Obligations of Evaluators

Independence

1. Evaluation in the United Nations systems should be demonstrably free of bias. To this end, evaluators are recruited for their ability to exercise independent judgement. Evaluators shall ensure that they are not unduly influenced by the views or statements of any party. Where the evaluator or the evaluation manager comes under pressure to adopt a particular position or to introduce bias into the evaluation findings, it is the responsibility of the evaluator to ensure that independence of judgement is maintained. Where such pressures may endanger the completion or integrity of the evaluation, the issue will be referred to the evaluation manager and, where necessary, the director of evaluation, who will discuss the concerns of the relevant parties and decide on an approach which will ensure that evaluation findings and recommendations are consistent, verified and independently presented (see below Conflict of Interest).

Impartiality

2. Evaluations must give a comprehensive and balanced presentation of strengths and weaknesses of the policy, program, project or organizational unit being evaluated, taking due account of the views of a diverse cross-section of stakeholders. Evaluators shall:

a. Operate in an impartial and unbiased manner at all stages of the evaluation.

b. Collect diverse perspectives on the subject under evaluation.

c. Guard against distortion in their reporting caused by their personal views and feelings.

Credibility

3. Evaluation shall be credible and based on reliable data and observations. Evaluation reports shall show evidence of consistency and dependability in data, findings, judgements and lessons learned; appropriately reflecting the quality of the methodology, procedures and analysis used to collect and interpret data. Evaluation managers and evaluators shall endeavour to ensure that each evaluation is accurate, relevant, and timely and provides a clear, concise and balanced presentation of the evidence, findings, issues, conclusions and recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest

4. Conflicts of interest shall be avoided as far as possible so that the credibility of the evaluation process and product shall not be undermined. Conflicts of interest may arise at the level of the Evaluation Office, or at that of individual staff members or consultants. Conflicts of interest should be disclosed and dealt with openly and honestly.

5. Evaluators are required to disclose in writing any past experience, of themselves, their immediate family, close friends or associates, which may give rise to a potential conflict of interest.
6. Evaluators engaged by a UN agency shall not have had any responsibility for the design, implementation or supervision of any of the projects, programs or policies that they are evaluating.

7. Under exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to engage an evaluator who has a past connection with the object of the evaluation, for example where there is very small pool of competent experts. In such a case, measures to safeguard the integrity of the evaluation shall be adopted and such measures shall be disclosed in the evaluation report. The director of evaluation shall ensure that the evaluator in question is not appointed as evaluation manager or evaluation team leader.

8. The Evaluation Office shall avoid any conflict of interest, which might arise, or appear to arise, as a result of the acceptance of any form of external support or assistance. For example, the acceptance of supplementary funding for any of its activities, from bilateral or multilateral agencies or other parties shall be carefully considered and managed. Such funding must not lead to any bias in the evaluation approach, opinion, or findings. The director of evaluation shall carefully assess any offer of assistance to ensure the necessary independence of judgement from any contributing parties and to prevent any undue influence over the work of the Office.

**Honesty and Integrity**

9. Successful evaluation depends on the honesty and integrity of the entire evaluation process. Evaluators shall:

   a. Accurately represent their level of skills and knowledge and work only within the limits of their professional training and abilities in evaluation, declining assignments for which they do not have the skills and experience to successfully complete.

   b. Negotiate honestly the costs, tasks to be undertaken, limitations of methodology, scope of results likely to be obtained, and uses of data resulting from the evaluation

   c. Accurately present their procedures, data and findings, including ensuring that the evaluation findings are not biased to make it more likely that the evaluator receives further commissions from the Client

   d. As far as possible, prevent or correct misuse of their work by others.

   e. Decline evaluation assignments where the client is unresponsive to their expressed concerns that the evaluation methodology or procedures are likely to produce a misleading result. (If declining the assignment is not feasible, the evaluator shall record his/her dissent either in the evaluation report or otherwise).

**Accountability**

10. Evaluators are accountable for the completion of the evaluation as agreed with the Client. Specifically, evaluators shall:

   a. Complete the evaluation deliverables within the timeframe and budget agreed
b. Exercise prudence and probity in fiscal decision-making so that evaluation expenditures are properly accounted for and the client receives value for money

c. Give the evaluation manager early notice of any change to the evaluation plan or any risks to the successful completion of the evaluation and record the reasons for any changes made to the evaluation plan