committees/parliamentary-control-administration-pca*, accessed on 24.08.2023.

Annex 2: International Organisations Active in Evaluations

The Guiding Principles on Managing for Sustainable Development Results[14] stipulate mutual accountability as one of the common principles. This is to be achieved, among others, through evaluations of projects and programmes. Bilateral and multilateral donor organisations in development cooperation have set up their own specific evaluation systems. They share the same principles laid out by the OECD DAC for adequate evaluation systems[15]. The most important common features are listed hereinafter.

Organisation	Associated resources
Multilaterals	
The *Independent Evaluation Group* (IEG) of the World Bank Group (WBG) is responsible for evaluating the development effectiveness of interventions of the WBG.	IEG is continuously expanding the use of evaluation methods. It publishes guidelines on evaluation and specifically on evaluation methods, i. e., under the *IEG Evaluation Methods Resources*.
The UNDP's *Independent Evaluation Office* (IEO) is charged with leading independent thematic and programmatic evaluations and with setting standards and guidelines for evaluations.	IEO maintains an *Evaluation Resource Centre* as well as an *Evaluation Methodology Centre* on its website where evaluation reports as well as guidelines, methods, tools and templates can be found.
The *United Nations Evaluation Group* (UNEG) is a networking platform connecting evaluation units of UN agencies and departments. It aims to promote independent and credible evaluations across the UN system.	UNEG maintains a *database of evaluation reports and a library of guidance documents*.
The *Independent Evaluation Office* (IEO) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) sets minimum requirements and ensures oversight of GEF's M&E. It shares evaluative evidence.	GEF's IEO evaluations and guidelines contain useful information on the nexus environment/development, on mainstreaming sustainability in evaluations and on evaluation methods for transformational change, biodiversity, climate change and land degradation.
Networks	
Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) is an independent network of donors of multilateral organisation. It supports its members in assessing the effectiveness of multilateral organisations with regard to strategic, operational, relationship and performance aspects.	MOPAN maintains an *assessment* and an *analysis* library.
The *OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation* (DAC EvalNet) brings together 32 evaluation units of bilateral development co-operation agencies and of 11 multilateral organisations. EvalNet aims at contributing to better development results by using evaluative evidence for policy-making and learning.	The *DAC Evaluation Resource Centre* (DEReC) collects evaluation reports from all members of DAC EvalNet, thereby collecting evidence and facilitating learning.

[14] Managing for Sustainable Development Results, Guiding Principles. OECD DAC, 2019. *https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC(2019)37/FINAL/En/pdf*, accessed on 26.01.2024.

[15] OECD DAC (2016): *Evaluation Systems in Development Co-operation: 2016 Review*. OECD Publishing, Paris.

Organisation	Associated resources
The *Global Evaluation Initiative* (GEI) is a global coalition funded through a World Bank trust fund aiming at strengthening M&E capacity and the use of evidence in developing countries.	GEI hosts a wide range of trainings and resources, in particular the following two: *BetterEvaluation* is a knowledge platform that offers tools, resources and information on evaluation approaches and methodologies; *gLOCAL evaluation week* is a yearly online knowledge-sharing event connecting practitioners within and across regions.
The *International Initiative for Impact Evaluation* (3ie) collects and promotes the use of (quasi-) experimental impact evaluations.	The 3ie *evidence hub* provides access to solid scientific evidence through, among others, a repository of (quasi-) experimental impact evaluations and systematic reviews, as well as interactive evidence gap maps.
The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-Pal)	A collection of *policy publications* and *evaluations* with a development focus.
The *Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action* (ALNAP) is a multi-stakeholder global network. Its aim is to learn how responses to humanitarian crises can be improved.	The *library of resources on Humanitarian Evaluation, Learning and Performance* (HELP library) hosts documents such as evaluations, tools, manuals, and articles.
NGOs	
The *International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation* (IOCE) is a global association of national and regional Voluntary Organisations for Professional Evaluation (VOPEs). IOCE promotes the use of evaluations and aims to strengthen evaluation capacities.	The *VOPE Directory* lists VOPEs across the globe and can be used to find local evaluators.
EvalPartners is a partnership of VOPEs, UN agencies, civil society organisations and academia. It supports evaluation capacity building, promotes collaboration in the evaluation community and fosters innovation.	EvalPartners maintains a *library* of publications, guides and other resources. It has dedicated networks on the topics of *gender+, SDGs, indigenous peoples, interested parliamentarians*, and *young evaluators*.

