Evaluation Handbook
Guidance for designing, conducting and using independent evaluation at UNODC
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Guidance for designing, conducting and using independent evaluations at UNODC
CHAPTER 1

Evaluation: what it is and why it matters

This chapter outlines why evaluation is essential to the success of programmes and projects as well as to organizational transparency, accountability and learning. It covers the basic concepts of evaluation and of what constitutes good evaluation practice. The chapter also explains how evaluation fits into results-based management practices and how it relates to other types of assessments.
WHAT IS EVALUATION?

Evaluations are carried out using social research methods and practices to measure what changes the programme, projects and policies have contributed to, and to obtain a mature understanding of how it happened. Evaluation aims at increasing knowledge of one or several aspects of the intervention for learning, informing decision-making processes, and being accountable to stakeholders, donors and citizens.

More precisely, UNODC uses the definition of evaluation developed by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). The key part of the definition being that evaluation is:

An assessment, as systematic and impartial as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area, or institutional performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality using appropriate criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

Furthermore, following UNEG norms and standards, UNODC requires evaluations to consider how well its interventions have addressed the principles of human rights and gender equality and to identify and analyse specific results at these levels. Therefore, human rights and gender aspects need to be considered as part of any UNODC evaluation.

This definition of evaluation further states that evaluation “should provide credible, useful evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of the organizations and stakeholders”.

Importantly, evaluation is not about fault-finding or judging an individual or a team. Rather, evaluation is an opportunity for internal and external stakeholders to contribute their knowledge and views about a particular intervention. At the end of the process, evaluation provides feedback by recognizing achievements that have been made. Furthermore, it identifies ways for improvement and supports evidence-based decision-making.

1http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914
WHY IS EVALUATION IMPORTANT?

The vital role that evaluation plays in the success of interventions is becoming increasingly apparent. The United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, has stressed that to be fully accountable, “we need a culture of evaluation, independent and real-time evaluation with full transparency.”¹ The former Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, was also a strong advocate of recognizing that, “evaluation is (. . .) critical for promoting accountability and for understanding what we are doing right and what we may be getting wrong.”²

Moreover, evaluation is at the heart of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda,³ which highlights that the follow-up and review processes for the development goals will be informed by country-led evaluations and by data that is accessible, timely, reliable and of high quality.

Ultimately, the information obtained through evaluation and the processes for gathering it serve four main purposes: accountability, organizational learning, knowledge generation and opportunities for dialogue. Evaluation enables the achievement of these aims as follows:

**Accountability:** By assessing compliance with established conventions, treaties, norms, policies and plans. Accountability is achieved through independently conducted evaluations that accurately and fairly report on performance results to UNODC at large, Member States and other stakeholders.

**Organizational learning:** By measuring the extent to which intended and unintended results are or are not achieved and their differentiated impact on stakeholders, giving attention to gender, age, social status and origin among other variables. Evaluation deals with answering difficult questions, such as whether the organization is doing the right things and whether it is doing things right. In this sense, evaluation is an important source of evidence about what works, what does not and why. Through the timely incorporation of recommendations and lessons learned into decision-making processes, evaluation aims at making programming and UNODC at large more effective and efficient.

¹[http://www.unevaluation.org/mediacenter/newscenter/newsdetail/121](http://www.unevaluation.org/mediacenter/newscenter/newsdetail/121)
Knowledge generation: By producing substantive knowledge about the specific topics that are part of an organization’s mandate, and about innovative practices. This knowledge is generally found in the recommendations and lessons learned contained in evaluation reports. Such information is compiled from multiple evaluations and then synthesized and shared by the UNODC evaluation function for the benefit of UNODC stakeholders as well as the United Nations organizations at large and its Member States.

Opportunities for dialogue: By providing a useful platform for stakeholders to come together to discuss the subject of the evaluation and other areas of common interest, inclusive evaluation processes help to build relationships and ensure a better understanding of the different needs and interests of participants and other stakeholders, as well as opportunities for further collaboration.

Figure 1.1 shows the four purposes that emerge from evaluation processes with decision-making being a common factor throughout. In some cases, evaluations become development interventions in themselves. Evaluations can create the space for participants to reflect on an intervention, whether individually or in groups, which may inspire new ideas and energy that lead to change such as new partnerships or new initiatives. Thus, evaluation as an agent of change is often an intervention in itself.
**THE BASICS OF CONDUCTING A GOOD EVALUATION**

Good evaluations are those that:

- Meet the expectations of those commissioning the evaluation, as well as those of key stakeholders
- Are useful for and guide future decision-making at the organization
- Provide credible and trustworthy results, as well as pertinent and actionable recommendations
- Are timely and conducted by using a reasonable amount of resources to ensure that evaluation results and recommendations feed into decision-making processes

The best way to ensure that evaluations are credible, reliable and useful is to ensure that they meet high quality and professional standards. Within the United Nations system, this means that evaluation processes must align with the international norms and standards developed by UNEG. United Nations requirements and resources are explained more fully in chapter two, but it is worth highlighting the main principles of good evaluation practice here:

- *Independent and impartial:* evaluation processes need to be separated from policymaking, implementation and management of the intervention.

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**SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING**

The 2015 UNODC mid-term in-depth evaluation of the global programme on strengthening the legal regime against terrorism is an example of how evaluations can be useful for organizational learning.

One of the evaluation report’s recommendations focused on the need for the UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) to "identify good practice and create guidelines on implementing sustainability strategies that should be incorporated into the programming of the delivery of future activity". Based on this, the Compendium of Good Sustainability Strategies in the Terrorism Prevention Branch was produced. The compendium has become an important resource for ensuring that good practices in the TPB technical assistance programmes are shared within UNODC and among new (and old) staff members.


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• **Transparent, participatory and inclusive**: evaluations need to be conducted in an open, respectful and consultative manner creating spaces for all relevant stakeholders, including those in a more disadvantaged position, to engage directly in the evaluation and take ownership of the evaluation process.

• **Robust in methodological approach**: evaluations need to be conducted in a systematic manner, using sound approaches and methods.

• **Utilization focused**: there needs to be clear intent about the purpose and use of findings to improve the organization’s work.

• **Ethically conducted**: evaluations need to be carried out according to professional and ethical guidelines and codes of conduct.

More details about the practicalities of conducting good evaluations can be found in subsequent chapters, in particular, chapters five and seven.

### WHAT TO EVALUATE?

Evaluations can be carried out on many types of development initiatives including activities, projects, programmes, strategies, policies, topics, themes, sectors, operational areas and institutional performance. This handbook primarily focuses on the evaluations of programmes and projects (also collectively referred to as “interventions”) but has relevance for other types of initiatives including policy work.

Evaluations are part of the normal programme/project cycle, which can be seen in figure 1.2 below, and can be conducted at any point in the life cycle of an initiative.

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Evaluations can address several types of questions about the different topics and aspects of the policy or intervention being assessed. For this reason, it is useful to distinguish between three broad categories of questions that can be addressed by evaluations, along with examples of each.

- **Descriptive questions** aim at determining the way things are, the way things occurred and who was involved.

  *Examples:* What were the overall objectives of the intervention being evaluated? What key stakeholders (male and female) were involved? What resources did the organization have to fulfil its mandate? What were the major gender stereotypes, norms and judgements among the intervention team and stakeholders in relation to the intervention topic?

- **Normative questions** aim at assessing whether things are the way they should be.

  *Examples:* Were the objectives realistic given the political context and the time and resources available for their implementation? Were intervention resources used efficiently? Has the policy been enforced as planned? How did the different stakeholders (male and female) benefit from the intervention?

- **Cause-and-effect questions** aim at determining whether a particular intervention or policy "made a difference," in the sense that certain measurable effects and impacts can be attributed to it.

  *Examples:* To what extent did the programme contribute to improving the situation of the target population? To what extent did the intervention contribute to women’s empowerment? To what extent did the intervention have an effect on institutional change? Which changes are most valued by stakeholders (disaggregated by different hierarchies of disadvantage and mainly by gender), and why?

In order to bring consistency to evaluation processes, the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC) developed a standard set of evaluation criteria to be used in assessing all types of interventions. These include *relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability*. UNODC together with other United Nations entities requires human rights and gender equality criteria to be considered. *Design, partnership and cooperation* are also frequently criteria that are required in UNODC evaluations. These nine criteria, and how they guide the main questions that evaluations need to address, are discussed in the next chapter.

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HOW GOOD EVALUATION CAN BE USEFUL

Ultimately, an evaluation needs to be useful to the commissioning organization or team. Good evaluations are those that provide information and recommendations that help managers and policymakers make sound decisions and that help teams and stakeholders to plan for better programming. Good evaluations (those that are relevant and based on credible and reliable evidence) are also the basis for promoting future actions or policies amongst stakeholders who might otherwise be reluctant to lend their support. Good evaluations can have a significant and useful role in fulfilling the reporting requirements of results-based management (RBM) systems.

RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT

Results-based management (RBM) is a management strategy that focuses on performance and the achievement of outputs, outcomes and overall impact of an intervention, collectively known as “results”. It is one of the core programming principles for development organizations globally.

