Evaluation Handbook
Guidance for designing, conducting and using independent evaluation at UNODC
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CHAPTER 4

Evaluation as part of programme/project management

This chapter guides project/programme managers through the steps and requirements leading up to, during, and after the evaluation. By following these steps, project/programme managers can ensure that the evaluation process goes smoothly and that the results of the evaluation can be used to improve UNODC programmes and operations.
OVERVIEW OF THE UNODC EVALUATION PROCESS

This chapter is primarily written for those who manage projects/programmes and who therefore have a central role in managing project evaluations, but it will also be useful for evaluators and partners. It will help all readers become familiar with the necessary actions, stages and requirements of the evaluation process in order to successfully conclude a UNODC evaluation.

Although the general principles and standards for evaluations are similar across the United Nations and other development organizations, the actual evaluation processes may vary. As the implementing entity of the evaluation function, the UNODC evaluation function provides guidance on how to meet internationally recognized standards and UNODC specific requirements.

The evaluation process can be described as having four overall phases: (a) Planning, (b) Preparation, (c) Implementation and (d) Follow-up. Within these phases are 10 specific steps that need be followed in order to meet all of the requirements of a UNODC evaluation. These phases and steps are shown in figure 4.1.

The UNODC evaluation function stands ready to answer questions and provide guidance and support throughout the evaluation process.
This chapter provides an overview of each step and of what is required for its successful completion. It also provides links to more detailed guidance and to required templates. Specifically, the guiding document “Gender-Responsive Evaluations in the Work of UNODC” provides practical guidance to mainstream a gender perspective in the four phases of the evaluation process. Although some key gender-related guidelines will be presented in this chapter, evaluation stakeholders should review this detailed guiding document in order to ensure adherence to organizational norms, standards and guidelines on gender-responsive evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION TOOLS</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **PLANNING PHASE** | - Quality checklist for project proposals  
- Evaluability assessment template  
- Evaluation quality criteria  
- Evaluation plan template  
- IEU evaluation budget matrix |
| **PREPARATION PHASE** | - Evaluability assessment template  
- Guidelines and template for evaluation ToR  
- Guidelines for selection of evaluators  
- Evaluations consultants declaration of interest  
- Guidelines and template for inception report  
- Guidelines for cluster evaluations  
- Evaluation roles and responsibilities  
- IEU guiding document “Gender Responsive Evaluations in the Work of UNODC”, 2017 |
| **IMPLEMENTATION PHASE** | - Quality assessment for evaluation reports  
- IEU guiding document “Gender Responsive Evaluations in the Work of UNODC”, 2017, which includes a proposed set of gender-sensitive evaluation questions and a gender mainstreaming checklist for quality assessment  
- Guidelines and template for evaluation reports  
- Typographic styles  
- United Nations spelling |
| **FOLLOW-UP PHASE** | - Evaluation follow-up plan template  
- IEU guiding document “Gender Responsive Evaluations in the Work of UNODC”, 2017  
- Evaluation application for recording recommendations and lessons learned |

The links to the templates and guidelines are available on the IEU website and included in the annex of the electronic version of this handbook.
CHAPTER 4. EVALUATION AS PART OF THE PROGRAMME/PROJECT MANAGEMENT

In line with the UNODC evaluation policy, all projects and programmes need to undergo an evaluation every four years and before completion of a project/programme.

PHASE 1: PLANNING

Programmes and projects need to be designed with evaluation in mind as evaluation is an essential part of an intervention’s life cycle. Programme and project managers (who will also be referred to as managers in this handbook) play a critical role in any evaluation process beginning at the programme/project design stage. This is when managers should:

- Review evaluation results, recommendations and lessons learned from previous interventions in order to inform the design of the new programme/project
- Review evaluation plans for related interventions at UNODC in order to ensure coordination and coherence of evaluation activities across the organization
- Carefully plan the timing of the evaluations and ensure sufficient funding is reserved
- Review the UNODC evaluation handbook in order to ensure adherence to organizational evaluation norms, standards and guidelines

All programme and project documents, including any revision documents, are required to include a section on evaluation. The evaluation function reviews and clears all documents in the direct approval process as well as provides comments for the approval process of the UNODC programme review committee. A list of what has to be included in the evaluation section appears in the text box below.

REQUIRED INFORMATION FOR THE EVALUATION SECTION OF THE PROGRAMME/PROJECT DOCUMENT AS WELL AS THE PROGRAMME/PROJECT REVISION DOCUMENT

- Type of evaluation: mid-term or final evaluation, independent project evaluation or in-depth evaluation (also indicating if cluster or joint evaluation) and rationale for this choice
- Purpose of the evaluation, including how evaluation findings will be used
- Approach of the evaluation, including how human rights (HR) and gender equality (GE) approaches will be integrated
- Timing for the evaluation (i.e. month and year; plan for evaluation preparation and implementation; whether rescheduling of evaluation needed due to project extension)
- Relationship to relevant past and planned evaluations, and to relevant evaluations at other levels (project, subprogramme or global programme evaluations and country, regional or thematic programme evaluations)
- Evaluation capacity: identify evaluation focal points in the region or section/branch, if any
- Evaluation budget: specify the reserved budget for the planned evaluations
- Evaluation management: clarify roles and responsibilities of involved parties
- Summary of recommendations of any previous evaluations
When preparing the programme/project documents, managers must:

- Explain how evaluation has been incorporated into the project/programme in accordance with UNODC evaluation policy
- Explain how they expect to coordinate evaluations between different levels of UNODC programming in order to ensure coherence
- Include evaluation activities in the timeline and budget

Programme/project managers are responsible for properly budgeting for the evaluation. In accordance with UNODC evaluation policy, 2–3 per cent of the overall programme/project budget needs to be reserved for one evaluation. However, the exact budget will depend on the scope and methodology of the evaluation (such as number of field missions), duration of the project/programme, geographical and thematic coverage, composition of the evaluation team, etc. In order to help managers prepare evaluation budgets, the evaluation function has developed a matrix for calculating the minimum amount required for a fully-fledged evaluation. The matrix is available upon request.

### FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN DEVELOPING AN EVALUATION BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEES FOR EVALUATORS:</th>
<th>TRAVEL:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Number of working days</td>
<td>• Number of countries to be visited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Daily fee</td>
<td>• Number of working days in each country (daily subsistence allowance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Number of consultants (minimum evaluation team of two)</td>
<td>• Location/base of the consultants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION REPORT:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Publication</td>
<td>• Participation of evaluation office staff in field missions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Translation</td>
<td>• Security measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Need for interpreters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Managers must discuss the final evaluation plan and budget with the evaluation office, which will review the plan and budget prior to the programme/project approval. This approval process is a requirement for all new initiatives and for all formal revisions. It helps ensure that all evaluation information is clearly established during the planning and design stage.
CHAPTER 4. EVALUATION AS PART OF THE PROGRAMME/PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The planning phase is crucial to make sure HR and GE aspects are properly addressed in the programme/project and its evaluation. Thus, it is relevant to mobilize human rights and gender knowledge and capacity during this phase. Moreover, during this phase it is necessary to commit enough capacity, time and budget to ensure HR and GE-responsive, inclusive and participatory evaluation processes. Managers must be aware that HR and GE-responsive evaluations require wide consultation with different informants, many of them hard-to-reach populations. Furthermore, human rights and gender expertise must be ensured among evaluation teams.

PHASE 2: PREPARATION

Careful preparation of the overall evaluation process helps to ensure that evaluations will be of high quality, credible and useful. The preparation phase has three main steps: initiating the process, determining the terms of reference and recruiting the evaluation team. The preparation phase establishes the foundations for a HR and GE-responsive evaluation process. As part of the planning phase, it is important that HR and GE knowledge and capacity are mobilized.

STEP 1 - INITIATE

The first step in the evaluation process is to start the coordination and administrative processes for conducting the evaluation. Managers begin this approximately six to eight months prior to the start of the implementation of the evaluation.

During this step, managers need to take the following actions:

- Inform the UNODC evaluation function and core learning partners (CLPs) of the intention to proceed
- Receive confirmation on the modality (type) of evaluation from the evaluation office
- Confirm that the funds specified in the programme/project budget for evaluation are readily available
- Confirm which stakeholders will be involved and their specific roles in the evaluation
- Update the evaluation timeline
- Officially initiate the evaluation process for project evaluations in the evaluation application

It is important that managers enter the above information in the evaluation application and consult with the evaluation function before further action is taken.

In accordance with UNODC evaluation policy, 2–3 per cent of the overall programme/project budget needs to be directed towards evaluation.
Careful and timely preparation of the overall evaluation process helps to ensure that evaluations will be of high quality, credible and useful, and human rights and gender equality-responsive.

Useful reference documents include UNODC guidance on evaluation roles and responsibilities and the evaluation planning template.

- UNODC GUIDANCE FOR IN-DEPTH EVALUATIONS
- UNODC GUIDANCE FOR INDEPENDENT PROJECT EVALUATIONS
- UNODC EVALUATION PLANNING TEMPLATE
- UNODC EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE
- HTTPS://WWW.UNODC.ORG/UNODC/EN/EVALUATION/GUIDANCE-FOR-PROJECT-PROGRAMME-MANAGERS.HTML

THE UNODC WEB-BASED EVALUATION APPLICATION

The web-based evaluation application is a key tool, guide and resource for evaluations at UNODC. It is an internal site, accessible to staff, that is used throughout the evaluation process.

All evaluation planning documents and deliverables need to be uploaded and submitted to the evaluation function through the evaluation application.

The application has useful resources including:
- Searchable databases for recommendations and lessons learned that have emerged from UNODC evaluations across all thematic areas
- Step-by-step instructions, guidance and templates for managing and undertaking evaluations

Please find below a screenshot of the evaluation application.
During the initiation step, managers also need to start gathering relevant background documents for the evaluation team to use during the desk review process. The documents should be provided to the evaluators as soon as they begin their work.

More detailed information regarding the relevant background documents and the desk review can be found in the practical guide in part 3 of this handbook.

**Timeframe**

As indicated above, the preparation for evaluation needs to begin six to eight months in advance of the start of the evaluation. How far in advance to start preparations depends on the size of the intervention and of the evaluation. Larger programmes and projects typically require longer preparation time. It is necessary for evaluations to be completed before the end of the intervention to ensure the availability of funds as well as the availability of key staff to participate for the duration of the evaluation. An approximate time frame for each phase of the evaluation is provided in table 4.1. It is of utmost importance to emphasize that the time frame provided in the table is exemplary and can vary substantively depending on the size and scope of the evaluation.