Table 4: International organisations active in evaluations

Annex 3: Reference Documents

Bibliography/Suggested reading

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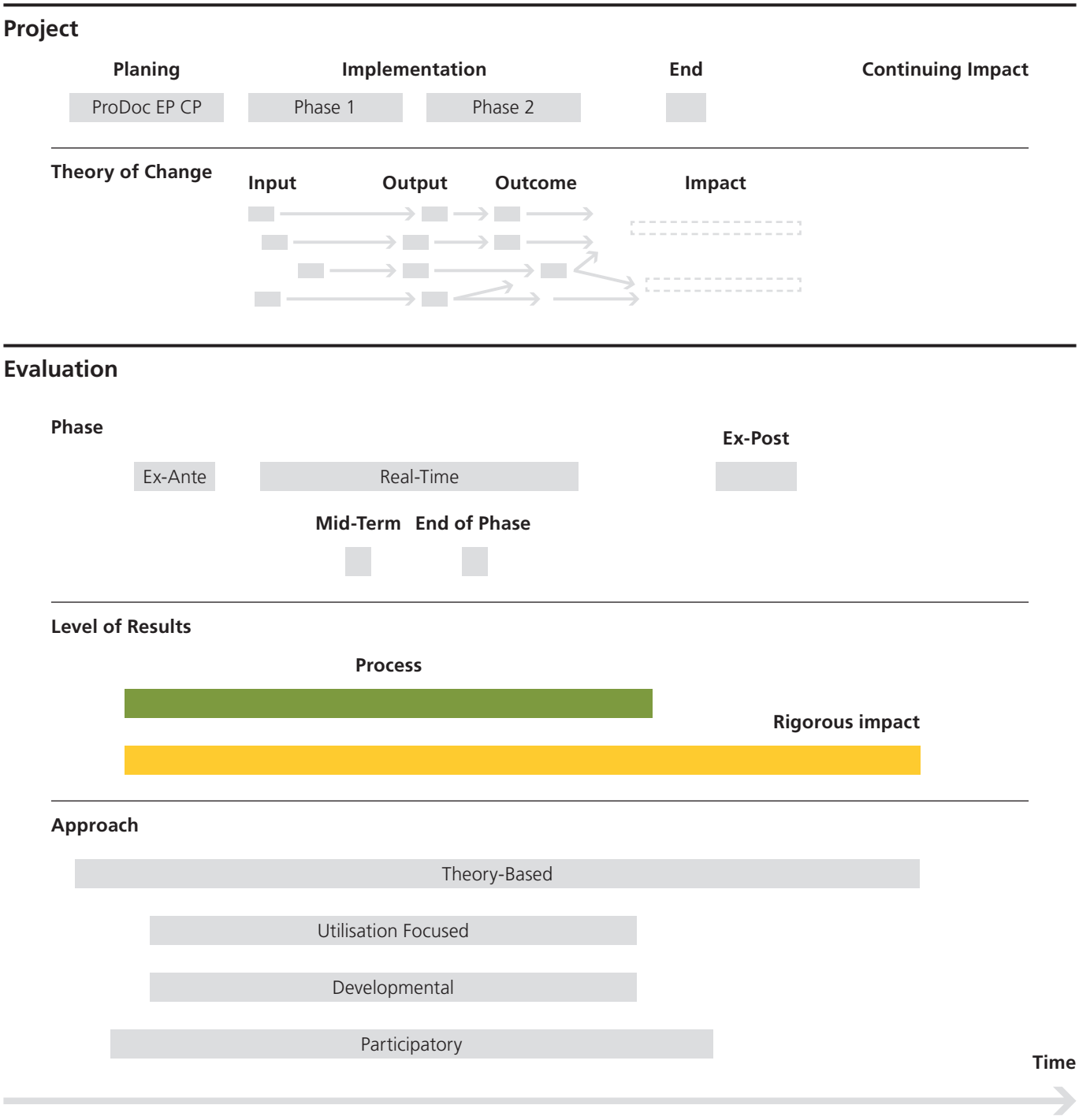
Annex 4: Visualisation of the Evaluation Process



Annex 5: Classifications of Evaluations

Evaluations can be classed according to the following categories. Text within quotation marks is taken form the OECD DAC Glossary[16].

Objects of analysis	Project evaluation: "Evaluation of an individual intervention designed to achieve specific objectives within specified resources and implementation schedules, often within the framework of a broader programme, examining its relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability."
	Programme evaluation: "Evaluation of a set of interventions, combined to attain specific global, regional, country, or sector development objectives. Note: A development programme is a time-bound intervention involving multiple activities that may cut across sectors, themes and geographic areas."
	Institution: Evaluation of the functioning of an institution and the capacity to fulfil its mandate.
	Policy: Evaluation of a specific public policy.
	Strategy: Evaluation of a strategy of an institution, donor, NGO or government agency.
	Thematic evaluation: "Evaluation of a selection of interventions, all of which address a specific sustainable development priority or topic, that cuts across countries, regions, and sectors. Note: Often thematic evaluations will examine a strategic approach or priority topic across a variety of interventions. An example would be evaluating the extent to which the rights of people with disabilities were advanced across a portfolio of interventions in education, health and employment."
	Sector (programme) evaluation: "Evaluation of a cluster of interventions within one country or across countries, all of which contribute to the achievement of a specific goal. Note: a sector includes development activities commonly grouped together for the purpose of public action such as health, education, agriculture, transport, etc."
Timing	Ex-ante evaluation: "An evaluation that is performed before the implementation of an intervention."
	Real-time evaluation: "A process that provides immediate (independent) evaluative evidence, insights and feedback to inform decision-making, learning and implementation while the intervention is underway."
	Mid-term evaluation: "Evaluation performed towards the middle of the period of implementation of the intervention." It serves as an input for the decision on whether to continue the intervention and if continued, on how to improve it.
	Ex-post evaluation: "Evaluation of an intervention after it has been completed." Ideally the evaluation takes place 2 to 4 years after the end of the project.
Level of result	Process evaluation: "An evaluation of the internal dynamics of implementing organisations, their policy instruments, their service delivery mechanisms, their management practices, and the linkages among these."
	Impact evaluation: "An evaluation that assesses the degree to which the intervention meets its higher-level goals and identifies the causal effects of the intervention. Impact evaluations may use experimental, quasi-experimental and non-experimental approaches. Note: The term is also sometimes used to refer only to evaluations that use explicit counterfactual analysis to determine the effects (including outputs and outcomes) caused by an intervention."