RBM uses a structured, logical approach that identifies expected results as well as the inputs and activities necessary to achieve them. It aims at promoting management effectiveness and accountability through:

- Clearly defining realistic results and targets
- Linking planned activities to the results to be achieved
- Monitoring progress towards the achievement of expected results and targets
- Assessing whether results were achieved and why
- Integrating lessons learned into management decisions
- Reporting on performance

Importantly, RBM helps to sharpen management practices by placing the primary focus on the results to be achieved by the intervention instead of on the activities being implemented.

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THE RBM JOURNEY

RBM is sometimes likened to making travel plans. The process entails first choosing a destination, then deciding on the route and the intermediary stops along the way, checking progress against a roadmap, and making course adjustments as needed in order to reach the desired destination. In this case, the main focus is the destination, and lessons learned during the journey are used to plan the next trip.

Like most travel, RBM places the primary focus on the destination (the results to be achieved) rather than on purely managing the processes (inputs and activities) along the way. It is still important to carefully attend to the details that make the trip possible, but the overriding emphasis is arriving at the agreed upon goal.

This analogy can also be used loosely to illustrate how evaluation criteria can be applied:

- **Relevance**: Who decided the route and the destination? Did the route and destination take into account other drivers? Was it the direction the passengers wanted to go in? Were we missing any passengers?
- **Efficiency**: Was the best route chosen and the least amount of fuel used given the circumstances?
- **Effectiveness**: Was good progress made in getting to the destination?
- **Impact**: Is the destination helping people achieve their larger goals?
- **Sustainability**: Will passengers be able to keep travelling on their own?
- **Human rights and gender equality (HR and GE)**: Did passengers represent diverse groups? Was everyone safe and comfortable? Did women have equal opportunities to make decisions and to drive?

RBM aspects have to be considered at the beginning of any programme/project planning. The planning process involves the development of a results framework, which is ideally based on a theory of change or programme theory. The results framework is important because it shows the links and cause-and-effect relationships between the ultimate goal (objective/impact), the short-term (output) and intermediate-term (outcome) results, and the activities to be implemented in order to achieve those results.

A simple way of showing these relationships is by developing a results chain. Figure 1.3 shows the main elements of a results chain. It also shows which elements are part of programme/project implementation, which are considered results, and how the different types of results build upon each other. Evaluations are typically focused on outcome-level results as these are the results that the intervention is expected to achieve.

More information about results frameworks and programme theories can be found in the practical guide in part 3 of this handbook.
CHAPTER 1. EVALUATION: WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

THE CHALLENGE OF MEASURING IMPACT

Impact (or objective) refers to the longer-term change that an intervention is expected to contribute towards. It may take months or years for these types of changes to become apparent. It is often difficult to attribute the observed changes to a particular intervention alone because other factors and actors may have contributed to the results as well. Thus, achieving the impact is generally beyond the direct control of the intervention.

Two important concepts in measuring impact are attribution and contribution. Attribution means that the particular intervention led to the observed outcomes and that it can be attributed to causing the outcome. Contribution means that the intervention helped to cause the observed outcomes, that it was a factor capable of causing the change.

Thus, evaluation primarily focuses on what changes the programme/project should be able to control—the outcome-level results. However, as there is still a need to prove to stakeholders that progress towards impact is being made and to learn from what works and what does not work, careful consideration should be given to developing evaluation questions that can reasonably capture impact–related information. In addition, it should be assessed how valuable the changes produced were to the different stakeholders involved.

Some programmes and projects do not have logical frameworks (logframes) or respective monitoring tools set up in a way that can easily assess impact. In these cases, the evaluation teams have to carefully revisit and consider the programme/project logic as well as the theory of change in order to determine the contribution of the programme/project under evaluation to changes.

However, most interventions can demonstrate their impact indicators in the form of anecdotal qualitative data as indicators that emphasize the effect a programme/project has had. Systematic monitoring and reporting on stories of success and, in particular, qualitative case studies will improve the challenge of assessing the impact of UNODC programmes/projects. However, such information remains selective in contrast to a well-developed impact evaluation, which will provide insights into the overall impact of the intervention.
WHAT IS AN IMPACT EVALUATION?

Impact evaluations belong to a particular type of evaluation that seeks to answer cause-and-effect questions. Unlike general evaluations, which can answer many types of questions, impact evaluations are structured around one particular type of question: What is the impact (or causal effect) of a programme/project on the outcome of interest? An impact evaluation looks for changes in outcomes that the intervention contributes towards triggering. This also includes any unintended changes as well as any negative impact.

Rigorous impact evaluations are impact evaluations specially designed for measuring the changes in outcomes that are directly attributable to the intervention. In rigorous impact evaluations, variables other than the intervention affecting the outcomes of interest are deduced from the measurement of the impact by collecting data on changes in outcomes among individuals who are almost identical to those benefiting from the intervention, but who are not affected by the intervention. In impact evaluation jargon, these groups of individuals are called, respectively, the comparison group and the treatment group.


THE IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATIVE THINKING

Conducting high quality evaluations is just as important as promoting evaluative thinking among managers and policymakers. In this way they actively participate in the evaluation process and make the best use of evaluation results.

Essentially, evaluative thinking is critical thinking applied to contexts of evaluation. More specifically, it is the ability to logically and rationally consider information that is relevant to the evaluation process, or that is generated by evaluations.

Rather than accepting the arguments and conclusions presented, a person with strong evaluative thinking will question and seek to understand the evidence provided. He or she will look for logical connections between ideas, consider alternative interpretations of information and evaluate the strength of arguments presented.

Evaluative thinking is not a matter of accumulating information. A person with a good memory and who knows a lot of facts is not necessarily good at critical thinking. A critical thinker is able to deduce consequences from what he or she knows, and seek relevant sources of information.

Critical thinking should not be confused with being argumentative or being critical of other people. Although critical thinking skills can be used to expose fallacies and bad reasoning, critical thinking can also be constructive and help us acquire knowledge, improve our theories and strengthen arguments. In evaluation, using critical thinking in a constructive way is essential for enhancing work processes and improving projects and programmes through learning.

In addition, the proper process of designing, implementing and using evaluations requires that evaluators, programme/project managers (who will also be referred to as managers in this handbook) and intended users reflect critically on key aspects of the intervention, the knowledge gaps, and the implications of evaluation findings, recommendations and lessons learned.

HOW IS EVALUATION RELATED TO OTHER TYPES OF OVERSIGHT?

In addition to evaluation, there are other assessment practices and disciplines that help ensure policymakers, programme managers, teams and stakeholders have sufficient understanding and oversight of policies, programmes and projects. This section distinguishes evaluation from monitoring and from other investigative assessments. It also describes the formal types of oversight within the United Nations system.

MONITORING

The main difference between monitoring and evaluation is the timing and focus of the assessment.

Monitoring is a continuous part of programme/project management that involves the systematic collection and analysis of data based on the intervention’s indicators. This data helps determine the progress being made in implementing activities, achieving results and using allocated resources. Thus, monitoring is an internal assessment aimed at keeping interventions on track and ensuring the timely decision-making needed to improve their design and functioning.

Information collected through monitoring is an important source of data used in evaluation processes to understand what is happening. It is quantitative and qualitative information on individual indicators collected on an ongoing basis by programme or partner staff. Monitoring and evaluation, together with planning, are the foundation of RBM.

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Evaluation is conducted at specific points in time and uses multiple sources and types of data. It is usually conducted by independent external consultants. Evaluation provides more detailed information such as why and how things are happening.

Monitoring and evaluation are integrally linked. While monitoring tells us whether an activity is on track to achieve its intended objectives, evaluation tells us whether the intervention as a whole is on the right track and what lessons can be drawn from its implementation.

OTHER ASSESSMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONS

Other types of investigative assessments include reviews, audits, inspections and research. Although they may be related to evaluation, each serves a different purpose as described below and in table 1.1.

Review

A review is a periodic or ad hoc assessment that typically addresses performance and operational issues of programme/project implementation. Examples of reviews include rapid assessments (often conducted as a part of programme/project design) and evaluability assessments (often as a part of programme/project design or prior to an evaluation). Reviews are usually undertaken internally and tend to be less rigorous than evaluations.

Audit

An audit is an assessment of the adequacy of management controls. It is meant to ensure the economical and efficient use of resources; the safeguarding of assets; the reliability of financial and other information; the compliance with regulations, rules and policies; the effectiveness of risk management; and the adequacy of organizational structures, systems and processes. Evaluation is more closely linked to managing for results and learning, while audits mainly focus on compliance.