**TABLE 4.1 SAMPLE EVALUATION TIMEFRAME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Party Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ToR</td>
<td>3–4 weeks (+ 2 weeks for review by CLPs)</td>
<td>Programme/project manager (with approval by the evaluation function)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment process of Human Resources and Management Service (HRMS) for evaluation team* (availability of consultants should be checked much earlier)</td>
<td>3–4 weeks (assuming that all required documents have been arranged beforehand)</td>
<td>Programme/project manager (with approval by the evaluation function)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inception report</td>
<td>3–5 weeks (once contract signed)</td>
<td>Evaluation team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation activities (data collection, including field missions)</td>
<td>2–6 weeks (once inception report approved; this strongly depends on the size and scope of the programme/project)</td>
<td>Evaluation team Programme/project management for all logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting activities (analysis, preparation of draft and final report, presentation)</td>
<td>8–12 weeks (once data collection finalized; includes around 3–4 iterations between the evaluation office and the evaluation team) (+ 2 weeks for review by CLPs)</td>
<td>Evaluation team (with approval by the evaluation function) Programme/project manager review for factual errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up phase (use and dissemination)</td>
<td>4–6 weeks (once final evaluation report received) (+ yearly update)</td>
<td>Programme/project manager and the evaluation function for approval</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Please note that the HRMS recruitment process mentioned here only includes the official recruitment of the selected candidates and not the selection process itself.
STEP 2 - TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference (ToR) serve as the contractual basis under which the evaluation team is expected to operate. The document sets out the roles and parameters for the evaluation process, and provides specific instructions to the evaluation team.

The ToR outline why the evaluation is being undertaken (purpose and objectives). It explains what is being examined (scope) and defines the key criteria and the key questions to be answered. It describes how the evaluation is to be accomplished (approach/es and methods). It outlines when the various activities will take place (time frame and deliverables). It identifies who will be involved (as stakeholders and users). Additionally, the ToR discuss the use of the evaluation once it is completed.

When preparing the ToR, it is important to mobilize human rights and gender knowledge and capacity. Specifically, it is recommended to look for advice on integrating HR and GE in evaluation processes at the IEU level.

Table 4.2 provides a checklist of the key components and requirements of the ToR. More detailed guidance and the required ToR template can be found on the UNODC evaluation website. Additional guidance in drafting this critical document is available from the evaluation function.

Review and approval of the terms of reference

It is important for the ToR to be reviewed in order to ensure it is sufficiently comprehensive and of adequate quality. The process of developing the ToR includes involvement of and close consultation with the evaluation function.

Sharing the ToR with key stakeholders is an important way to:

- Make use of their collective knowledge about key issues to be addressed in the evaluation and how these should be addressed
- Develop a shared understanding of the purpose of the evaluation, thereby facilitating ownership of the evaluation process
- Clarify and manage expectations of each party’s roles and responsibilities
Once the initial draft of the ToR has been developed by the manager, it is discussed with, and cleared by, the evaluation function. The CLPs are then offered the opportunity to comment on the draft document. The CLPs are informed by the programme/project manager of their role in the process before they receive the ToR for comments. Once their input has been included, the evaluation function reviews and clears the final ToR.

**TABLE 4.2 KEY COMPONENTS OF THE EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEADINGS</th>
<th>ISSUES TO ADDRESS</th>
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</table>
| Background and context | • What is the programme/project overview: historical and social context, key stakeholders, main challenges and notable developments during implementation (including sex-disaggregated data)?  
• What are the main objectives and outcomes?  
• What main issues from previous evaluations should be considered?  
• How have HR and GE been addressed?  
• What are the links to other programmes, and to agency strategies and goals?  
• How does the programme/project contribute to the SDGs? What SDGs are relevant in the context of the programme/project? |
| Disbursement history   | • How much is the overall budget, expenditure, committed funds of the programme/project?                                                                                                                                 |
| Purpose of evaluation  | • Who commissioned the evaluation; why is it being undertaken now?  
• What does the evaluation seek to accomplish; how will results be used?  
• Who are the main evaluation users; how will they be involved?                                                                                                                                 |
| Scope of evaluation    | • What unit of analysis is covered?  
• What time period and geographic area is covered?                                                                                                                                                              |
| Key evaluation questions | • What is the focus of the evaluation; what are the most critical things to know about the intervention?  
• What are 1–3 priority questions for each criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, partnership and cooperation, HR and GE-, innovation (optional) and for lessons learned and best practice? |
| Evaluation methodology | • What is the methodological guidance, both for data collection and analysis, for qualitative and quantitative data, for integrating HR and GE dimensions into the evaluation design?  
• What are sources of data?                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Evaluation team        | • How is the evaluation team composed; what are the required experience and skills?  
• What are the responsibilities of evaluators?  
• How many working days are required for the overall evaluation process as well as for individual deliverables?                                                                                           |
| Management of evaluation | • What are the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder group?  
• What are the logistical responsibilities?                                                                                                                                                                    |

(cont.)
STEP 3 - RECRUITING THE EVALUATION TEAM

In this step, the manager considers the composition of the team that will conduct the evaluation. This involves identifying and selecting qualified candidates in line with guidance from the evaluation function. The evaluation function is closely involved during these steps and reviews and clears any proposed candidates before the recruitment can be initiated. More specific information on the actual recruitment and contractual process is available from HRMS. In addition, more information, including about the clearance process and relevant UNEG Norms and Standards, can be found in the guidance document on the UNODC evaluation website.

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION OF EVALUATION CONSULTANTS

Composition of the evaluation team

In order to promote transparency and ensure the maximum objectivity of evaluations, the UNODC relies on external independent evaluators. Evaluators are selected on the basis of their experience, expertise, technical competence, independence and integrity.

Evaluation teams for a project evaluation need to include at least two members, one team leader/lead evaluator with extensive evaluation expertise, the other a team member/second evaluator with expertise in the substantive topic to be evaluated. One of the team members should also have expertise in HR and GE-responsive evaluation approach. In addition, all team members’ commitment to HR and GE mainstreaming and the analysis of gender and human rights issues is essential. Depending on the size and complexity of the intervention being evaluated, additional interdisciplinary national and international team members with evaluation expertise may be added, in particular for in-depth evaluations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEADINGS</th>
<th>ISSUES TO ADDRESS</th>
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</table>
| Timeframe and deliverables| • What is the timing/deadlines during the evaluation process, including for field missions?  
• What are expected deliverables, when do they have to be concluded? |
| Payment modalities        | • How will payment be provided?                                                   |
| Annexes                   | • Terms of reference for evaluators                                               
• List of background documents for desk review                                  
• List of Sustainable Development Goals and Targets                            
• List of stakeholders (CLPs) to be consulted                                    |
The teams should be gender balanced and geographically diverse. Ideally, the evaluation team includes international professionals and others from the countries or regions concerned, as they can bring knowledge of the local context and fluency in one or multiple local languages to the team.

The inclusion of one or more national team members is also beneficial in order to help build national evaluation capacity. This is particularly the case where the international consultant has experience in specific evaluation tools and methods that can be shared with national team members. The ToR have to indicate whether the evaluators are to be national or international recruits.

When conducting in-depth evaluations, which are managed by the evaluation function, the evaluation team includes an evaluator from the evaluation function, sometimes acting as the team leader. The chief of the UNODC evaluation function will appoint this person. In-depth evaluations are managed by the evaluation function.

**Required skills and competencies**

As mentioned, the evaluation team needs to possess evaluation and subject-matter expertise, as well as demonstrate understanding of GE and HR approaches. The required core competencies and the ethical standards are outlined in the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation. Additional competencies may be required by programme/project managers, in consultation with evaluation office, and included in the ToR.

Key attributes of evaluation teams generally also include knowledge of the local, country or regional context (depending on the specificity of each programme/project), experience or familiarity with the United Nations system, and proven ability to work as part of an international team.

The team leader plays a key role in getting the evaluation team to work efficiently together. Besides having relevant evaluation and technical skills and HR and GE sensitivity, the team leader needs to have effective management, interpersonal, facilitation, writing and presentation skills.

**Sources for recruiting evaluators**

There are several places to begin the search for an appropriate evaluation team. These include:

- Consultation with the evaluation function
- Core learning partners
- Relevant technical units
- National, regional and international evaluation organizations
The evaluation function is able to provide recommendations of suitable candidates, especially regarding their experience and substantive expertise. Profiles of evaluation experts and substantive experts are available. Some of these candidates have already been assessed on the basis of their previous evaluation performance in a UNODC evaluation or through a review of their CVs and phone interviews. National evaluators are usually recruited through the field office (UNDP) and not the Human Resources and Management Service (HRMS) at UNODC headquarters.

**Conflicts of interest**

When selecting the evaluation team, the manager must ensure that there are no conflicts of interest. In order to avoid conflicts of interest and undue pressure being placed on evaluators, the consultants must be independent. This requires them to be external to UNODC and to have no vested interest in the intervention to be evaluated and no prior involvement in its design or implementation.

It is very important that evaluators have full freedom to conduct their evaluative work impartially and express their positions independently. If a conflict of interest arises during the evaluation, the evaluation function will determine whether the evaluator needs to be dismissed or the evaluation terminated. The main potential sources of conflicts include past engagement or possible future involvement in the programme/project being evaluated, and involvement in multiple assignments.

**Selection process**

Managers select evaluators by means of a transparent process, usually with the assistance of the evaluation function. The process is guided by the UNEG norms and standards to ensure the best-possible candidates are chosen and any conflicts of interest and other ethical issues are averted. Selection needs to follow the official United Nations recruitment process, which includes interviews and, potentially, a short written or oral assessment, as deemed necessary. The identified candidates need to be reviewed by the evaluation function and their selection cleared before recruitment.

**Contracting process**

Sufficient time is needed for the recruitment of the evaluators. Experienced and well-qualified evaluators typically have limited availability and must often be contacted months in advance. In addition, the contracting process itself may take a significant amount of time. Once an evaluation is scheduled, the manager may inquire into the interest and availability of potential evaluators for the upcoming consultancy.
As part of the contracting process, evaluators need to complete a declaration of interest that attests that they will abide by the UNEG code of conduct for evaluation in the United Nations system. This form has to be attached to the ToR and must be signed by the evaluators prior to their engagement. It can be found on the UNODC evaluation website.

