



Glossary of results-based monitoring and results measurement

Data from OECD 2009: '[Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management](#)' and DeGEval '[Glossary of Standards for Evaluation](#)' (German only).

Baseline study: An analysis describing the situation prior to a development intervention, against which progress can be assessed or comparisons made.

Endline study: An analysis describing the situation immediately after a development intervention. Its results are compared with those of the baseline study to permit assessment of a project's effectiveness.

Baseline-endline comparison: A comparative analysis of endline and baseline data for assessing the effectiveness of a project.

Data collection tools: Methodologies used to identify information sources and collect information during an evaluation. Note: Examples are informal and formal surveys, community interviews with individuals and groups, focus-group discussions, expert opinions, case studies, literature search.

Effect: Intended or unintended change due directly or indirectly to an intervention.

Effectiveness: The extent to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

Note: Also used as an aggregate measure of (or judgement about) the merit or worth of a development activity, i.e. the extent to which an intervention has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives.

Logical framework (logframe): Management tool used to improve the design of interventions, most often at the project level. It involves identifying strategic elements (inputs, outputs, outcomes, impact) and their causal relationships, indicators, and the assumptions or risks that may influence success and failure. It thus facilitates planning, execution and evaluation of a development intervention.

Inputs: The financial, human, and material resources used for the development intervention.

Activity: Actions taken or work performed through which inputs, such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources are mobilised to produce specific outputs.

Outputs: The products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.

Outcome: The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs (on the target groups, for instance).

Impacts: Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

Result: Generally refers to a change that can be attributed to particular causes. An empirically measurable change among the target groups of a development measure that is originally attributable to an intervention (attribution analysis) or for which it can be plausibly concluded that the measure made a significant contribution (contribution analysis).

Evaluations are primarily concerned with the changes triggered, directly or indirectly, by the object of evaluation, changes that should be viewed separately to other causes from an analytical perspective. A distinction is frequently made between short-, medium- and long-term effects on target groups (outcomes) or on other individuals, groups, institutions, systems, etc. (impacts).

Monitoring: A continuing process that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to identify steering needs in a timely manner and provide indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds. Unlike an evaluation, monitoring is not evaluative and is always longitudinal in nature.

Evaluation: The systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results, based on empirical data and utilising disclosed criteria. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, along with their development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors. Evaluation also refers to the process of determining the worth or significance of an activity, policy or programme. **An assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of a planned, ongoing, or completed development intervention.**

Object of the evaluation: The thing that is being examined and assessed in an evaluation and to which any consequences resulting from that evaluation pertain. In many scenarios, projects/programmes are the most frequent object of evaluation.

Ex-ante evaluation: An evaluation that is performed before implementation of a development intervention. Based on strategies, plans and applications, an ex-ante evaluation examines aspects such as need, feasibility and the likelihood of success.

Ex-post evaluation: Evaluation of a development intervention after it has been completed (retrospectively). Note: This type of evaluation is typically conducted between three and five years after the intervention has ended. It can also be informed by data collected before and during the programme's implementation. The focus is often on sustainability and impact.

Final 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 achieved. A summative evaluation is intended to provide information about the value of the programme.

Mid-term evaluation: Evaluation performed in the course of the implementation phase of the intervention. Related term: formative evaluation.

Formative evaluation: Evaluation intended to improve performance and management, most often conducted during the implementation phase of projects or programmes. Note: Formative evaluations may also be conducted for other reasons such as verification of compliance with legal requirements or as part of a larger evaluation initiative.

Summative evaluation: Evaluation designed to aid decision-making regarding the object of the evaluation (e.g. continuation, expansion, discontinuation). Implies a retrospective overall assessment.

Process evaluation: An evaluation of the internal dynamics of implementing organisations, their policy instruments, their service delivery mechanisms, their management practices, and the linkages between these. **Process evaluations examine and assess existing projects with a view to drawing conclusions about their implementation to date and creating recommendations regarding how they should be taken forward and refined.** Unlike impact evaluations, the primary information interests do not (only) concern a review of impact, but also and more especially the analysis of results mechanisms and the influence of external factors (implementation).

Impact evaluation: An evaluation that is focused on identifying and assessing the overarching impact of a development intervention, going beyond the immediate results of an intervention, project, programme or policy.

Impact evaluations can focus (i) on higher results rather than the output of an intervention, (ii) on longer-term results, (iii) on a group of interventions within a specific sector or geographic region, or (iv) explicitly on the results achieved by one intervention, that is, on the attribution of results to a single intervention.

External evaluation: Evaluation of a development intervention conducted by entities and/or individuals outside the donor and implementing organisations that have not been involved in the planning and implementation of the intervention. While it always constitutes a third-party evaluation, it is not synonymous with one, as a third-party evaluation can also be conducted internally (e.g. by other organisational units as part of an in-house evaluation).

Internal evaluation: Evaluation of a development intervention conducted by a unit and/or individuals reporting to the same organisation that is also responsible for the object of the evaluation. Can be conducted as a self-evaluation or a third-party evaluation (in-house evaluation).

Third-party evaluation: Evaluation in which the evaluators are/were not involved in the development, implementation or management of the object of the evaluation. Unlike with the self-evaluation, the role and programme responsibilities are separated in this case. Can be conducted as an internal or external evaluation.

Self-evaluation: Evaluation by individuals who are entrusted with the design and/or delivery of a development intervention. It combines the roles of evaluator, programme manager and, in some cases, client. While it always constitutes an internal evaluation, it is not synonymous with one, as third-party evaluations can also be conducted in-house.

Quality assurance: Quality assurance encompasses any activity that is concerned with assessing and improving the merit or the worth of a development intervention or its compliance with given standards. Note: Examples of quality assurance activities include appraisal, RBM, reviews during implementation, evaluations, etc. Quality assurance may also refer to the assessment of the quality of a project portfolio and its development effectiveness.

Terms of reference: Written document presenting the purpose and scope of the evaluation, the methods to be used, the standard against which performance is to be assessed or analyses are to be conducted, the resources and time allocated, the reporting requirements, and, generally, the evaluation questions and criteria.

Reliability: Consistency or dependability of data on the basis of which evaluations/assessments are made. The term refers to the quality of the instruments, procedures and analyses used to collect and interpret evaluation data. Note: Evaluation information is reliable when repeated observations using the same instruments under identical conditions produce similar results and when different researchers arrive at the same findings (inter-rater reliability).

Validity: The extent to which the data collection strategies and instruments measure what they purport to measure.

Triangulation: Use of several data sources, procedures and analyses by evaluators in an attempt to overcome the distortions that arise when a study avails itself of only a single information source, method or observer. Differentiation between data and source triangulation, method triangulation (refers to both data collection instruments and evaluation methods) and investigator triangulation.

Participation in evaluation processes: Participation refers primarily to clarification of the commission (e.g. agreement of evaluation design, delimitation of object of the evaluation, along with evaluation tasks and goals, data collection instruments and data sources), ongoing dialogue on the progress of the evaluation and joint decisions concerning any necessary adjustments, and to the interpretation of results (e.g. evaluation of conclusions, drafting and adaptation of recommendations, and identification of lessons learned). For external evaluations at least, the analysis should be conducted exclusively by independent (external) experts, as it would otherwise no longer be possible to guarantee independence.

Independence: The credibility of an evaluation depends in part on how independently it has been carried out. Independence in this context implies freedom from political influence and organisational pressure. An independent evaluation is characterised by full access to information and by full autonomy in carrying out investigations and reporting findings.