Inspection

An inspection is a general examination of an organizational unit, issue or practice. It is meant to determine the extent to which the unit, issue or practice adheres to prescribed standards, good practices or other criteria. Information gained is used to make recommendations for improvement or apply corrective measures. Inspections are often performed when there is a perceived risk of non-compliance.
Research

Research is a systematic examination undertaken to develop or contribute to knowledge of a particular topic. Research often feeds information into evaluations, other assessments or decision-making processes. Examples include in-depth baseline studies and impact studies.

| **TABLE 1.1 COMPARING KEY FEATURES OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS** |
| **MONITORING AND REVIEWS** | **EVALUATIONS** | **AUDITS AND INSPECTIONS** | **RESEARCH** |
| **WHY?** | Track progress, inform decisions and remedial action, update project plans, support accountability | Assess progress, derive recommendations and identify lessons learned for longer-term planning and organizational learning, contribute to accountability | Ensure compliance and provide assurance and accountability | Acquire in-depth knowledge on specific issue |
| **WHEN?** | Ongoing during programme/project implementation | Periodic (usually mid-term) and at the end of an intervention | Ad hoc or according to requirements (often the donor’s) | Ad hoc, based on research gap identified after thorough preliminary analysis of existing knowledge |
| **WHO?** | Internal, involving programme/project implementers | Typically external consultants, but with participation of all stakeholders | Typically external to programme/project but internal or external to organization | Typically external |
| **WHAT?** | Focus on inputs, activities, outputs and shorter-term outcomes | Focus on outcomes and overall objective/impact | Focus on inputs, activities and outputs | Focus on a specific research question and hypothesis |

Source: Adapted from White, Graham and Wiles, Peter. 2008. Monitoring Templates for Humanitarian Organizations. Commissioned by the European Commission Director-General for Humanitarian Aid (DG ECHO); p. 40.
OVERSIGHT FUNCTIONS IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Most United Nations organizations have specific evaluation functions that provide expertise, guidance and management for their required evaluation activities. They all commission evaluations to respond to the need to account for the use of resources and demonstrate results and the added value of the work of the organizations.

In addition to the specialized evaluation functions located within each individual organization, three further system-wide institutions have to be mentioned, namely the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System (JIU), the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and the Board of Auditors (BoA). All three contribute to system-wide transparency and accountability.

The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) is a unit established in 1976 by the General Assembly of the United Nations under resolution 31/192. JIU is the only independent external oversight body of the United Nations system mandated to conduct evaluations, inspections and investigations system-wide. Its objective is to enhance the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations system and, to this end, it may make on-the-spot inquiries and investigations.13

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) is the internal oversight body of the United Nations. It was established in 1994 by the General Assembly under resolution 48/218B. The office assists the Secretary-General in fulfilling his oversight responsibilities through the provision of audit, investigation, inspection and evaluation services. OIOS aims to be an agent of change that promotes responsible administration of resources, a culture of accountability and transparency, and improved programme performance.14

The United Nations Board of Auditors (BoA) was established by the General Assembly in 1946 under resolution 74(1) as an important mechanism to promote accountability and transparency in the United Nations. BoA performs external audits of the accounts of the United Nations organization and its funds and programmes, and reports its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.15

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13https://www.unjiu.org/en/Pages/default.aspx
14https://oios.un.org/
SUMMARY

Evaluation is increasingly recognized for its vital role in organizational dialogue, accountability, learning and knowledge generation. Evaluation complements other types of assessment processes and brings additional evidence to bear that can tangibly improve programming and policymaking. However, evaluations only have value when they are actually used. Conducting high quality evaluations is just as important as promoting evaluative thinking (critical thinking applied to evaluation) among managers, programme teams, stakeholders and policymakers. In this way they actively participate in the evaluation process and make the best use of evaluation results.

This chapter has provided a definition of evaluation as well as showing how it differs from other types of assessment and review. In addition, it has outlined the importance of evaluation in general. The next chapter provides further information about overall evaluation principles as well as the requirements for evaluation processes conducted by United Nations entities.

OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES

- MY M&E Resource Centre and E-learning Course:
  http://mymande.org
- OECD/DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance:
  http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm
- United Nations Development Group RBM Handbook:
  United Nations Evaluation Group Norms & Standards for Evaluation:
This chapter introduces the main principles and requirements that influence, guide and harmonize how evaluations are conducted in the United Nations system. These principles and requirements include the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which gives prominence to evaluation; the 2016 UNEG norms and standards; and the OECD-DAC criteria. The chapter concludes with a more in-depth look at the UNEG standards of human rights and gender equality, national evaluation capacity and ethical conduct.
THE UNITED NATIONS CONTEXT OF EVALUATION

Evaluations undertaken within the United Nations system need to take into account specific agendas, principles, criteria, norms, standards and other considerations. It is perhaps helpful to think about these elements as being part of a “United Nations context of evaluation” that has connecting and overlapping functions.

Figure 2.1 suggests how this context of evaluation might be constructed, and what managers and evaluators need to be mindful of when conducting evaluations. The largest part represents the Agenda for Sustainable Development, which guides all the work of the United Nations. Evaluation is essential to the agenda for generating knowledge that can be used at country level to inform priority setting and to improve public policies and interventions. Within this context are efforts led by UNEG and OECD to harmonize, standardize and strengthen evaluation practice and to ensure ethical conduct—these are the criteria, norms, standards and principles that evaluation processes need to follow. The Agenda 2030 also requires that special consideration be given to issues that require more attention in order for our collective goals to be reached, and reached in an equitable manner. Specific issues that intersect with evaluation include the need to use human rights and gender equality-responsive evaluation approaches, and the imperative of strengthening national evaluation systems. Each of these elements is considered in this chapter.
Evaluation will play a key role in achieving the SDGs. Ensuring that policies and programmes are on track to achieve such large-scale change requires measuring what works and what does not work.

In 2015 the 194 Member States of the United Nations, with input from global civil society, adopted Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In its own words, this is “a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity that seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom.” As noted above, within the context of evaluation, the SDGs guide all work of the United Nations.

The 17 SDGs are elaborated through 169 targets to be met by 2030. These provide a transformational vision for the world where no one is left behind and they spell out commitments for working together to eradicate poverty, create decent jobs, promote dignity, equality and justice for all, while sustaining the natural environment.

Evaluation will play a key role in achieving the SDGs. Ensuring that policies and programmes are aligned with the SDGs and corresponding targets and on track to achieve such large-scale change requires measuring what works and what does not work. Where necessary, it means providing evidence-based guidance to recalibrate for success.

Unlike the previous Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), that only applied to developing countries, the SDGs are relevant for all countries and have a clearly stated follow-up and review process that underscores the important role of evaluation. The Agenda 2030 calls for the accountability of all people, national ownership of development results, and country-led review processes. As a result, strengthening national evaluation capacity has been highlighted as a critical part of the 2030 Agenda, and one to which UNODC is contributing.

There are over 230 indicators for tracking progress towards the SDGs. These indicators are important references that should inform all planning and evaluation processes. With that in mind, programme/project managers and evaluators should be knowledgeable about those related to their areas of work. The complete list of indicators and more information can be found on the website of the United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs, Statistics Division.

http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/17357IIED.pdf
http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/

HTTPS://UNSTATS.UN.ORG/SDGS/INDICATORS/INDICATORS-LIST/
CHAPTER 2. EVALUATION IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

PRIORITY GOALS FOR UNODC

Given the strong connections between rule of law, security, peace and inclusive sustainable development, UNODC has an important role to play in the achievement and measurement of the SDGs across all of their thematic areas. Of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, 10 have been identified as priorities for UNODC. These are highlighted in figure 2.2 and discussed below. More details on each of these and how they relate to the work of UNODC can be found in the publication “UNODC and the Sustainable Development Goals”. It has to be emphasized that the SDGs are however universal and complementary to each other. No SDG can be looked at in isolation.

FIGURE 2.2 SDGS FOR UNODC

HARMONIZING EVALUATION PRACTICE

The conducting of evaluation within the United Nations context is primarily guided by two organizations/networks: the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The work of these two bodies has been instrumental in helping to develop, standardize and improve evaluation processes. Both continue to be key actors and leaders in supporting and measuring the success of the Agenda for Sustainable Development.

UNEG is an interagency professional network that aims to promote and strengthen evaluation. It brings together over 45 evaluation units of the United Nations system and affiliated organizations. UNEG was created in 1984 with the name “Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation” and initially focused on designing and introducing monitoring and
evaluation systems primarily for United Nations technical assistance projects. Its current mission is "to promote the independence, credibility and usefulness of the evaluation function and evaluation across the United Nations system, to advocate for the importance of evaluation for learning, decision-making and accountability, and to support the evaluation community in the United Nations system and beyond." UNODC is a member of UNEG and has adopted its norms and standards for evaluation.

OECD provides a forum for governments to work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems. Their mission is to "promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world." The mandate of OECD with respect to SDG evaluation includes tracking and monitoring official development assistance and international climate finance, strengthening national-level data systems, and facilitating follow-up and review mechanisms.

OECD, specifically its Development Assistance Committee (DAC), established a common set of criteria by which interventions should be evaluated. The need for these common measures emerged from the aid effectiveness principles of ownership and donor harmonization contained in the 2005 Paris Declaration and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action. UNEG subsequently developed more precise guidance in the form of the Evaluation Norms and Standards. These were initially issued in 2005 and were updated in 2016.