Fee rates for evaluators are not negotiated. Fees are calculated on the basis of the experience of the consultant and can be obtained from UNODC HRMS.

PREPARATION PHASE CHECKLIST

✓ Has the required information been entered in the evaluation application?
✓ Has the evaluation process been discussed with the evaluation function?
✓ Have the background documents for the desk review been assembled?
✓ Has the initial draft ToR been developed and shared with the evaluation function for quality review?
✓ Has the next draft ToR been shared with the core learning partners (CPLs) and any comments been incorporated?
✓ Has the ToR received final approval from the evaluation function?
✓ Has the final ToR been uploaded to the evaluation application?
✓ Has the search for evaluation consultants/firm included consultation with the evaluation function and CPLs?
✓ Has an independent, external evaluation team with expertise in the evaluation process, the subject matter of the evaluation and knowledge of HR and GE been recruited after approval by the evaluation function?
✓ Is there gender balance within the evaluation team?
✓ Is the evaluation team geographically diverse?
✓ Has the contracting process been finalized?
PHASE 3: IMPLEMENTATION

Once the planning and preparation are finished, and recruitment has taken place, the evaluation team can get to work. The main components of the implementation phase are the development of the inception report, data collection and analysis activities, and the preparation of the draft and final evaluation report.

The UNODC evaluation function begins the implementation phase by welcoming the evaluation team on board, outlining the process, steps and requirements, and providing all necessary documents and templates for a successful evaluation. In most cases, a kick-off meeting is arranged in order to facilitate the implementation planning. The meeting can be held either face-to-face or virtually, and includes staff from the evaluation function as well as members of the programme/project management team. The meeting provides the opportunity for the parties outlined above to be introduced to the team, have a substantive discussion on how the evaluation will be carried out, and discuss logistical and administrative issues. This is another opportunity to set the foundations for a human rights and gender equality-responsive evaluation process. It is important that all evaluation stakeholders are aware of the conditions (time, mainly), capacity, responsibilities, and approaches and methods required.

Once the evaluators are oriented, the manager’s responsibilities shift to providing support and input to the team as the evaluators undertake their activities. The general requirements for facilitating the inception and evaluation reports steps are outlined below. More detail about the structure and content of the reports can be found in chapter five, which is focused on the responsibilities of the evaluators.

STEP 4 - THE INCEPTION REPORT

The inception report is a roadmap that ensures a shared understanding between the evaluators and the UNODC evaluation function of how the evaluation will be carried out. It is one of the key deliverables produced by the evaluators and should provide:

- A summary of the desk review of the programme/project documentation undertaken by the evaluation team outlining the preliminary findings regarding each evaluation criterion. This should include a review of the results framework as well as of the programme theory/theory of change (if available). If necessary, additional context or thematic-related documentation should be reviewed (for example documentation on gender aspects related to the substantive topic to be evaluated).
- Further elaboration of the methodology that was proposed in the ToR; the methodology will specify the approaches (including a specific section on a HR and GE approach), strands of inquiry, the evaluation questions, sampling strategy, and the data collection and analysis processes and instruments.
• A comprehensive evaluation matrix which will guide the evaluation team through the evaluation process outlining the evaluation criteria and questions, the indicators and data for each question, the data collection methods, data sources, sampling and lines of inquiries.

• A detailed stakeholders map to identify key informants for the evaluation, ensuring the participation of both women and men and marginalized groups, and representation of rights holders organizations. Human rights and gender equality actors should be identified and consulted to ensure knowledge, reflection and views on these aspects.

• A workplan with associated activities, deliverables, timetable, roles and responsibilities as well as the travel schedule for the field missions for data collection

Role of programme/project manager

In order to support the inception phase, the manager is required to gather and provide access to all necessary desk review materials before the inception phase starts. For an in-depth evaluation, all desk review material also needs to be made available to the evaluation function. Additionally, complementary materials and references can be requested by the evaluation team at any time during the inception phase as well as later during data collection.

Further information for developing the inception report is provided in chapter five. More specific guidance and the required template for the report can be found on the UNODC evaluation website.

Review and approval

Once the inception report is submitted by the evaluators, the evaluation function reviews the report for its overall quality and suitability for meeting the expectations that were set out in the ToR. Specific issues to consider in the review process are whether:

• The evaluators have addressed the adequacy of the programme/project results framework

• The design of the evaluation is suitable for answering the evaluation questions and addresses each of the required UNODC evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact, cooperation and partnerships, human rights and gender equality)
Once approved, the inception report complements the ToR as one of the key reference documents for the evaluation process.

The methodology includes strategies to engage all stakeholder groups, integrates gender equality and human rights principles, and has mechanisms to ensure confidentiality of sources.

The methodology and tools appear sufficiently robust to reliably and validly provide and analyse data.

More specific information and guidance about the evaluation design and methodology, including individual data collection techniques and tools, sampling strategy, data analysis and triangulation can be found in the practical guide in part 3 of this handbook.

The inception report is shared with the evaluation function through the evaluation application for thorough review and comments. This review ensures a sound, comprehensive and inclusive evaluation methodology, which is essential for the successful implementation of the evaluation and especially the data collection and analysis.

As the review process may encompass several rounds in order for it to meet the required quality standards, sufficient time must be allotted to the inception report step. It is important that the final version of the report be approved by the evaluation function before the evaluators depart on field missions for data collection. Once approved, the inception report complements the ToR as one of the key reference documents for the evaluation process. After the inception report has been cleared by the evaluation function, the data collection commences, including any field missions.

**STEP 5 - DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

This step focuses on obtaining multiple types of evidence that the evaluators require to make judgments about the programme/project. It also entails organizing and analysing the evidence to produce the main findings. These activities should be followed by a brief, informal meeting in order to share the preliminary findings with key stakeholders.

**Data collection**

A rigorous evaluation process requires that data be collected from a range of stakeholders. In addition, different data collection tools and methods need to be applied and employed in a variety of ways. Key stakeholders invited to share their experiences and opinions can include UNODC staff at headquarters and in field offices, government counterparts, programme/project managers, programme/project participants, donors, direct beneficiaries, other international organizations, CSOs, academia and other partners. As already mentioned, participation of both women, men and marginalized groups, and representatives of rights holders organizations should be ensured. Human rights and gender equality actors are also key informants in HR and GE-responsive evaluation processes.
Common methods for collecting information about stakeholders’ experiences and perspectives, as well as for assessing changes that have occurred as a result of UNODC activities, include individual and group interviews, focus group discussions, case studies, surveys and observations. More details about these and other data collection techniques can be found in the practical guide in part 3 of this handbook.

**Role of programme/project manager**

The primary responsibility for managers during data collection is ensuring that (a) logistical support is provided for the evaluation team; (b) agendas for fieldwork are finalized on time; and (c) access to the broad diversity of stakeholders is facilitated. The type of support will vary immensely depending on the evaluation methodology. All travel and visas have to be arranged for the evaluation team well in advance of the field missions selected by the evaluation team. In addition, managers and the project teams will provide logistical support during the field missions, such as setting up any interviews or meetings requested by the evaluation team, providing contact details of any additional stakeholders to be interviewed and contracting independent interpretation. At any time during the evaluation process, the programme/project managers should be ready to supply the evaluation team with any additional desk review materials they may require as well as to clarify any outstanding questions regarding the programme/project to be evaluated.

**General data collection approach**

*Field missions.* The evaluation team will undertake field missions in order to collect primary data from those most closely involved or affected by the programme/project activities. During the field missions, the corresponding field office or HQ section/branch will provide the required administrative and logistical support and help the evaluation team setup meetings with key stakeholders and any other informants deemed necessary by the evaluation team. It is important that field missions devote enough time and resources to ensuring broad consultations. Staff may also need to provide logistical support such as organizing transport, recommending accommodation and ensuring the security of the evaluation team. It is important that the evaluation team members undertake relevant United Nations security training and be aware of, and compliant with, any relevant security protocols.

*Remote methods.* Data is often collected remotely via phone or web-based interviews, and e-mail or web-based surveys. In the case of interviews, the managers may need to assist in arranging these meetings (scheduling, providing contact details, potentially allocating a room and phone, etc.). In the case of surveys, there will be a need to provide the evaluators with contact information as well as to support the evaluation team with follow-up reminders in order to increase survey responses.
Document review. Data are also obtained from programme/project reports and a range of other documents. These are considered secondary data sources. Although much of the information is likely be found in the desk review material, managers may need to provide access to additionally requested documents throughout the evaluation. Moreover, evaluation team members may identify context and thematic-related documentation through their interaction with stakeholders. If available, it is very important to identify, access and analyse sex and age-disaggregated data.

There is a delicate balance between providing adequate support for the evaluation and maintaining the independence of the exercise. While UNODC managers are expected to organize meetings and visits, only the evaluation team and staff members of the evaluation function are allowed to participate in these evaluation activities. In cases where interpretation is required, independent interpreters (contracted in advance for the purpose of the specific evaluation) will also participate in the interviews. This practice helps to ensure interviewees and participants feel comfortable and speak freely. As part of a gender-responsive evaluation methodology, the evaluation approach will be designed to be inclusive, participatory as well as sensitive, as outlined in detail in chapter 2. It is of utmost importance that the evaluators remain independent throughout the evaluation process.

**EXAMPLES OF GOOD, RIGOROUS EVALUATION METHODOLOGIES**

In general, the evaluation methodology should be based on a mixed-methods approach, be HR and GE-responsive and inclusive, and be guided by triangulation. As part of a good evaluation report, the methodology should be clearly outlined and explained. In particular, any limitations and mitigating measures should be discussed. The following reports are useful resources for evaluators looking for examples of sound methodology:

- A comprehensive survey was developed in order to capture feedback from training participants. One important aspect when conducting a survey is the assessment of the response rate, which has been carried out thoroughly in this evaluation.

In-depth evaluation of the Counter Piracy Programme Combating Maritime Piracy in the Horn of Africa and the Indian Ocean Increasing Regional Capacities to Deter, Detain and Prosecute Pirates (XAM72, XEAX20, XSSX11, SOMX54, MUSX55, XEAX67), 2013.
- As part of the methodology, a most significant change (MSC) narration analysis was conducted in order to assess perceived change and impact in a systematic way.