[16] OECD (2023), Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management for Sustainable Development (Second edition), OECD Publishing, Paris

Approach	Theory-based evaluation: Evaluations based on an explicit theory of change or logical framework. To test the theory of change, theory-based evaluations often use deductive and inductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning starts with the assumed theory of change and formulates hypotheses that must hold true if the theory is correct. It then tests these hypotheses against observations made and data collected. It allows to *reject* or *not reject* the assumed theory of change. Inductive reasoning aims at identifying patterns in observations and data. From these patterns it will establish general conclusions, where possible. It tests the assumed theory of change by testing for alternative theories of change that explain the observed results.
	Utilisation-focused evaluation: Utilisation-focused evaluations identify and involve its intended user(s) and strive to be useful to them. The reasoning is, that if intended user(s) are involved in the process, they will provide important inputs, will better understand the reasoning, will have more ownership and hence will be more likely to act on the findings, conclusions and recommendations.
	Developmental evaluation: "An iterative, embedded approach to evaluation, designed to support learning particularly in complex or uncertain environments. It involves providing real-time, or near real-time, (independent) feedback to intervention staff, thus facilitating ongoing learning and enabling improvements during implementation."
	Participatory evaluation: "An approach in which partners (including target groups) work together and are actively involved in the evaluation including designing plans, collecting and interpreting data, documenting and using findings, and formulating conclusions and recommendations."
	Evaluation synthesis: An evaluation synthesis aggregates findings, conclusions and recommendations from a series of evaluations (sometimes also referred to as meta-evaluation).
	Quality assessment: A quality assessment judges the quality of one or several evaluations and their adherence to standards and established good practice in evaluation (sometimes also referred to as meta-evaluation).
Design	Experimental design: Before the projects start, individuals are randomly assigned to a group that will benefit from the project (treatment group) and a second group that will not (control group). Both groups are surveyed. The survey can be repeated during the project but must be repeated after the project ends. The difference between the two groups allows for the determination of a causal link between project and impact.
	Quasi-experimental design: Quasi-experimental designs use statistical methods to infer from individuals that do not benefit from the project and from those that do the causal link between project and impact. Examples of such methods are: difference-in-difference, regression-discontinuity, time-series, instrumental-variables, and panel analyses.
	Ex-post-facto design: Ex-post-facto evaluations are implemented as a one-off study during or after a project. They take into account different data sources. By comparing and considering existing differences and their relationship to impact they aim at identifying the contribution of a project to impact.
Intended use	Formative evaluation: "Evaluation intended to improve performance or to inform planning of a subsequent phase, often conducted during the implementation phase of the intervention. Note: Formative evaluations may also be conducted for other reasons such as compliance, legal requirements or as part of a larger evaluation initiative."
	Summative evaluation: "A study conducted at the end of an intervention (or a phase of that intervention) to determine the extent to which anticipated outcomes were produced. Summative evaluation is intended to provide information about the worth or significance of the intervention."
Method	Methods of the strategies used for data collection and analysis. These include focus group discussions, observations, questionnaires, measurements, statistical tools, text analysis, etc.

Annex 6: Decision Tree Evaluation

Do you have any questions or doubts about the project?

Yes

Do you have a question regarding:

Relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact?	Monitoring system or monitoring data?	Compliance with project documents, contracts, etc.?	Project organisation, management and governance?	Thematic/ technical issues?
	Monitoring assessment. Third-party monitoring	Audit	Organisational or management review	Expertise by thematic/ technical expert

	Timing	**Level of results**	**Approach**	**Design**
Relevance	Ex-ante, real-time, mid-term evaluation	Process evaluation	Theory-based, utilisation-focused, developmental, participatory approach	ex-post-facto design
Coherence	Ex-ante, real-time, mid-term	Process evaluation		ex-post-facto design
Effectiveness	Ex-ante, real-time, mid-term, ex-post evaluation	Process evaluation, impact evaluation		Experimental, quasi-experimental, ex-post-facto design
Efficiency	Ex-ante, real-time, mid-term evaluation	Process evaluation		Experimental, quasi-experimental, ex-post-facto design
Sustainability	mid-term (potential of sustainability), ex-post evaluation	Process evaluation, impact evaluation		Experimental, quasi-experimental, ex-post-facto design
Impact	Real-time, mid-term (potential of impact), ex-post evaluation	Impact evaluation		Experimental, quasi-experimental, ex-post-facto design

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