UNITED NATIONS EVALUATION GROUP NORMS AND STANDARDS

In 2005, UNEG released its first norms and standards, which set out clear principles to strengthen and harmonize evaluation practice for development interventions. The norms and standards were instrumental in guiding evaluation practitioners across the globe. However, changes in the evaluation field and the adoption of both the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the 2014 United Nations Resolution "Capacity-building for the evaluation of development activities at the country level" led to the need for revisions in order to ensure the continued relevance of these requirements in guiding and further strengthening evaluation practices.

The 2016 updated UNEG norms and standards for evaluation now include ten general norms to be followed in conducting evaluations and four institutional norms to be reflected in the management and oversight of evaluations. These are accompanied by 24 standards to support implementation of the norms. This updated version introduces four new norms: human rights and gender equality, national evaluation capacities and professionalization of evaluation.

HTTP://WWW.UNODC.ORG/UNODC/EN/EVALUATION/NORMATIVE-TOOLS.HTML

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26 United Nations Evaluation Group http://www.uneval.org/about
21 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development http://www.oecd.org/about/
23 http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914
All UNODC evaluations adhere to UNEG norms and standards, updated in 2016.

The general norms are highlighted in table 2.1. Those relating to ethical conduct, human rights and gender equality, and national evaluation capacity are more fully described in the text below. The standards are not specified here but are integrated into the remaining chapters of this handbook.

**TABLE 2.1 LIST OF 2016 GENERAL NORMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NORMS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># 1 - Internationally agreed principles,</td>
<td>Upholding and promoting United Nations principles and values is the responsibility of evaluation managers and evaluators. This includes respecting, promoting and contributing to the goals and targets set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goals and targets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 - Utility</td>
<td>There must be clear intention to use the evaluation’s analysis, conclusions and recommendations. This includes relevant and timely contributions to organizational learning, decision-making and accountability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 - Credibility</td>
<td>This requires independence, impartiality, rigorous methodology and ethical conduct. Key elements include transparent processes, inclusive approaches involving relevant stakeholders and robust quality assurance systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4 - Independence</td>
<td>Evaluators must have the freedom to conduct their work without influence from any party or threat to their careers. In addition, the organization's evaluation function must be positioned separately from other management functions, be responsible for setting the evaluation agenda, and have adequate resources to do its work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5 - Impartiality</td>
<td>This entails objectivity, professional integrity, and absence of bias at all stages of the evaluation process. Evaluators must not have been or expect to be directly responsible for the policy setting, design or management of the evaluation subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6 - Ethics</td>
<td>Evaluations need to be conducted with the highest standards of integrity and respect for the social and cultural environment, for human rights and gender equality, and for the “do no harm” principle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7 - Transparency</td>
<td>This is essential in order to establish and build trust, confidence, stakeholder ownership and public accountability. It includes making evaluation products publicly available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8 - Human rights and gender equality</td>
<td>These universally recognized values and principles need to be integrated into all stages of an evaluation, underpinning the commitment to the principle of “no-one left behind”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9 - National evaluation capacities</td>
<td>Building capacity for evaluating development activities at the country level is vital and is to be supported when requested by Member States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10 - Professionalism</td>
<td>To ensure credibility, evaluations need to be conducted with professionalism and integrity. These are supported by an enabling environment, institutional structures and adequate resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The standard OECD-DAC evaluation criteria are: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. UNODC places additional emphasis on partnerships and cooperation as well as human rights and gender equality. These are also sometimes complemented by design and innovation.

**OECD-DAC CRITERIA**

The criteria developed by OECD-DAC continue to be the standard categories for what evaluations should measure. As noted in chapter one, the five main criteria—relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability plus, more recently, human rights and gender equality—are used throughout the United Nations system with most of its entities adopting additional criteria relevant to their work. UNODC evaluations also commonly address design (as part of relevance), partnership and cooperation, and innovation.

These criteria, described in table 2.2, provide the foundation for developing the main questions that each evaluation needs to answer. Further information and suggestions for framing questions for all criteria can be found in the UNODC guidelines for developing terms of reference for evaluation processes.

**TABLE 2.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard evaluation criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>The extent to which the intervention conforms to the needs of participants and other stakeholders, compliments existing initiatives, and aligns with organizational mandates and policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>The extent to which resources and inputs are managed and used in an optimal way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>The extent to which intended outcome-level results are being achieved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>The lasting changes—positive and negative, intended and unintended—arising from the intervention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>The degree to which processes started and results obtained are likely to remain in place after intervention completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>The extent to which the intervention is guided by human rights standards and principles following a human rights-based approach and addressing issues such as non-discrimination, participation, accountability and social transformation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality</td>
<td>The extent to which the intervention integrates a gender perspective (gender mainstreaming) and addresses issues such as power relations and social transformation, equal inclusion and participation, and the empowerment of women and marginalized groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTEGRATING HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY

The promotion and protection of human rights (HR) and gender equality (GE) are guiding principles for all United Nations entities. There is virtually no aspect of the work of the United Nations that does not have a human rights dimension. Whether we are talking about peace and security, development, humanitarian action or climate change, none of these challenges can be addressed without consideration of HR and GE issues and principles. In the United Nations context of evaluation, this is closely connected to the Agenda for Sustainable Development. Interventions that do not follow these principles risk reinforcing or neglecting harmful patterns of discrimination and exclusion.

As the United Nations organization mandated to address crime, terrorism and drugs, UNODC requires that HR and GE be considered throughout all programming and as a central pillar of the work itself. Therefore, UNODC strives and has developed guiding documents to ensure that HR and GE are actively and visibly mainstreamed in all its practices, policies and programmes. The position paper “UNODC and the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights” (2012) recognizes the need to adopt a human rights-based approach in all development cooperation and technical assistance activities, and to ensure that (a) all interventions and activities further the realization of human rights; (b) human rights standards and principles guide all phases of the programming process; and (c) programmes contribute to the development of the capacities of Member States to meet their obligations as duty bearers, and/or of rights holders to claim their rights. The “Guidance Note on Gender Mainstreaming in UNODC” (2013) stresses that UNODC has the responsibility to understand how and where gender issues are relevant in its different areas of work and to integrate a gender perspective in all its practices, policies and programmes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional criteria that may be used in UNODC evaluations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design (as part of relevance)</td>
<td>The extent to which appropriate and participatory planning processes took place; the existence and suitability of logical frameworks and performance indicators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships and cooperation</td>
<td>The extent to which effective partnerships were established and maintained; the extent of alignment and contribution to the One UN, UNDAF, and other coordination mechanisms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>The extent to which innovative approaches were successfully used or emerged from implementation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The definitions have been slightly rephrased from the original reference: http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm
It is mandatory for the United Nations entities to consider human rights and gender equality principles and standards in the design, implementation and evaluation processes of all interventions, regardless of whether these issues are the focus of the intervention itself. By addressing HR and GE, the important principles of equality and non-discrimination, inclusion and participation as well as accountability become part of the evaluation focus. Although substantial progress has been made in this regard, meta-assessments of United Nations programming suggest that more still needs to be done to fully integrate and mainstream HR and GE issues and approaches, including into evaluation processes.\(^{24}\)

Specifically, the challenge to fully mainstream gender equality in United Nations work has been taken up across the United Nations system. In 2006, a United Nations system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women was developed calling for a system-wide action plan in order to make the strategy of gender mainstreaming operational. The United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP)\(^ {25}\) was adopted in 2012. Since 2013, on a yearly basis, all entities are required to report on their progress in meeting indicators specific to gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEW), which includes ratings of all evaluation reports for the evaluation performance indicator of the UN-SWAP reporting. UNEG has been instrumental in providing guidance on how evaluations can usefully address the principles of HR and GE. The work of the UNEG Working Group on Gender Equality and Human Rights includes helping to clarify and provide context for key terminology used in such discussions and the provision of guidelines and tools.

http://uneval.org/document/detail/1452

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\(^{24}\)www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2685

CLARIFYING THE TERMS

The 2014 UNEG Guidance Document, *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations* provides the basis for the following definitions of key terms.

*Human rights* are the civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights inherent to all human beings without discrimination, regardless of one’s nationality, place of residence, sex, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, colour, disability, religion, language or any other status. Human rights are universal, inalienable, interdependent and indivisible.

The work of the United Nations is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights signed in 1948 and the nine core international human rights treaties that have been signed subsequent to the initial Declaration.

### THE NINE CORE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES

- ICERD International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 21 Dec 1965
- ICCPR International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 16 Dec 1966
- ICESCR International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 16 Dec 1966
- CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 18 Dec 1979
- CAT Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment 10 Dec 1984
- ICRMW International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families 18 Dec 1990
- CPED International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance 20 Dec 2006
- CRPD Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 13 Dec 2006

A human rights-based approach (HRBA) is the strategy for implementing human rights in United Nations programming. It mainstreams human rights aspects such as universality, non-discrimination, participation and accountability into development work promoting and protecting human rights on the basis of international human rights standards. More information, tools and insight from United Nations practitioners about this approach can be found through the HRBA Portal, a collaborative effort between 19 United Nations organizations, agencies and programmes.