In-depth cluster evaluation of the Global Programme against Human Trafficking (GLOT 59) and Migrant Smuggling (GLOT 92), 2017.
- A human rights and gender-responsive evaluation methodology was developed under the leadership of a gender expert who was specifically hired to be part of the evaluation team. In particular, additional desk review materials and informants were identified to be included and consulted as part of the data collection in order to gain understanding of the context of the two global programmes regarding human rights and gender equality.
**Data analysis**

Although analysis of information and data occurs throughout the implementation stage, once it has all been collected, a different analytical process is undertaken. This involves systematically organizing, comparing and synthesizing information that was obtained through all methods. All data analysis should be strongly based on triangulation. Thus, it should enable evaluators to make judgments based on the evidence and to develop their findings, which their conclusions and recommendations will be based upon. Figure 4.2 illustrates this process. More details about undertaking data analysis can be found in the practical guide in part 3 of this handbook.

![Figure 4.2 USE OF ANALYSED DATA IN EVALUATION REPORT](image)

**Presentation of preliminary findings**

For all evaluations, it is strongly recommended that an internal debriefing session be held once data collection and preliminary data analysis have been completed at the end of the field mission. Participants should include the evaluation team, the manager and programme/project staff members. The presentation can be held in the field and/or at headquarters, in person or via Skype, etc. In the case of evaluating a country-level programme/project, it is advantageous to hold the session in the field.

These debriefing sessions can be instrumental in ensuring ownership. During a debriefing session, the evaluation team can give a brief, oral report of its initial findings and preliminary conclusions so as to allow the programme/project manager to react to the conclusions reached. In addition, participants can provide feedback and also clarify points that may have been misunderstood by the evaluators. Debriefing sessions can also be used as an opportunity to conduct or arrange follow-up interviews as deemed necessary by the evaluation team.
After the field mission, the evaluation team prepares a draft evaluation report. It is the main product of the evaluation and should be a well-written and carefully constructed report that is first presented in full draft form. The report describes the programme/project being evaluated and the evaluation methodology, but its main purpose is to present evidence-based findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

The report must be developed according to the UNEG norms and standards as well as other specific requirements of UNODC. The draft evaluation report should be fully formatted in accordance with the guidelines and templates, be fully proofread regarding spelling and grammar and should contain all the required components, including an executive summary with a matrix and annexes. Further information on developing the evaluation report is provided in chapter five. More specific guidance and the required template for the report can be found on the UNODC evaluation website.

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**THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The executive summary will be read more closely than any other part of the report. The evaluators have to make sure that it briefly and clearly highlights the evaluation’s purpose and methodology, and the main conclusions and recommendations. It should be no more than five pages long plus the summary matrix. The executive summary should be a stand-alone document, which can be consulted independently of the main body of the report.

A good example of a well-executed executive summary can be found in the 2014 in-depth evaluation of the UNODC Global Programme on HIV/AIDS.


Evaluation reports are submitted to the evaluation function in English. There are exceptions for the official United Nations languages, but this needs prior discussion and agreement from the evaluation function. Evaluation reports written in a language other than English need to be accompanied by an English translation of the executive summary prepared by a competent translator who is cleared in advance by the evaluation function.
Review and approval

The primary responsibility of the evaluation function is to make sure that the draft corresponds with the inception report, particularly the agreed upon evaluation questions and methodologies. The evaluation function also considers what improvements may be needed for the document to meet UNODC’s quality criteria for evaluation reports. The UNODC evaluation quality assessment form can be found in the annex and on the UNODC evaluation website.

Role of programme/project manager

The draft evaluation report is shared with the evaluation function through the evaluation application after the programme/project management has reviewed it for factual errors in case of independent project evaluations. As part of in-depth evaluations, the evaluation function reviews the draft report first. The programme/project manager comments on any factual errors that may be apparent in the draft evaluation report. A revised and provisionally cleared draft report will be shared with the CLPs for their review and comments, particularly with regard to the conclusions and recommendations.

CORE LEARNING PARTNERS

The involvement of core learning partners throughout the evaluation process is recognized as a hallmark of a strong evaluation process. Their involvement should include reviewing and providing input to the ToR and the draft evaluation report as well as facilitating the dissemination and application of the results and other follow-up action.

STEP 7 - FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

The final evaluation report is the main output of the entire evaluation process. It provides the basis for a decision to either continue the intervention in its current form or to take corrective action. Evaluation reports can have substantial impact; the results can influence how new programmes/projects are developed and the organization’s operational procedures are changed or adjusted. They are also crucial for UNODC’s accountability to donors, governments, beneficiaries, other partners and staff.
During this step, the evaluation team has to carefully consider all comments and questions received after the draft report has been shared with the evaluation function, the manager and CLPs. The feedback may be minor, requiring only small changes or edits to the final report. Or it may be substantive, with the evaluators being compelled to do additional research, more data analysis or even significantly reworking the entire evaluation document. The process of review and commenting might entail several rounds between the evaluation function and the evaluation team.

It is important that the independence of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations is ensured. As long as these sections are based on sound reliable methods of data collection and analysis, there is no requirement for the evaluators to adjust their report in response to general criticism. Factual errors should be rectified and the language used needs to be appropriate for an official United Nations document.

The evaluation function undertakes the role of quality control by ensuring that all relevant input, comments and corrections have been considered before clearing the final evaluation report. All finalized UNODC evaluation reports are publicly available on the UNODC evaluation website.

**PHASE 4: FOLLOW-UP**

The evaluation process does not end with the receipt of the final evaluation report. The steps in the follow-up phase are critical for ensuring all the effort put into conducting a good evaluation produces impact. As part of in-depth evaluations, this phase includes a formal management response to the final evaluation report. For independent project evaluations, management response is optional.

**Role of programme/project manager**

Managers are also responsible for the development of the evaluation follow-up plan, to be reviewed and cleared by the evaluation function. The manager is required to update the follow-up plan once a year. The dissemination of the evaluation report, as well as the implementation of the recommendations, lessons learned and best practices is a further responsibility of the manager. This ensures that the results of the evaluation are shared so that others can learn from it, and can use the results to improve UNODC programming.
STEP 8 - MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

In the light of the recommendations of the final evaluation report, programme/project managers, discuss and liaise with relevant parties, including senior management, other UNODC sections, donors, etc. and prepare a management response accordingly. The management response has to be finalized within one month of completion of the evaluation. This is a written response (approximately 1–2 pages) that presents the opportunity to:

- Share the organization’s reactions to the evaluation results, including the feasibility of the recommendations made. Managers can accept, partially accept or reject recommendations and are required to provide appropriate justification for the particular choice
- Provide general feedback on the overall evaluation process and its quality
- Provide initial direction for the evaluation follow-up plan

The management response is presented to key stakeholders, including UNODC sections, senior management, Member States, donors, the CLPs and other stakeholders, at a presentation of the overall evaluation.

The management response is an opportunity to create stronger programming and to work closely with partners to make the necessary changes. Ultimately, the management response will be attached to and published with the final evaluation report. It forms an integral part of the report and significantly increases the agency’s transparency and accountability.

STEP 9 - PRESENTATION AND DISSEMINATION

Effective communication and sharing of evaluation results contributes to organizational learning and greater accountability of UNODC. Moreover, these activities enable internal and external stakeholders to become more aware of the important work of the organization. As part of human rights and gender-responsive evaluations, it is essential to grant access to the evaluation results for all informants as well as stakeholders.

After the evaluation report is finalized, internal and external stakeholders for the project/programme, in particular the CLPs, are invited to a presentation on the evaluation. The presentation should include the most important findings, recommendations and lessons learned that emerge from the evaluation process, as well as the management response. This oral presentation by the evaluation team leader, accompanied by a brief slide presentation, promotes informed discussion of the findings and the overall evaluation process, and facilitates organizational learning.
In the case of in-depth evaluations, the evaluation reports are accompanied by an evaluation brief (2-pager). Managers are strongly encouraged to further disseminate the evaluation report and share, in particular, the best practices and lessons learned with other programmes/projects and key internal and external stakeholders. Thus, all stakeholders will be able to truly learn and benefit from the evaluation in an inclusive and comprehensive way. The final evaluation report along with the evaluation brief in the case of in-depth evaluations, is published and made available to the public on the UNODC evaluation website.

What stakeholders have to say about attending the presentation of evaluation findings:
Programme/project management: "The presentation is a great way to disseminate the evaluation report and also contributes to our transparency and accountability."
UNODC evaluation function: "The presentation is essential in order to utilize the evaluation activity. This is one of the key moments of the process. All efforts crystalize to transform the future of interventions."
UNODC senior management: "This sharing of knowledge will inform future decision-making."
Donors: "We can see the worth of our investments, progress made and challenges encountered."
Member States: "It is a good way to get an overview of UNODC’s operations, policies and their effect."

**STEP 10 - EVALUATION FOLLOW-UP PLAN**

The evaluation follow-up plan (EFP) is an action plan outlining the responsibilities and timelines for implementing the evaluation recommendations. Managers are responsible for preparing the EFP within one month of the issue of the evaluation report and uploading it to the evaluation application. The required EFP template can be found on the UNODC evaluation website. Managers are also required to track the implementation of the recommendations by regular, yearly updates to the EFP, with one further alternate responsible person being identified for this task. In addition, managers should make use of the recommendations as well as the lessons learned for future decision-making, planning and organizational learning, and work closely with partners to make the necessary changes for any future phase of the programme/project or for a new programme/project design. Any changes in the programme/project as well as the implementation status of the recommendations should further be reported on in annual progress reports. The extent to which recommendations were implemented will also be assessed as part of future evaluations.

[https://www.unodc.org/UNODC/EN/EVALUATION/NORMATIVE-TOOLS.html#FOLLOW-UP](https://www.unodc.org/UNODC/EN/EVALUATION/NORMATIVE-TOOLS.html#FOLLOW-UP)
The evaluation function facilitates the systematic follow-up of the status of the implementation of the EFP. This includes reporting annually to the Executive Director and senior management of UNODC as well as to Member States on the implementation of the evaluation recommendations.

**EVALUATION KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING**

The UNODC evaluation application has an evaluation knowledge database of recommendations and lessons learned. It includes the complete set of recommendations and lessons learned emerging from all completed evaluations since 2011.