UN HRBA PORTAL: [HTTP://HRBAPORTAL.ORG](HTTP://HRBAPORTAL.ORG)
**Gender equality** implies that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. Gender equality does not imply that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.26

Gender equality serves to the advantage of both men and women, girls and boys and all individuals/groups marginalized and/or discriminated against account of their gender (transgender people for example). Gender equality cannot be achieved without the full engagement of all of them. Furthermore, men and women are subject to different, often contextually specific, forms of discrimination (e.g., due to gender identity, class, religion, caste, ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, location, among others).

**HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY**

Gender equality is at the heart of human rights and United Nations values and development goals. Discrimination based on sex is prohibited under almost every human rights treaty. The United Nations Charter (1945) recognizes the “equal rights of men and women”; and protecting and promoting women’s human rights is the responsibility of all States.

*http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/WRGS/Pages/WRGSIndex.aspx

**Gender mainstreaming** is the strategy adopted by the United Nations at the Fourth International Conference on Women (Beijing, 2005) for integrating gender equality in programming. It goes beyond increasing women’s participation; it entails bringing the experience, knowledge and interest of women and men to bear in all development interventions. The 2014 UNEG Guidance Document provides the detailed definition in ECOSOC Resolution 1997/2:27

The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, such that inequality between men and women is not perpetuated.

Gender-responsive evaluations are assessments that provide “credible and reliable evidence-based information about the extent to which an intervention has resulted in progress (or the lack thereof) towards intended and/or unintended results regarding gender equality and the empowerment of women.” They require an analysis of the specific gender-related strategy, processes and practices deployed by an intervention. Specifically, gender-responsive evaluations should be sensitive to and include all the diverse forms of discrimination that women and men face.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS FOR EVALUATION

The main concepts underlying evaluations that are HR and GE-responsive are inclusion, participation, non-discrimination and fair power relations. Considering these concepts helps improve programming by taking into account important social and cultural issues that can make interventions more effective and sustainable. Other benefits to conducting HR and GE-responsive evaluations, as highlighted in figure 2.3, are for general organizational learning and accountability purposes.

FIGURE 2.3 BENEFITS OF HR AND GE-RESPONSIVE EVALUATIONS

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UNEG has developed two sets of guidance documents on HR and GE that are useful resources for evaluators and those who manage evaluation processes. The group’s 2011 publication Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in evaluation—towards UNEG guidance is an abridged version that provides step-by-step advice for preparing, conducting and using HR and GE-responsive evaluations. Its 2014 publication, Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations provides more in-depth theoretical and practical information, tools and suggestions.

Processes for conducting HR and GE-responsive evaluations are also discussed in the practical guide in chapter seven.


**MAINSTREAMING OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER ASPECTS AS PART OF UNODC EVALUATIONS**

Evaluation plays a crucial role in assessing to what extent UNODC interventions adhere to the principles of human rights and gender equality. UNODC’s evaluation policy requires that both principles be a key part of its evaluation processes. Based on the guiding principles of UNEG, the whole evaluation process at UNODC is required to follow HR and GE-sensitive, inclusive and participatory approaches, advancing human rights, gender equality, and the inclusion and empowerment of women and other marginalized groups. Core elements of these approaches to evaluation are highlighted in figure 2.4.

Over the past years, the UNODC evaluation function has engaged in more thoroughly mainstreaming the GE and HR approaches into the evaluation cycle. These efforts have included:

- Hiring evaluation staff with human rights and gender expertise to support evaluation processes, including by developing guidelines and tools.
- Raising awareness of internal and external stakeholders about both issues. This has included ensuring that evaluation teams receive relevant guidance as part of their key reading material.
- Ensuring, to the extent possible, that there is equal representation of both genders and regional balance on all evaluation teams, and that all teams have at least one member with expertise in gender mainstreaming.
- Including human rights and gender experts on evaluation teams conducting in-depth evaluations to further strengthen and facilitate organizational learning.
- Ensuring training to enhance evaluation function expertise and capacity for gender responsive evaluation.
- Having members from the evaluation function actively participate in and contribute to the UNEG working group on human rights and gender equality.

UNODC has produced the internal guiding document *Gender Responsive Evaluations in the Work of UNODC* aimed at (a) presenting the most important frameworks for gender-responsive evaluations; (b) explaining what a gender-responsive evaluation entails; and (c) providing practical guidance to mainstream a gender perspective in the various stages of the evaluation process: planning, preparation, implementation and follow-up.

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**FIGURE 2.4 ELEMENTS OF HR AND GE-SENSITIVE EVALUATION PROCESSES AND METHODS**

OVERSIGHT OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE EVALUATIONS


The oversight component of UN-SWAP includes three performance indicators, one of them dedicated to evaluation. The evaluation indicator is linked to meeting the gender-related UNEG norms and standards and demonstrating effective use of UNEG guidance on integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluation.

The UNEG working group on gender equality and human rights developed a technical note and scorecard for the evaluation performance indicator (EPI). It aims to support more systematic and harmonized reporting through the use of a common tool that allows for improved comparability across the United Nations system. The unit of analysis selected as most feasible to assess was the evaluation report. Thus, the UN-SWAP rating for evaluation for UNODC, and all other United Nation entities, is solely based on an assessment of the extent to which evaluation reports completed in the reporting year successfully integrate gender equality and women’s empowerment into the evaluation approach and implementation.

Figure 2.5 highlights the specific criteria used for this assessment. Each of the four criteria is rated on a scale of 1–3 (with 3 being the highest) and the ratings are combined to give the total score. More information about UN-SWAP, including the scoring tool, technical note and additional guidance, can be found on the UNEG website at the following link.

HTTP://WWW.UNEVALUATION.ORG/DOCUMENT/DETAIL/1452
FIGURE 2.5 UN-SWAP EVALUATION PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (EPI) CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION PERFORMANCE INDICATOR</th>
<th>GEEW is integrated in the evaluation scope of analysis, and indicators are designed in a way that ensure GEEW-related data will be collected.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GEEW is integrated in evaluation criteria and questions specifically address how GEEW has been integrated into the design, planning and implementation of the intervention and the results achieved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender-responsive evaluation methodology, methods, tools and data analysis techniques are selected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender analysis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


BUILDING NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY

The Agenda for Sustainable Development asks countries, for the first time, to assess their achievements against their commitments. This call, also reflected in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on evaluation capacity-building (A/RES/69/237), requires assessing and investing in the existing evaluation capacity of Member States. Once again, in the United Nations context of evaluation, the SDGs provide fundamental guidance for the overall evaluation process as well as evaluation functions in general.

Thus, country-led evaluation is at the heart of the review mechanism of the Agenda for Sustainable Development. The work of UNODC in this agenda contributes to helping build evaluation capacity in selected countries. In addition, it directly contributes to SDG target 16.6 by furthering the development of “effective, accountable and transparent institutions” in the respective ministries of Member States, ensuring that “responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making takes place at all levels” (16.7).

The evaluation function delivers technical assistance in evaluation capacity within the areas mandated to UNODC (drugs, crime and terrorism). The approach follows a series of tailored technical assistance interventions with the aim to improve good governance by increasing effectiveness, accountability and inclusiveness in public organizations at the country level. This initiative focuses on the first pillar of the strategy of the UNODC evaluation function as can be seen in figure 2.6 below.
Country-led evaluation is at the heart of the review mechanism of the Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**EVALUATION ETHICS**

Evaluations within the United Nations context are guided by a set of ethical guidelines drawn up by UNEG. These guidelines have three main purposes: responsible use of power, ensuring credibility and responsible use of resources. They recognize that ethical conduct in evaluation is a shared responsibility and lay out a set of principles for evaluators, evaluation managers, the evaluation function and the organization commissioning the evaluation.

Those involved in evaluation processes must also follow the UNEG code of conduct for evaluation. The code applies to, and must be signed by all United Nations staff engaged in evaluation and all evaluation consultants working in the United Nations system. The provisions apply to all stages of the evaluation process and address the principles of: independence, impartiality, conflict of interest, honesty and integrity, competence, accountability, obligations to participants, confidentiality, avoidance of harm, accuracy/completeness and reliability, transparency, and omissions and wrongdoing.

UNET ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION:
HTTP://WWW.UNEVALUATION.ORG/DOCUMENT/DETAIL/102.

UNET CODE OF CONDUCT:
HTTP://WWW.UNEVALUATION.ORG/DOCUMENT/DETAIL/100
Of particular importance to the conduct of evaluations are that evaluators need to:

- Be sensitive to the beliefs, manners and customs of all stakeholders, paying particular attention to protocols, codes and recommendations that may be relevant to their interactions with women and minority groups
- Ensure that the rights of individuals involved in an evaluation are respected
- Act with integrity and honesty in their relationships with all stakeholders, treating everyone with respect
- Protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants
- Be responsible for their performance and their products

SUMMARY

This chapter described the United Nations context of evaluation in order to illustrate the different evaluation principles and requirements that apply to UNODC evaluation and the connections between them. The United Nations context of evaluation includes the SDGs, UNEG norms and standards, OECD-DAC criteria, HR and GE-responsive approaches, building of national evaluation capacity and evaluation ethics. The SDGs guide all United Nations work and provide a clear role for evaluation. The criteria, norms, standards and ethical guidelines provide a common understanding of what constitutes good evaluation practice. Finally, being mindful of HR and GE aspects ensures that the important principles of equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion, and fair power relations also become part of the evaluation focus, and ultimately help to ensure that the SDGs are for the benefit of all.