In order to analyse the available data according to individual needs and foci of programmes/projects, the data can be sorted according to key aspects such as region, thematic area and specific programmes/projects. All UNODC staff are encouraged to consult the evaluation knowledge data base for future planning and programme/project design.

**SUMMARY**

UNODC has clearly established processes for managing and using evaluations. These processes are organized into four phases comprising ten steps as outlined in this chapter. Managers and evaluators are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this handbook, and seek guidance from the evaluation function. Doing so will strengthen the overall quality of evaluations, ultimately leading to better use of evaluations and improved programming.

The next chapter provides more specific information about the final phase of the evaluation process, with a focus on UNODC expectations for inception reports and evaluation reports.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- UNEG Ethical Guidelines http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102
CHAPTER 5

Conducting the evaluation

This chapter provides guidance primarily to the evaluation team hired by UNODC to conduct the evaluation. It addresses the steps that the evaluators are directly involved in and discusses the expectations for the quality of the main outputs of the evaluation process, namely the inception and evaluation reports. The inception report outlines the methodology and therefore steers the evaluation process. The evaluation reports are oriented towards usability and learning for UNODC and are publicly available in order to ensure the accountability and transparency of the evaluation process.
CHAPTER 5. CONDUCTING THE EVALUATION

STEPS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

For the evaluation team, the evaluation process begins with signing the contractual agreement with UNODC. By this time, programme/project managers as well as the UNODC evaluation function will have already invested heavily in preparing for the process by carefully developing the terms of reference (ToR) and recruiting a strong evaluation team with expertise in the thematic area being studied and in the field of evaluation, including in human rights and gender-based approaches.

The evaluators’ responsibilities are primarily focused on phase 3, the implementation of the evaluation. This phase comprises the steps of developing the inception report, undertaking data collection and analysis, as well as drafting and finalizing the evaluation report. The evaluators are also responsible for the subsequent presentation of the findings and recommendations as part of phase 4. This is again illustrated in figure 5.1 below, which outlines the phases and steps of the UNODC evaluation process.

FIGURE 5.1 FOUR PHASES AND TEN STEPS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

These steps were also covered in chapter four, but primarily from the perspective of those responsible for managing the entire evaluation process. This current chapter provides more specific direction to the evaluation team on the steps they are responsible for undertaking. It emphasizes the expectations that UNODC has regarding the quality of the process as well as the products, and points to additional guidance and report templates.
All reports have to be written in accordance with the templates, guidelines, and norms and standards provided by the UNODC evaluation function.

Following the recommendations in this chapter should help evaluators to clearly understand the "ingredients" for producing effective and useful evaluation products.

**A PRACTICAL GUIDE**

Chapter seven of this handbook is a practical guide to planning and carrying out quality, credible and useful evaluations with a specific focus on the methodological aspects of the evaluation. It includes the most common approaches and methods used in UNODC evaluations, and provides links to additional guidance and helpful resources. As the guide is focused on the fundamentals of implementing evaluations, it is most relevant to those who want to know more about what constitutes good evaluation practice, including managers of evaluations and in particular the evaluators.

**INCEPTION REPORT**

As noted in chapter four, the inception report is a roadmap that explains how the evaluation will be carried out. More specifically, the inception report summarizes the review of documentation (the "desk review"), and outlines the evaluation methodology, the strands of inquiry as well as the tools that will be used for data collection and analysis.

The inception report ensures a shared understanding between the evaluators and the UNODC evaluation function of all aspects of the evaluation process.

The process for developing the inception report begins with a review and analysis of the desk material, the development of preliminary hypotheses and the refinement of the evaluation questions. The evaluators then turn to developing the scope and methodological approach in accordance with the requirements of the evaluation ToR, including the schedule for field missions. The evaluators also develop a sex-disaggregated stakeholder map to identify key actors, different roles and informants for the evaluation.

**DESK REVIEW**

The material for the review is provided by the programme/project manager. It will generally include documents specific to the intervention. These can include the needs assessment and stakeholder analysis, original and updated programme/project plans, monitoring data, progress reports, and reports of any previously conducted evaluations.
It will also include material relevant to the topic and geographic location such as UNODC strategy documents, country/region specific plans and lessons learned from similar interventions. In addition, this might include relevant strategies of other international or regional organizations on the topic under evaluation, documents and strategies in the light of the SDGs, previous evaluation reports, research publications, etc. Moreover, the UNODC evaluation function will provide standard publications about the evaluation process, including expected quality of deliverables, and guidance on human rights and gender responsive approaches, which will need to be considered by the evaluation team (see box below).

The initial list for the desk review can be refined during the evaluation process. Once the evaluation has started, the evaluators can request additional information based on the initial review of the background documentation. In fact, the team is expected to identify other material, internal and external, that they consider relevant to the evaluation.

Essential information to consider within the programme/project planning documents will be the logical framework and, if it exists, the theory of change. Both are important foundations for the evaluation process as they depict the cause and effect relationship between an intervention’s activities and its intended results.

The evaluation team will be required to assess the adequacy of these tools in capturing the chain of results and providing a basis from which progress and impact can be assessed. If they are found to be inadequate, in most cases it is preferred that the evaluators improve or develop at least one of these tools. More information about logical frameworks, theories of change and results chains can be found in the practical guide in the third part of the handbook.

**KEY DOCUMENTS TO BE REVIEWED**

As part of the desk review process, evaluators will also be given a standardized set of documents to help ensure that both the evaluation process and products adhere to UNODC quality standards. These include the:

- UNEG evaluation norms and standards
- UNEG ethical standards
- UNODC evaluation handbook, guidelines and templates
- Guidance note for UNODC staff: Gender mainstreaming in the work of UNODC, 2013
- UNODC and the promotion and protection of human rights position paper, 2012
- UNODC evaluation quality assessment template
- UNODC guiding document on gender-responsive evaluation, 2017
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- Relevant United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks
ADDRESSING THE EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY QUESTIONS

The evaluation criteria that have to be assessed as part of any UNODC evaluation have been outlined in detail in the second chapter of this handbook and include relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact, cooperation and partnerships, and human rights (HR) and gender equality (GE). The ToR confirms the criteria to be addressed and also identifies the main questions for each criterion.

Based on the documentation reviewed and conversations with the programme manager and team, the evaluators will need to review and refine the evaluation questions that are presented in the ToR. It is important that the number of questions is manageable and that it will be feasible to answer them within the scope of the evaluation process. Justification will need to be provided for any changes to the original questions.

More information on addressing evaluation criteria and key questions can be found in the practical guide in part 3 of this handbook.

DEVELOPING THE EVALUATION SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The next part of the inception process involves determining the evaluation scope and methodology. The scope is generally specified in the ToR and covers issues such as units of analysis, time frames, geographic reach and stakeholders to be consulted. However, there may be some parts of the scope that the evaluators may suggest changing in order to sharpen or adjust the focus of the study. These might include aspects such as countries to be covered or specific stakeholders who should be involved. In this regard, a revised stakeholder map is highly recommended.

The methodology is specific to how the evaluation questions will be answered. These revolve around what the overall approach will be, which design will be adopted, what methods will be used to collect data, what the sources of data will be, and how the data will be analysed. The methodology will also need to indicate how the quality and rigour of the evaluation process will be ensured, including what strategies will be employed for sampling and for the triangulation of data.

The ToR also typically indicate aspects of the methodology that are necessary. UNODC requires a mixed-methods approach that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative methods. Additional requirements are a HR and GE-responsive, inclusive and participatory evaluation methodology. There may be other specific requirements depending on the nature of each evaluation but generally evaluators are expected to use their expertise to determine how the evaluation should be carried out in order to best address the questions that need to be answered.
More specific information regarding evaluation approaches, methods, data collection techniques and tools, sampling strategy, data analysis and triangulation can be found in chapter seven, the practical guide.

FORMAT AND CONTENTS OF THE INCEPTION REPORT

The inception report should clearly and concisely reflect the issues discussed above. UNODC has specific requirements as to what is to be included in the report as well as for the format of the report. The report should not be concise in length (10–15 pages, excluding the annexes). The table of contents showing what needs to be included is presented in table 5.1 below. Specific instructions for each section are provided in the UNODC guidelines for inception reports. There is also a mandatory template to be followed. Links to each are provided below.

### TABLE 5.1 CONTENTS OF THE INCEPTION REPORT

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UNODC requires a HR and GE responsive mixed-methods approach that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative methods.
IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DEVELOPING THE INCEPTION REPORT

The following, primarily methodological considerations are important for the evaluators to bear in mind. These are also discussed in more detail in chapter seven, the practical guide.

Lines of enquiry. An aim of the inception process is to formulate lines of enquiry for the evaluation based on a thorough desk review and assessment of the intervention logic of the programme/project in order to develop further questions and identify gaps in the data as well as lines of inquiry for the overall approach of the evaluation.

Data collection instruments. All data collection instruments that are to be applied during the evaluation have to be introduced and explained in the inception report. Evaluators should explain how the instruments relate to the evaluation questions they address. Key sources of survey data and key interviewees that were identified as part of the stakeholder map have to be mentioned. Furthermore, the evaluation team has to explain how data will be triangulated. Draft versions of all data collection instruments (such as interview guides and questionnaires) are to be included as annexes to the inception report.

Sampling strategy. The sampling techniques have to be elaborated for each collection instrument that will be applied. It is important to ensure fair representation of both women and men and marginalized groups, and of the diversity of stakeholders.

Field missions. In consultation with both the programme/project management and the evaluation function, the evaluation team has to finalize the selection of countries to be visited for data collection.

Limitations. The limitations to the evaluation based on the applied methodology, information obtained as well as analysed so far have to be outlined. In that regard, the mitigating measures that will be applied also have to be discussed.

Evaluation matrix. The methodology is to be summarized in an evaluation matrix. The matrix is a planning tool that lays out how the evaluation process will address each of the evaluation criteria and key questions. The matrix needs to contain the indicators, data collection methods, data sources, sampling as well as any other comments corresponding to each evaluation question.
CHAPTER 5. CONDUCTING THE EVALUATION

REVIEW PROCESS

As the inception report is one of the key deliverables from the evaluation team, it is shared with the UNODC evaluation function for review and clearance before any field missions or data collection take place. There needs to be enough time for the review and the incorporation of comments by the evaluation team in order to ensure it meets UNODC needs and quality standards. This process may take several rounds.