The next chapter describes the process of UNODC evaluations in detail.

OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES

- Gender Mainstreaming: Economic and Social Council Resolution 2013/16
  http://undocs.org/E/RES/2013/16
- Gender Mainstreaming in the Work of UNODC, Guidance note for UNODC staff (2013)
- IEU Guiding Document “Gender Responsive Evaluations in the Work of UNODC”, 2017
- Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system: Economic and Social Council Resolution 1997/2

- OECD DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management https://www.oecd.org/dac/2754804.pdf


CHAPTER 3

Evaluation in UNODC

This chapter explains the prominent place of evaluation within UNODC and within the programme/project cycle in general. It describes how and when evaluations are undertaken at UNODC. It also discusses the specific roles of the different parties involved. Finally, it provides insights into some of the specifics of evaluating the mandate of UNODC on issues of illicit drugs, crime and terrorism.
THE COMMITMENT OF UNODC TO EVALUATION

UNODC recognizes that evaluation is a powerful tool for learning, decision-making and accountability. As such, it is a priority for the organization. UNODC commits resources towards conducting and supporting evaluation, including ensuring that adequate budgets for evaluation are reserved. It also commits to building organizational capacity for good evaluation practice.

The UNODC evaluation policy is both the guiding and the binding document for the organization in relation to UNODC evaluations. The policy has been endorsed at the highest level by Member States and the Executive Director of UNODC.

The commitment of UNODC extends to promoting a culture of evaluation throughout the organization as well as amongst partner organizations. In practice this means:

- Providing clear procedures and guidance for evaluation processes, including clearly stated roles and responsibilities for all parties involved
- Providing adequate and ongoing support to programme/project managers tasked with managing evaluations
- Facilitating the engagement of a range of internal and external stakeholders in each evaluation process
- Fostering ongoing learning about good evaluation practice
- Ensuring that evaluation results are broadly shared to improve programming, strategy, operations and organizational learning

Specific practices to support organizational learning include evaluation briefings and debriefings, wide dissemination of all published evaluation reports, preparing and sharing evaluation briefs that highlight the results of in-depth evaluations, and having the lessons learned and recommendations from evaluation reports easily accessible as searchable databases on the evaluation portal. These activities are also described more fully in chapter six "Use of evaluation results".
Evaluation is part of the whole programme/project life cycle. Figure 3.1 shows how evaluation is embedded into the three main stages of any programme/project planning, implementation, and of course, evaluation, which includes the dissemination of the findings. The evaluation-related activities in each phase build upon each other and contribute to continuous learning about what is working, what adjustments need to be made, and what lessons can be drawn for future use.

1. **Planning stage.** Good practice calls for taking into account the results–findings, recommendations, and lessons learned of relevant, previous evaluations when:

- Conducting the needs assessment and the stakeholder analysis and mapping
- Strategy setting, including reviewing evaluation results, recommendations and lessons learned from previous thematically/regionally relevant interventions in order to inform the design of the new programme/project
- Designing the project, including the theory of change, the project logical framework, the HR and GE strategies, etc.
- Developing the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan, including key indicators and budget
- Reviewing evaluation plans for related future interventions at UNODC in order to ensure coordination and coherence of evaluation activities across the organization
- Carefully planning the timing of evaluation in coordination with the evaluation function as well as ensuring sufficient funding is reserved for evaluations

The commitment of UNODC extends to promoting a culture of evaluation throughout the organization as well as amongst partner organizations.

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**THE EVALUATION POLICY OF UNODC**

The evaluation policy of UNODC is an important reference document for both staff and Member States. It sets out the principles and rules that guide the Organization’s decisions and actions when planning, conducting, disseminating and using evaluations.

Evaluation is an institutional responsibility. It is the responsibility of senior management to promote a culture of evaluation and be champions of evaluation. It is the responsibility of all staff to follow the principles set out in the Organization’s evaluation policy. This policy can be found on the IEU website.

• Undertaking the baseline study to obtain initial data for measuring progress on the key indicators (the data obtained from the study is then included as baseline information in the M&E plan)

2. **Implementation stage.** Implementation should be guided by good management practices that include:

• Developing and using the monitoring system and information produced
• Managing the mid-term evaluation
• Using the results of the mid-term evaluation to make any necessary course corrections
• Continuing to gather monitoring data

3. **Evaluation stage.** This stage should be informed by the norms and standards for evaluations, with the main activities being:

• Designing and managing the final evaluation
• Ensuring the use of evaluation results for accountability, decision-making and organizational learning

Continuous learning, as well as stakeholder participation, should be central components for all phases. The results of evaluations are integral to planning new interventions and so the cycle continues.

**FIGURE 3.1 EVALUATION IN THE PROGRAMME/PROJECT LIFECYCLE**
The steps/processes as outlined in figure 3.1 are not to be understood as linear or stand-alone; rather they complement as well as cross over and influence each other. Programme/project management is ultimately responsible for integrating evaluation into the programme/project cycle as well as for properly planning for, budgeting and initiating the evaluation process. Before initiating an evaluation however, close consultations with the UNODC evaluation function on issues of timing, the modality of evaluation and the evaluation budget is mandatory before the required information can be entered into the web-based evaluation portal. More specific instructions and guidance on the different phases and steps of UNODC evaluations are provided in the next chapter.

WHEN ARE EVALUATIONS CONDUCTED?

The evaluation policy of UNODC requires all programmes/projects to be evaluated at least every four years or six months before the intervention is finalized. Most UNODC interventions are evaluated at two major points during their life cycle.

A mid-term evaluation is typically conducted during the development or improvement of the programme/project, often more than once, by the in-house staff of the programme/project. It aims to assess the achievement of initial output-level results and to provide an early indication of whether the intervention is on track to achieve its outcome-level results. It may also address the adequacy of delivery and monitoring systems, and provide early indications of the intervention’s potential for sustainability and scalability. Mid-term evaluations are “formative” in their approach as they provide the opportunity to determine what adjustments might be needed and to implement those changes within the intervention’s lifecycle.

A final evaluation is conducted shortly before the end of a programme/project and for the benefit of some external audience or decision makers. It focuses on the assessment of outcome-level results, both intended and unintended. It captures lessons learned from implementation to inform future programming, policymaking and overall organizational learning. Final evaluations are also referred to as “summative” evaluations.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF EVALUATIONS?

In addition to timing, different types (or modalities) of evaluation are undertaken within UNODC. The most common are independent project evaluations and in-depth evaluations, with the latter being more complex. UNODC also conducts cluster evaluations and joint evaluations, which are usually undertaken as in-depth evaluations. Decisions about the type of evaluation to be conducted are made by the evaluation function and based on the evaluation’s purpose, the level of direct involvement of different parties, as well as the focus and complexity of the evaluation. Table 3.1 provides a brief overview of each type with fuller descriptions provided below.

Regardless of the type of evaluation undertaken, all evaluations must be conducted in accordance with the UNODC evaluation policy, norms and standards, guidelines and templates.

### TABLE 3.1 TYPES AND NOTABLE EXAMPLES OF UNODC EVALUATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>FOCUS</th>
<th>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Independent project evaluations (IPE) | Examining the performance of individual projects. These are the evaluations most frequently undertaken at UNODC. Notable examples:  
  - Independent project evaluation of the UNODC Global eLearning Programme - making the world safer from drugs, crime and terrorism (GEP), GLOU 61, 2015  
  - Final independent project evaluation of the “Strengthening Criminal Justice Responses to Human Trafficking in Lao People’s Democratic Republic” Project, LAOX 26, 2016 | Programme/project Manager and IEU                                                   |
| In-depth evaluations (IDE)  | Examining broader initiatives that are of high strategic interest and relevance across the organization:  
  - Country, regional, thematic or global programmes  
  - Cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, human rights, etc.  
  - Corporate policies  
  Notable examples:  
  - Mid-term In-Depth Evaluation of the “Strengthening the legal regime against Terrorism” (GLO/R3S) | IEU                                                                                   |

(Cont.)
Independent project evaluations (IPEs) are required for all projects unless the evaluation office determines that another type of evaluation is more suitable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>FOCUS</th>
<th>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Cluster evaluations   | Identifying commonalities and synergies across a set of related projects as well as determining the progress made towards a wider programming objective. In some cases, the decision may be made to group several smaller projects in one cluster evaluation in order to ensure efficient usage of resources. Notable examples:  
  • In-depth mid-term cluster evaluation of the global programmes against trafficking in persons (GLOT 59) and the global programme against smuggling of migrants (GLOT 92), 2017 | IEU                     |
| Joint evaluations     | Collaboratively undertaking an evaluation with another implementing partner, usually done as a requirement of particular funding and donor agreements. Joint evaluations within the United Nations system gain importance as means of improving coordination and harmonization, as well as assessing the effectiveness, of UN Delivering as One. Notable examples:  
  • The evaluation function strives to increase the number of joint evaluations and therefore provides guidance and additional references in this handbook. | IEU                     |