The inception report is to be directly submitted to the evaluation function. Ideally, the inception report is submitted directly via the evaluation application. It is important to note that the review, as well as clearance, is provided only by the UNODC evaluation function due to their expertise in evaluations and the focus on methodological quality assurance.

The primary focus of quality assurance for the inception report will be on:

- Whether there is sufficient clarity in the programme/project logic or theory to assess the links between the interventions’ activities and intended results
- Whether the proposed methodology and tools adequately address the ToR, particularly the evaluation questions, and UNODC norms and standards for evaluation
- Whether the proposed methodology and tools are able to reliably and validly provide data to explore the different aspects of the evaluation criteria
- Whether the proposed methodology and tools are able to capture HR and GE issues and the different experiences, views and assessments of the variety of stakeholders
- Whether relevant stakeholders were identified for data collection

DATA COLLECTION AND FIELD MISSIONS

Once the inception report is approved, the evaluation team typically undertakes field missions to collect information (data) on the programme/project being evaluated. A variety of methods should be used as part of data collection, in order to elicit stakeholders’ views, opinions and assessments. The most common methods are individual and group interviews, surveys and questionnaires as well as visits to project sites and observation. The evaluators have to ensure gender-sensitive language is used in all data collection tools and consultation spaces.

As every method has the potential to bring new information and insights, evaluators are encouraged to use additional approaches beyond those that are most common in order to obtain the most comprehensive data feasible within the scope of the evaluation.
Field missions should pay particular attention to ensuring a balance of perspectives when planning how to enquire into the effectiveness of the intervention. It is this variety of methods and stakeholders that helps to confirm (triangulate) the evidence obtained. The list of stakeholders invited to share their experiences and opinions generally includes staff in field offices, government counterparts, programme and project managers, other beneficiaries of the intervention, donors, and other partners. Additional stakeholders not directly involved in the intervention but who have expertise in the thematic area of the evaluation and in particular in relation to aspects of HR and GE may also be included. It is important to get the experiences and assessments of rights holders and ultimate beneficiaries of the interventions.

In order to allow for broad consultation with the variety of stakeholders, field missions should be carefully planned in advance, devoting a sufficient number of days for this exercise that includes consultation with a variety of stakeholders, some of them hard to reach (often the case with rights holders).

Although the majority of data is generally collected during field missions, information is often also collected remotely via phone or web-based interviews, and e-mail or web-based surveys.

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR ACHIEVING AN INCLUSIVE EVALUATION PROCESS

As evaluation exercises are limited in terms of time and resources, it is not always possible to interview all relevant stakeholders or to visit all programme/project sites. In such circumstances, the evaluation team may consider other cost-effective data collection methods to elicit the views of as many stakeholders as possible. This can include phone interviews or surveys. Often evaluators will use a sampling strategy to get views that are representative of a particular stakeholder group. Particular care needs to be taken in order to include the views of rights holders and specifically of underrepresented groups. These are stakeholders that might not have been involved in the programme/project design and implementation. Specific strategies should be deployed to reach them in order for the evaluators to understand the relevant issues, the programme/project approaches and results from a perspective beyond that of the programme/project team, partners and authorities. In this regard, evaluators may decide to seek the perspective of support services, CSOs, rights holders’ representatives or human rights advocates. Last but not least, fair representation of female and male stakeholders is very important.
LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

During the field mission, the corresponding field office or HQ section/branch is responsible for all logistical arrangements and support for the evaluation team. This includes setting up meetings with key stakeholders (and any additional interlocutors deemed necessary by the evaluation team), developing a comprehensive agenda for the field missions, travel and transport, as well as translation and interpretation services if needed. The support also includes ensuring the safety of the evaluation team. The evaluation team members must undertake relevant United Nations security training and be aware of and compliant with related security protocols.

There is a delicate balance between providing adequate support for the evaluation and maintaining the independence of the exercise. It is of utmost importance that the evaluators remain independent throughout the evaluation process. While UNODC programme/project managers are expected to organize meetings and visits, only the evaluation team and the evaluation function are allowed to participate in them in order to make interviewees and participants feel comfortable and speak freely. Independent interpreters might be present for translation during the interviews.

PRESENTATION OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

For all evaluations, it is strongly recommended that the evaluation team organizes an internal debriefing session once data collection and preliminary data analysis have been concluded at the end of the field mission. Participants should include the evaluation team, the evaluation function and the manager and other programme/project staff members. This can be done either in person or via Skype, etc. Debriefing sessions can be instrumental in ensuring ownership of the evaluation.

During a debriefing session, the evaluation team can give a brief, oral report of its initial findings and preliminary conclusions so as to allow participants to react to the conclusions reached. In addition, feedback can be provided and any misunderstandings clarified. Debriefing sessions, including the presentation of preliminary findings, can be used as an opportunity to conduct follow-up interviews as deemed necessary by the evaluation team.

After the data collection, the evaluation team prepares a draft evaluation report. This draft evaluation report is based on the data collected during the desk review, the field missions, including any interviews and observations, data from any additional instruments, as well as the subsequent analysis.
DRAFT EVALUATION REPORT

The main output of the evaluation process, the evaluation report, is first presented by the evaluation team in draft form. Draft reports are expected to adhere to the same standards as final versions.

The main purpose of the evaluation report is to inform stakeholders about the context of the intervention being assessed, the way in which the assessment was carried out, and evidence-based findings, conclusions and recommendations. It needs to be presented in accordance with UNEG norms and standards, and it is of particular importance that the products emanating from evaluations be designed according to the needs of their intended users.

As figure 5.2 helps to illustrate, useful and quality reports are those that systematically link evidence from the findings through to the conclusions and recommendations. The questions are connected to findings and the findings are based on solid data collection as well as analysis. Conclusions are drawn from those findings, and provide the basis for the recommendations given. This is also illustrated in the figure below. The draft evaluation report needs to be evidence-based, well-structured, balanced, clear and concise in order to ensure the effectiveness and utility of the evaluation.

Evaluators need to be able to present the value of an evaluation in a way that will have a positive outcome. The language and tone will have an impact on how stakeholders interpret the findings, and whether there will be resistance to the evaluation results. The degree of receptivity will also be increased if the report is delivered in time for UNODC decision-making. Equally importantly, stakeholders will be receptive if the consultative processes during the evaluation have already awakened interest and created a broad agreement with the findings of the report.
CHAPTER 5. CONDUCTING THE EVALUATION

There must be clear links between the findings, the conclusions and the recommendations.

FORMAT AND CONTENT OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

The evaluation report also has to be written in line with the UNODC template and guidelines for evaluation reports. Links to each are provided below. The text box below highlights the table of contents for both the draft and final evaluation reports. Specific instructions for each section are provided in UNODC’s guidelines for evaluation reports.

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GUIDELINES FOR UNODC EVALUATION REPORTS

TEMPLATE FOR UNODC EVALUATION REPORTS

HTTPS://WWW.UNODC.ORG/UNODC/EN/EVALUATION/NORMATIVE-TOOLS.HTML#EVAL_REPORT
IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN DEVELOPING THE DRAFT EVALUATION REPORT

The following considerations are important for the evaluators to bear in mind when developing the draft evaluation report.

Methodology. The evaluation approach has to be based on a thorough methodology, guided by a HR and GE approach, applying triangulation throughout and carefully considering any limitations as well as mitigating measures.

Argumentative flow. Useful and quality reports are those that systematically link evidence from the findings through to the conclusions and recommendations.

Context. The background of the programme/project under evaluation has to be carefully described and outlined in order to anchor the analysis in the relevant context of the social phenomenon. Sex-disaggregated data has to be presented and analysed to understand gender context-related aspects.

Length. In most cases, the main body of the report should not exceed 25-30 pages. Annexes should be kept to an absolute minimum. Although the ToR for the evaluation are to be included, it is not necessary to include the ToR for each team member. Furthermore, the list of stakeholders from the ToR should not appear in the annex.

Language. Evaluation reports are submitted to the UNODC evaluation function in English. There may be some exceptions for official United Nations languages, however this has to be discussed and agreed upon with the UNODC evaluation function. When evaluation reports are written in a language other than English, programme/project managers are responsible for arranging to have the executive summary translated into English by a translator cleared by the evaluation function. Evaluation reports must avoid sexist or discriminatory language and stereotypes, and use inclusive and gender-sensitive writing.

Format. The UNODC template for evaluation reports must be used. The report should be carefully checked regarding format, spelling and grammar before being submitted for review.

Logic. There must be clear links between the findings, the conclusions and the recommendations. The report must draw overall conclusions based on the evaluation findings, which are developed from the data collection and analysis. Furthermore, the lessons learned also need to be based on the findings and evidence presented in the report. The lessons learned should not be written as recommendations, nor as observations or descriptions.
Usability. The report should provide clear, useful, time-bound and actionable recommendations aimed at enhancing the project performance and improving the sustainability of results.

References. Sources of information used should be referenced in a consistent manner and as footnotes.

REVIEW OF THE DRAFT EVALUATION REPORT

In the case of an independent project evaluation, once the draft evaluation report has been prepared by the evaluation team, it is first sent by e-mail to the programme/project manager, with the evaluation function copied. The manager reviews and comments on any factual errors that may be apparent in the report. Once the evaluation team has considered these comments, the manager submits the draft report to the evaluation function through the evaluation application. The evaluation function then carefully reviews the draft evaluation report to make sure it corresponds with the original ToR, the proposed evaluation questions and methodology, ensuring that it is in line with the UNODC evaluation guidelines and templates, as well as UNODC quality criteria for evaluation reports. The process of review and revision between the evaluation function and the evaluation team can entail various rounds. After all the comments made by the evaluation function have been carefully addressed and incorporated by the evaluation team, the provisional draft is cleared by the evaluation function. The cleared draft report is thereafter shared with the CLPs for their review and comments in order to ensure the involvement of the key stakeholders during the evaluation process.

For an in-depth evaluation, the evaluation function first reviews and comments on the draft report, followed by the project manager and, after clearance by the evaluation function, the evaluation is shared with the CLPs for their review.

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

The final evaluation report is the most tangible element of the whole evaluation process. As part of its preparation, the evaluation team has to carefully consider all comments and questions received on the draft report. However, the evaluators are independent and as long as findings and recommendations of the evaluation report are reliably based on sound methods for data collection and analysis, they are not required to adjust their report in response to general criticism. That said, factual errors do need to be rectified and the language used needs to be appropriate for an official United Nations document.