HTTP://WWW.UN.ORG/EN/GA/DELIVERINGASONE/

INDEPENDENT PROJECT EVALUATIONS

Independent project evaluations (IPEs) are required for all UNODC projects unless the evaluation function determines that another type of evaluation is more suitable. The responsibility for managing IPEs lies with the manager of the programme/project being evaluated (also referred to in this handbook as the “manager”). They are conducted by independent external evaluators/consultants. The role of the evaluation function is to backstop the process, review and clear all deliverables in the process as well as provide quality assurance and guidance to managers and evaluators throughout the process. IPEs are typically initiated approximately six months prior to the planned date of completion of the project.
IN-DEPTH EVALUATIONS

In-depth evaluations (IDEs) are usually large-scale strategic evaluations. These may be of country, regional, thematic or global programmes, or of corporate-level initiatives, policies or approaches. The range of potential themes is highlighted in the text box below. The evaluation function of UNODC usually conducts between two and four IDEs each year. The subject chosen depends on the focus, purpose or complexity of the analysis required, and on the human and financial resources available to conduct the evaluation.

IDEs differ from IPEs in their relative size, geographical scope and strategic importance, as well as the greater complexity of methodological evaluation instruments used. These evaluations are also undertaken by independent external evaluators/consultants or specialized companies. However, they are managed by the evaluation function and involve staff from the evaluation function as part of the evaluation team. IDEs usually require extensive consultation, take longer to complete, command significantly larger budgets, and share their reports with a wider audience. IDEs are typically initiated at least eight months prior to the planned date of completion of the intervention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POTENTIAL THEMES AND TOPICS FOR IN-DEPTH EVALUATIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Overall UNODC strategy and mandate</td>
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<td>• Specific thematic programme within UNODC strategy and mandate</td>
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<td>• Regional or country programme</td>
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<td>• Global programme or project</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Area of special interest to UNODC senior management or donor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cluster of projects</td>
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<td>• Specific project or programme requiring more intensive involvement of IEU</td>
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CLUSTER EVALUATIONS

Cluster evaluations can be beneficial for grouping individual programmes or projects in order to identify commonalities and potential synergies. They may be justified when interventions have similar aspects such as a theme, subprogramme or region that can be meaningfully assessed together. In some cases, it is more efficient and effective to cluster small projects together for one evaluation than to evaluate them individually. The evaluation function takes the lead in cases where it is determined that an in-depth evaluation approach is more appropriate. Further information can be found in the “Guidelines for Cluster Evaluations” on the IEU website.

GUIDELINES FOR CLUSTER EVALUATIONS

HTTP://WWW.UNODC.ORG/DOCUMENTS/EVALUATION/GUIDELINES/GUIDELINES_ON_CLUSTERS EVALUATIONS.PDF
Cluster evaluations can be beneficial as a way of grouping programmes and projects in order to identify commonalities and synergies.

JOINT EVALUATIONS

Joint evaluations may be conducted in cases where the intervention being evaluated is collaboratively funded or implemented with Member States or partners such as other United Nations or multilateral organizations. There can be various degrees of “jointness” depending on the extent to which individual partners cooperate on the implementation of the evaluation process, merge their evaluation resources and combine their evaluation reporting. In all cases, UNODC programme/project management still needs to set aside funds for the evaluation, even when conducted by multiple partners.

Joint evaluations can help overcome a range of issues commonly encountered in evaluation processes. The benefits to undertaking joint evaluations include the opportunity to:

- Increase harmonization and cohesion of international aid when partners work together
- Decrease burden on recipient countries by reducing the overall number of evaluations
- Overcome challenges of attributing effectiveness to an individual intervention by being able to more easily look at complementary efforts supported by different partners
- Increase acceptance and legitimacy of findings and recommendations as a result of shared ownership of the evaluation process
- Build capacity for evaluation by being exposed to good practices used by other partners

Joint evaluations tend to be lengthier and require greater coordination than other types of evaluations. Clear management structures and communications systems are essential for joint evaluations to function effectively. It is important to determine at an early stage exactly which partners will be participating and their probable contribution. The level of cooperation between UNODC and its partners can vary but typically all partners work together throughout the evaluation process. The OECD publication "Joint evaluations: Recent experiences, lessons learned and options for the future" provides a good overview and detailed instructions for managing joint evaluations.11

OTHER TYPES OF EVALUATIONS

In addition to the above, there are several other types of evaluations that may potentially be conducted within UNODC. This is a limited selection:

- **Meta-evaluations.** These are the evaluation of evaluations and are used to assess the evaluator, the evaluation report as well as the evaluation process itself. The focus may include combining evaluation results, checking compliance with evaluation policy and good practices, and/or assessing how well evaluations are disseminated and used for organizational learning.

Clear management structures and communications systems are essential for joint evaluations to function effectively.

- **Impact evaluations.** These focus on the effect of an intervention rather than on its management and delivery. They are usually undertaken after the intervention is completed, but may also be done during longer programmes/projects. Systematic baseline assessments and data collection and monitoring throughout the implementation phase are key to the success of an impact evaluation.

- **Ex-poste evaluations.** These are carried out at a period after the intervention has been completed, usually with the intention of discovering what the longer-term impact of the intervention has been.

- **Developmental evaluations.** These are an approach to understanding the activities of a programme/project operating in dynamic, novel environments with complex interactions. They focus on innovation and strategic learning rather than standard outcomes and are as much a way of thinking about programmes-in-context and the feedback they produce.

**WHO IS INVOLVED AND HOW?**

During all its evaluations, UNODC aims to be inclusive of the wide range of internal and external stakeholders involved in the undertaking of any programme/project. This section describes the parties that may be involved in the evaluation process and their responsibilities—these include the evaluation function, the evaluation team, the programme/project managers, core learning partners (CLPs), informants, advisory board members, Member States and senior management.

The extent of involvement of the various parties differs according to the type and complexity of the intervention and evaluation. Therefore, it is important to clarify the roles of all stakeholders at the beginning of the evaluation process. This includes determining which headquarters unit/section or field office will manage and/or support the process. This decision needs to take into account the significant time commitment that managing the entire evaluation processes generally requires. Once finalized, the respective responsibilities of all parties need to be identified in the evaluation terms of reference. This does not preclude UNODC’s evaluation function from refining the roles and responsibilities later on in the evaluation planning process.

More detailed guidance about undertaking evaluation processes as well as links to templates and useful resources are provided in the following chapter.
UNODC EVALUATION FUNCTION

The independent evaluation function of UNODC is situated outside of the organizational structure of UNODC with an administrative linkage to the Office of the Executive Director. It is staffed by evaluation specialists. By directly reporting to the Executive Director and Member States, the unit is able to conduct their work independently and impartially.

It is the responsibility of the evaluation function to:

- Promote a culture of evaluation within the organization
- Provide policy, tools, templates and guidelines to be used in the evaluation process, and to update these on a continuous basis
- Review and approve all products and deliverables of the evaluation, including terms of reference, selection of evaluators, the evaluation methodology in the form of an inception report, draft evaluation report, final evaluation report, presentation of evaluation findings, and the evaluation follow-up plan provided by the programme/project manager
- Manage and conduct in-depth evaluations in collaboration with external independent evaluators. The staff members of the evaluation office participate as part of the evaluation team and contribute to all deliverables according to the terms of reference
- Provide quality assurance by ensuring that evaluation quality standards are met throughout the evaluation process
- Respond to questions from all involved parties, and provide coaching support as feasible
- Publish and make publically available all cleared final evaluation reports on the UNODC website
- Regularly disseminate evaluation results to the Executive Director, senior management and Member States
- Report the implementation rate of recommendations to the Executive Director, senior management and Member States on an annual basis
EVALUATION TEAM

UNODC relies on independent evaluators in order to promote transparency and ensure the maximum objectivity of the evaluation process. All UNODC evaluations require an evaluation team of at least two team members in order to conduct each evaluation—one team leader with extensive expertise in evaluation and the other team member with expertise in the substantive topic to be evaluated. Depending on the specific requirements of the evaluation, size and complexity of the intervention, additional substantive experts may be recruited to fill any technical gaps on the team (e.g. in strategic issues such as human rights and gender equality, or in UNODC thematic areas such as policing). Furthermore, the teams need to be gender balanced. In addition, the evaluators’ knowledge of and commitment to gender mainstreaming and a human rights-based approach are essential. The teams should also be geographically diverse. Ideally, the evaluation team includes professionals from the countries or regions concerned, as they can contribute with knowledge of the local context and fluency in one or multiple local languages to the team. In the case of in-depth evaluations, a staff member of the evaluation function is also part of the evaluation team.