The UNODC evaluation function, as a matter of quality control, does monitor whether relevant input, comments and corrections are adequately considered, and subsequently clears the final version.
All evaluation team members are required to review the evaluation quality assessment template and criteria during the evaluation process.

The final evaluation report provides the basis for any follow-up action such as management response and the evaluation follow-up plan, and needs to be disseminated widely within UNODC and to UNODC stakeholders and counterparts. All finalized UNODC evaluation reports are publically available on the UNODC evaluation website.

**EVALUATION QUALITY ASSURANCE**

The quality of all evaluation reports is assessed internally by the UNODC evaluation function at the draft and final report stages. In line with UNEG norms and standards for evaluations, finalized evaluation reports commissioned by UNODC are subsequently subject to a further quality assessment process conducted by external reviewers. Both the internal and external processes focus on a set of criteria that form the basis for a strong and credible evaluation report.

This section provides an overview of each assessment criterion. Selective examples are provided when a criterion has been implemented very well in a published evaluation report. Additional details can be found in the UNODC evaluation quality assessment (EQA) template, which is available on the UNODC evaluation website. All evaluation team members are required to review the EQA template and criteria during the evaluation process in order to ensure that the evaluation report complies with UNODC evaluation standards.

**Structure, completeness and clarity of the report**

This criterion focuses on the overall presentation of the report. It considers whether:

- The report is formatted and written in a reader-friendly and respectful style
- The language is non-sexist or discriminatory, clear and without errors
- Visual aids such as maps, figures and charts are used to present information
- It complies with all aspects of the ToR including the need to integrate a human rights and gender equality approach and focus
- It follows the required logical sequence of evidence-assessment-findings-conclusions-recommendations

Example: Independent in-depth evaluation of Prevention of Transmission of HIV among Drug Users in the SAARC Countries—Phase II

Executive summary

The executive summary should serve as a stand-alone section that succinctly presents the main results of the evaluation as well as a brief description of the intervention and evaluation methodology. As this is often the most carefully, and frequently only, read part of the report, it is important that it should be well written and complete. This section needs to include a summary matrix which links key recommendations to the data source and to the stakeholder group to whom they are addressed. The matrix should include short, focused main findings (positive or negative) and action-oriented recommendations identifying the responsible parties. This criterion focuses on the content as well as the structure and length of the executive summary. (The text should not exceed four pages, excluding the matrix.)

The executive summary is followed by a summary matrix of findings, evidence and recommendations. This section of the report aims at consolidating all key findings and recommendations of the evaluation report so readers gain immediate accessibility to the core of the issues presented in the evaluation report.

The role of the evaluation team in producing this matrix entails the selection of those findings and recommendations in the report that are worth highlighting. This is the case for recommendations that are strategic and essential for the intervention under evaluation and recommendations that are related to operational elements of the intervention but are still important for the management team to follow up on.


Background of programme/project evaluated

This criterion considers whether there is a clear description of the intervention, of the logic model or theory of change, and the context. The implementation status of the intervention as well as the key stakeholders should be outlined.

Example: Final in-depth evaluation of the "Regional Programme for South Eastern Europe (2012-2015)" (XCE/U60)
Evaluation purpose and scope

The review of this section aims at a clear description of what the evaluation was intended to do, including why it was commissioned, what it evaluated, and what the study’s objectives, scope and target audience were.


Evaluation methodology

The methodology section is expected to explain the process of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis, and how rigour, credibility and ethical conduct were ensured. It should include a transparent description of all data collection methods, sources and sampling techniques, along with acknowledgements of the limitations of the study and measures taken to mitigate the limitations. Furthermore, the section will be reviewed to judge the extent to which HR and GE-responsive as well as participatory, evaluation methodologies were applied. In this regard, the section should provide information as to whether specific actions were taken in order to effectively engage different stakeholder groups, and whether data techniques were able to capture HR and GE issues. Moreover, it should be outlined how tools and approaches were inclusive and respectful, data sources were disaggregated by gender, and preliminary findings were shared with CLPs.

Example: Cluster mid-term in-depth evaluation 2017 of the Global Programmes on Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling.

Findings and analysis

This criterion examines the extent to which the report demonstrates sound analysis and credible findings. The findings should be clearly formulated, addressing each of the evaluation criteria and questions. They should be based on rigorous analysis of data, and triangulation should be evident. Additionally, the cause and effect links between the intervention and its intended and unintended results should be explained, and the reasons for accomplishments and/or lack of progress identified.
Example: Independent in-depth cluster evaluation of the Global Synthetics Monitoring: Analyses, Reporting and Trends Programme (GLOJ88) and the Global Scientific and Forensic Programme (GLOUS4)


**Conclusions**

The conclusions are expected to emerge from, but also add value to the findings. They should succinctly address each of the evaluation criteria, and also present a comprehensive picture of the intervention’s overall strengths and weaknesses. This criterion also looks at whether the conclusions were developed with the involvement of relevant stakeholders, thereby enhancing the probability of ownership and use of results.

Example: Mid-term in-depth evaluation of the Global Maritime Crime Programme


**Recommendations**

The quality assessment of recommendations is based on whether they are clearly derived from the findings and conclusions, and whether they have utility. Utility is promoted when the recommendations are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Results-oriented, Time-bound), prioritized, of a manageable number, and appropriately pitched to the target group responsible for taking action.

Example: Final independent project evaluation 2016 of the “Strengthening Criminal Justice Responses to Human Trafficking in Lao People’s Democratic Republic” Project

Lessons learned

These should focus on the most significant lessons that emerge from the evaluation, especially those that are applicable to other programmes or contexts. Usually, this chapter also includes reference to best practices identified in the evaluation of a project/programme. The following text box explains why lessons learned are so important.

WHY LESSONS LEARNED NEED MORE ATTENTION

Evaluation reports are not only supposed to outline findings and provide an assessment of performance to increase accountability, but they should also come up with a set of lessons learned and best practices. As this is the last section of the evaluation report, it often does not get the attention it deserves. However, lessons learned are key components of any knowledge management system and are important for continuously improving the performance of organizations such as UNODC. During the lifetime of all projects and through evaluations conducted, it is expected that lessons and best practices will emerge that are valuable and worth sharing. Sometimes they will be lessons from success and sometimes they will be hard but useful lessons learnt from failure. Either way, they can help the organization to build on what worked well and what to avoid in the future.

DEFINING TERMS

*Lessons learned* are generalizations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programmes or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design and implementation that affect performance, outcome and impact. They should provide a potential answer to the “why” question: what factors can explain strong or weak performance? The lessons are expected to come from supporting evidence: the more rigorous the evidence and the greater the triangulation of sources, the more meaningful the lesson is. Lessons learned that are only based on one source of evidence would be considered as “lessons learned hypothesis”.

*Best practices* are the shining examples of processes or activities that have helped produce positive outcomes. As with lessons learned, these should have applicability to other programmes and contexts.


Example: Subprogramme on Counter-Terrorism: East and South-East Asia Partnership on Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism

PRESENTATION AND DISSEMINATION

After the finalization of the evaluation report, the programme/project’s internal and external stakeholders, in particular the CLPs, are invited to a presentation of the most important findings, recommendations and lessons learned from the evaluation as well as the management response. This oral presentation promotes an informed discussion of the findings as well as of the overall evaluation process, and facilitates organizational learning. The presentations are usually given with Power Point and should include a clear narrative. Visual aids and pictures should be used throughout. In conclusion, the evaluation function expects a concise and clear presentation, which is targeted to the audience and conveys the findings, recommendations and lessons learned well.

In addition to making the presentation, for in-depth evaluations, the evaluation team is expected to prepare a two-page evaluation brief, in the form of a hand-out, outlining the main aspects of the evaluation, which will be published along with the final evaluation report on the UNODC website. Moreover, as part of in-depth evaluations, the programme/project manager also presents the management response during the presentation by the evaluation team leader.

SUMMARY

UNODC has clear guidance, templates and quality standards to assist the evaluation team in producing strong and useful inception reports and evaluation reports. Evaluators are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these expectations and requirements during the initial planning stages of the evaluation and seek clarification, guidance and support from the UNODC evaluation function as needed. Ultimately, all final evaluation reports are crucial for learning, change and accountability purposes within UNODC.

The following chapter further outlines how evaluation reports can best be used to instigate change and learning within UNODC.
Evaluations are undertaken in order to improve accountability, organizational learning and knowledge generation. However, evaluations can only be effective in advancing UNODC’s work if they are used. This chapter begins by considering how the use of evaluation is critical for managing results and improving programming, and how results are integrated into the programme life cycle. It looks at how evaluations are shared at UNODC and concludes with good practices for communicating results.
FOCUS ON UTILIZATION

So much of the focus of evaluation processes tends to be on getting the evaluations done and on doing so in time to meet deadlines. There is often less emphasis placed on how to use the information and evidence gained from evaluations beyond the formalities of distributing the report to management, donors and other stakeholders. In addition, evaluation is not only the end product in the form of an evaluation report but a whole evaluation process. The evaluation process itself provides space for reflection (e.g., during data collection and analysis and when sharing preliminary findings, etc.) where valuable learning is generated.

A question that needs to be asked when considering what information is needed from an evaluation is “so what will we do with the answers?”. Ultimately, the real value of an evaluation exercise is in what is done with the results, specifically how results are used in decision-making processes to improve and accelerate development outcomes. Moreover, how results can serve audiences beyond the programme/project teams and even UNODC.

Concerns about learning being lost as a result of too many reports just sitting on shelves or in e-mail in-boxes has prompted action from UNEG and other organizations, including UNODC. Utilization has become central to the terminology and discussions in the field of evaluation and a major focus of both the planning and follow-up phases of evaluations.

Use is emphasized in the UNEG definition of evaluation. The 2016 UNEG norms and standards for evaluation state that evaluations “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.” Furthermore, one of the ten UNEG general norms for evaluation is focused on utility:

In commissioning and conducting an evaluation, there should be a clear intention to use the resulting analysis, conclusions or recommendations to inform decisions and actions. The utility of evaluation is apparent from its use in making relevant and timely contributions to organizational learning, informed decision-making processes and accountability for results. Evaluations could also be used to contribute beyond the organization by generating knowledge and empowering stakeholders.
The evaluation should be designed with use in mind; this is a hallmark of a utilization-focused evaluation.

UNODC’s follow-up phase to each evaluation is focused on planning for utilization. As depicted in figure 6.1, this phase involves three steps to address and share the evaluation’s main findings and results:

- Preparation of a management response
- Presentation of the evaluation to the core learning partners (CLPs) and other stakeholders
- Development of an evaluation follow-up plan.

Sharing, officially responding and developing a follow-up plan to the evaluation are the preliminary steps for utilization. However, they do not guarantee use. Little will happen if managers do not take actions to respond to recommendations. It is also imperative for other stakeholders to be engaged if results are to be fully integrated into organizational learning and change processes.

Evaluation evidence and learning can support multiple functions, as described in the following text box. Therefore, it is important to start thinking about how results will be used during the initial planning stages of an intervention. The evaluation should be designed with use in mind; this is a hallmark of a utilization-focused evaluation.
CHAPTER 6 USING EVALUATION RESULTS

The use of evaluation results is a central part of the programme life cycle. Evaluation results (which include the findings, recommendations and lessons learned) are expected to contribute to improving programming and informing future initiatives.

TYPES OF USE

Within UNODC, evidence gathered from evaluations is used in a number of ways. First and foremost, evidence shows stakeholders whether any actual benefits accrued from the intervention and, if so, of what nature. Learning is used to adapt or expand current interventions, to make decisions about replication or even scaling up successful practices, and for designing future interventions. In some cases, evaluations change ideas and understanding about an issue. Evaluations are also useful to identify the capacity and resources gaps, for example for HR and GE goals.

Results also help to guide policy, strategy and funding decisions. One example is the 2015 evaluation of GLOU61 global e-Learning programme. This evaluation was instrumental in securing additional funding to continue and significantly expand the programme. The programme was initially centred in Asia, but the evaluation recommended the programme be expanded to all geographical areas and themes in UNODC and, as a result, it is now a hallmark of UNODC in the provision of on-line training to Member States worldwide.

USING RESULTS IN THE PROGRAMME CYCLE

The use of evaluation results is a central part of the programme life cycle. As illustrated in figure 6.2, evaluation results (which include findings, recommendations and lessons learned) are essential for improving programming and informing future initiatives. The activities marked in the diagram in bold type that are undertaken as part of the planning phase—the development of the needs assessment and stakeholder analysis, programme/project design, theory of change and the logical framework (logframe), as well as the monitoring and evaluation plan—will all improve when the lessons and recommendations emerging from previous relevant evaluations are taken into account.
Managers are encouraged to look beyond the evaluations of their own projects to learn from other UNODC interventions.

Managers are encouraged to look beyond the evaluations of their own projects to learn from other UNODC interventions. Relevant work may include similar thematic programmes undertaken in other regions or by other organizations, or unrelated programmes that had similar geographic reach, implementing partners, implementing techniques or activities. Therefore, there is a benefit to searching for relevant evaluation products (such as evaluation reports, briefs and synthesis documents) on the websites and knowledge portals of UNODC and other development organizations. The UNODC evaluation database provides a wealth of lessons learned and best practices from evaluations conducted across all UNODC thematic areas. In addition, evaluation-based knowledge products provide synthesized information after detailed analysis is carried out by the evaluation function.

UNODC endeavours to encourage a culture of continuous knowledge exchange and sharing of experiences in order to inform the planning phase and contribute to evidence-based decision-making.

* This figure does not reflect the official UNODC figure of the project cycle but has been developed with a specific focus on evaluation for this handbook.
HOW RESULTS ARE SHARED

It is important for managers to use results from other evaluations in their planning processes and for evidence-based decision-making. However, it is equally important for managers to share results from their own evaluations to support broader organizational learning and knowledge generation. UNODC has a number of systems and procedures in place to promote the dissemination and further use of evaluations. These include:

Presentation of evaluation results: Each in-depth evaluation process includes a formal presentation by the lead evaluator where the evaluators present and obtain feedback on the main results. Presentations are attended by CLPs for the evaluation under discussion and other internal and external stakeholders. Programme/project management also presents the management response during those presentations.

Posting of evaluation reports: The full final reports of all UNODC-commissioned evaluations are made publically available on the IEU website. The reports are categorized by type (in-depth and independent project evaluation) and year published, as well as by thematic focus of the programme/project that was evaluated.

Posting evaluation briefs: The evaluation briefs of all in-depth evaluation reports are also made publically available on the UNODC evaluation website. These are two-page documents prepared by the evaluation team that succinctly highlight the background and purpose of the programme under review, and the evaluation’s key results. Visual aids such as photographs, maps and charts are incorporated into the briefs to help to make the content easily accessible. The briefs are also distributed during the presentation meetings in order to give participants and stakeholders a quick overview of the evaluation and guide discussion.

Posting meta-analysis reports: These synthesis reports cover evaluations conducted over the previous two years and are prepared by the evaluation function. The evaluation reports from that time frame, and particularly their recommendations, are systematically analysed. The main results are reported and used to initiate discussion at the organizational level. The results are also used to inform overarching thematic priorities such as questions of planning and design, human rights and gender, and RBM.

Database of recommendations and lessons learned: The UNODC evaluation application includes an evaluation knowledge database with a complete set of recommendations and lessons learned from all completed evaluations undertaken since 2011. The database enables searching by criteria such as region and thematic area. It is an internal resource for all UNODC staff.

“EVALUATION-BASED KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS”: HTTP://WWW.UNODC.ORG/UNODC/EN/EVALUATION/EVALUATION-BASED-KNOWLEDGE-PRODUCTS.HTML
More informal opportunities for sharing results include:

*Professional networks:* Participating in sector-specific or evaluation-related conferences, communities of practice, working groups, etc. provides beneficial networking opportunities for learning about and sharing evaluation results.

*National stakeholder meetings or coordination groups:* At the country level national stakeholder meetings or coordination groups are strategic spaces to share the results of the evaluation to improve understanding of the national context, inform similar interventions and generate dialogue on issues of common interest.

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**KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE AND TAILOR THE MESSAGE**

Managers are encouraged to think about who might be interested in what has been learned from an evaluation. There are likely to be several types of audiences—such as donors, partners who were not part of the CLP, government counterparts, colleagues from other departments, CSOs and social media networks. The key is to think about what aspects of the results each audience might be most interested in and then tailor your communication accordingly.

A few examples of opportunities to broadcast evaluation results include conference presentations, a web-story on the UNODC website, meetings with Member States and donors, coordination groups at the national level, UNEG working groups and social media.

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**STRATEGIES FOR TRANSLATING LEARNING INTO ACTION**

After all the work that goes into producing a high-quality evaluation, it is essential for managers to make it meaningful and make it count. They must both promote the use of evaluation and lead by example in creating an organizational culture that sees evaluation as central to the work. As Secretary-General Guterres has said, "We need a culture of evaluation, independent and real-time evaluation with full transparency". This involves preparation, timing, an enabling culture and the use of accessible forms of communication.

As mentioned earlier, good preparation includes considering the likely users and uses of results during the design and planning stage of the intervention as well as at the initiation of the evaluation process. Anticipating who the different audiences may be and in what ways they might use the results of an evaluation will help guide both mid-term and final evaluations and determine the best ways to organize and present the results of each.
Timing and timeliness are crucial factors. The impact of an evaluation can depend on how well and how quickly its findings can be made available to inform strategic priorities and communicated in appropriate ways to stakeholders at the time when they need it. Evaluators should be aware of any time sensitive issues and be prepared to share preliminary key findings as they emerge.

Evaluations are more likely to be viewed positively and acted upon when managers and in particular senior management embrace these exercises as useful for managing results and improving programming. An evaluation culture and an enabling environment is one where it is understood that learning comes from both successes and failures.

Finally, adoption of evaluation results is enabled when the information is disseminated in a user-friendly manner. Traditional and text-heavy evaluation reports may not be equally accessible to all stakeholders. Good practices for effectively communicating results in reports and other evaluation products, described in more detail in chapter five, include, for instance, the following approaches:

- **Telling a story**: A report can be brought to life by using stories to communicate key findings.
- **Keeping things simple**: Avoid extraneous information or words. Write in an accessible style using plain language and minimize the use of technical terms as much as possible.
- **Being purpose driven**: Focus on what aspects are most relevant to the audience.
- **Segmenting the audience**: Present messages in simple and easily understandable formats tailored to the specific needs of different users.
- **Visualizing results**: Make frequent use of visual aids such as diagrams, pictures, charts, graphs and maps. Also use formatting techniques such as section and subsection headings, short paragraphs, bullet points, pull-quotes and other tools to draw attention to key points and increase readability.

The following table highlights actions that can be undertaken by managers, evaluators and other decision-makers at UNODC and partnering organizations in order to promote use of evaluation results.
### TABLE 6.1 PRACTICES FOR PROMOTING EVALUATION USE

| WHAT MANAGERS CAN DO | • Develop an initial plan for use of evaluation results early in the planning phase of an intervention  
• Consider different users of and audiences for results when developing the evaluation ToR, particularly for the evaluation questions and deliverables  
• Work with evaluators to ensure utilization-focused evaluation; ideally develop a communication strategy that recognizes the different needs of different users  
• Use results and lessons in planning for continued and future programming |
| WHAT EVALUATORS CAN DO | • Plan for use of results when designing the evaluation  
• Share preliminary results with key stakeholders  
• Prepare the evaluation report in an accessible and user-friendly style, with clear and understandable language  
• Use visual aids to convey key findings  
• Use a communication strategy for formulating the summary matrix in the executive summary section of the evaluation report |
| WHAT DECISION MAKERS CAN DO | • Ensure procedures are in place for sharing evaluation reports and key results  
• Foster an evaluation culture (commitment to using evaluation where both failures and successes are embraced as learning opportunities)  
• Use evaluation results for policy development |

### SUMMARY

Each evaluation should be viewed as a systematic and operations-oriented learning experience. The results provide an important opportunity to improve the intervention being assessed, to improve programming throughout UNODC, and to generate dialogue and knowledge that is useful beyond the organization.

The way that results are shared is important. The evaluation report is the starting point but reaching a wider range of audiences requires communications strategies that make it easy for people to understand and determine how the results may be useful for their own situations.

Ultimately, evaluations are only worthwhile when they are credible and when they are used. Hopefully this handbook serves as a resource to build the quality of evaluations and to inspire stakeholders to view evaluation, when done well, as a positive opportunity for improving the important work of UNODC.

### RESOURCES