It is the team’s responsibility to conduct professional evaluations guided by the UNEG norms and standards for evaluation and UNODC evaluation processes and procedures, and according to the evaluation terms of reference.

PROGRAMME/PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Programme/project managers are the staff responsible for the implementation and management of individual UNODC programmes and projects, including the respective evaluation activities. It is their responsibility to:

- Build evaluation into the programme/project design and budget
- Consult with the UNODC evaluation function on the exact modality and timing of the evaluation
- Confirm that the funds specified in the programme/project budget for evaluation are available
- Initiate the evaluation process of independent project evaluations with the evaluation function through the evaluation application
- Manage all IPE evaluation processes under the guidance of the evaluation function and in consultation and collaboration with the core learning partners
- Support evaluations by facilitating programme/project team engagement, access to documents, interaction with stakeholders and provide other required information
• Complete all administrative and logistical arrangements during the evaluation process
• Prepare the management response addressing the recommendations of the final evaluation report and ensuring agreed upon follow-up actions
• Disseminate the final evaluation report to all relevant stakeholders
• Prepare an evaluation follow-up plan (EFP) on the recommendations
• Track the implementation of the recommendations by regular yearly updates
• Make use of the recommendations and lessons learned for future decision-making, planning and organizational learning

CORE LEARNING PARTNERS

The Core Learning Partnership (CLP) is a platform for key stakeholders to actively participate in the evaluation process. CLPs are made up of intended users of the evaluation, including donors, beneficiaries, counterparts in government and other organizations involved in the intervention’s implementation.

CLP members are identified by programme/project management at the planning stage of the evaluation and can be further refined by the evaluation team throughout the evaluation process. Membership can differ depending on the type of evaluation, the countries involved and the thematic area under evaluation.

The benefits of this partnership of stakeholders are wide ranging. In addition to improving transparency and accountability of evaluation processes with UNODC stakeholders, CLP members’ participation can increase the quality and relevance of evaluations. Lessons can also be shared quickly as they emerge during the evaluation. Furthermore, members gain exposure that can increase their understanding of the thematic area and evaluation practice.

A high degree of stakeholder participation throughout the evaluation can also result in strengthening commitment to the process, ownership of the subsequent evaluation results, and willingness to implement the recommendations.

The primary role of the CLPs is to:

• Review and comment on the evaluation terms of reference, including the evaluation questions
• Propose any known qualified candidates for the evaluation team
• Provide support and insights throughout the evaluation process, including as participants in interviews and discussions conducted by the evaluators
Informants are an essential element for an evaluation process identifying and engaging with them properly impacts the quality of data collection and in turn the whole evaluation exercise.

INFORMANTS

Informants such as interviewees, focus group participants or survey respondents are essential to any evaluation since they are able to provide the information about the intervention under evaluation. They thereby provide the data for the assessment by the evaluation team. Informants form part of the wider stakeholder group and can include counterparts from government institutions, CSOs, academics, direct beneficiaries, etc. The evaluation team has to identify all relevant informants based on a thorough, inclusive stakeholder mapping.

ADVISORY BOARD

Advisory boards are composed of internal or external experts who can provide technical advice on a thematic area or on the conduct and use of evaluation studies. Individuals are selected based on their technical, procedural or political expertise, and may include, for instance, judicial or policy experts, medical professionals, human rights campaigners and gender equality experts. Advisory boards are used in cases where their participation may increase the profile, legitimacy, credibility and/or acceptance of the evaluation and its results.

The primary role of advisory board members is to offer guidance and feedback on the evaluation design, methodology, data collection and analysis as well as the content and format for reporting the findings. They do not have any decision-making power or direct responsibility in the evaluation process.

The evaluation manager normally creates this structure by drafting terms of reference for the specific advisory group to be established including number of members, technical expertise required, decision-making process and staged inclusion of advisory group products through the evaluation process. As in all evaluation-related structures, fair representation of women and men and gender equality and human rights expertise is recommended.
Advisory boards are used in cases where their participation is likely to increase the profile, legitimacy, credibility and/or acceptance of the evaluation and its results.

MEMBER STATES

Member States of the United Nations are involved in evaluations as stakeholders, donors or other counterparts including as programme/project hosts or beneficiaries. On a regular basis, the UNODC evaluation function presents evaluation findings, the implementation rate of recommendations, and information on compliance with evaluation standards and other evaluation-related topics to Member States. The presentations are either given as part of FinGov meetings (the standing open-ended intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of UNODC) or during specifically arranged evaluation meetings and events designed to reach a wide audience of stakeholders.

Representatives of Member States are welcome to participate in all phases of the evaluation process, including as members of the CLP. They are encouraged to reach out to the UNODC evaluation function with any questions or concerns about evaluations, transparency and accountability, as well as to request evaluations of UNODC activities.

The roles of Member States within evaluation processes can potentially include:

- Being involved as CLPs during the evaluation process
- Making individual representatives available for consultations or interviews with the evaluation team
- Attending the presentations of evaluation results
- Being stakeholders in the follow-up to evaluation recommendations

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

The members of UNODC senior management include the Executive Director, directors of branches and divisions, and field representatives. UNODC’s senior management is expected to support the further development of the organization’s evaluation function, to ensure that adequate resources for evaluation are reserved and that evaluation processes are of a high standard. Evaluation is part of the programme and project cycle and is therefore an institutional responsibility to be taken up by all managers in UNODC.
The responsibilities of senior management during evaluations include:

- Being available for consultations or interviews with the evaluation team
- Ensuring that evaluation recommendations are implemented
- Acknowledging the results of the evaluation and reviewing the management response
- Ensuring the dissemination and utilization of evaluation recommendations, identified best practices and lessons learned to inform work plans and strategies

EVALUATING ISSUES OF DRUGS AND CRIME

Illicit drugs, organized crime, corruption and terrorism threaten development, justice and security in countries around the globe, disproportionately affecting those members of society in a most vulnerable position.

UNODC is a global leader in the struggle against illicit drugs and organized and serious crime, and the lead United Nations entity for delivering legal and technical assistance to prevent terrorism. Headquartered in Vienna, UNODC operates more than 50 field offices around the world, covering over 150 countries. The UNODC evaluation function is also located at the headquarters in Vienna, Austria, with an international team of evaluation experts, evaluation assistants and administrative assistants.

UNODC is mandated to assist Member States in their struggle against illicit drugs, crime and terrorism and is responsible for five interrelated thematic areas: (a) organized crime and trafficking, including drug trafficking, firearms, human trafficking and migrant smuggling, maritime crime and piracy as well as wildlife and forest crime; (b) corruption; (c) crime prevention and criminal justice reform; (d) drug abuse prevention and health as well as (e) terrorism prevention. Through all its work, UNODC strives to mainstream a gender perspective and human rights-based approach.

The thematic topics are being addressed within five clear lines of services, namely:

Research and threat analysis. Drugs and crime policies must be firmly based on evidence to be effective. UNODC regularly publishes comprehensive reports for instance on drugs, homicide, trafficking in persons and wildlife crime.32

Capacity-building assistance. Developing local capacity improves the ability of states to tackle the threats posed by illicit drugs, organized crime, corruption and terrorism. The technical assistance provided by UNODC includes expert advice, specialized training, legal assistance, operational tools, guidance and practical resources.

Standards and norms. The internationally accepted standards and norms developed by UNODC encourage a coordinated transnational approach to address the challenges posed by drugs, crime and terrorism. UNODC is the guardian of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the United Nations convention against transnational organized crime as well as the standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners. In addition, UNODC is a co-sponsor of the joint United Nations programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and oversees the ratification and implementation of the 19 legal instruments against terrorism.

Cross-border cooperation and knowledge-sharing. UNDOC develops and supports cross-border cooperation linking practitioners and policymakers, Governments and non-governmental organizations, to encourage them to share knowledge, experience and best practices in dealing with drugs, crime and terrorism.

Communication and advocacy. UNODC engages in communications and advocacy to increase awareness and understanding of drugs, crime and terrorism and to mobilize society to promote change.

Additional information and more details about UNODC in general can be found on the UNODC website: https://www.unodc.org/unodc/index.html

The independent UNODC evaluation function, which is located next to the Office of the Executive Director in the UNODC organigram, contributes to establishing strong institutions, criminal justice and the rule of law by evaluating all UNODC efforts in combatting drugs, crime and terrorism, issuing and disseminating recommendations as well as lessons learned and best practices.

Specific challenges as well as mitigating factors and solutions when evaluating the UNODC thematic areas are outlined in the practical guide of chapter seven.

SUMMARY

The UNODC evaluation policy underscores the organization’s strong commitment to evaluation. Evaluation is a core part of the lifecycle of all UNODC interventions, and there are clear procedures for the timing and types of evaluations that are conducted. Evaluation at UNODC involves multiple parties including programme/project managers, evaluators, staff of the evaluation function, core learning partners and Member States. All have important roles to play in ensuring that evaluations are relevant, timely and credible, and that the results are used.

The next chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the evaluation processes to be followed in managing UNODC evaluations.