Government of Sierra Leone National Evaluation Guidelines

March 2026

Foreword

Sierra Leone's development agenda is guided by its Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) for 2024–2030, which outlines the country's strategic priorities and objectives for sustainable development. This new plan builds on the gains of the previous MTNDP (2019–2023) and emphasizes the importance of results, accountability, and learning in achieving national goals. In support of this, the 2019–2023 plan was the first to include a dedicated Results Framework section detailing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) requirements as a strategic tool for realizing development targets.[1]

The Government has underscored its commitment to evidence-based policymaking by establishing institutional mechanisms and policies for M&E. Notably, the then National Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (NaMED) which was created in 2018 within the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED) to provide technical leadership and coordination for the overall national M&E agenda,[2] and later evolved to the National Monitoring and Evaluation Agency (NaMEA).[3] With the Parliamentary Act that allowed for the transformation, NaMEA's mandate was made broader to encompass M&E efforts funded by Development Partners and includes feeding the work of different ministries and local councils to a centralised M&E system. Illustrative of the political will and senior level interest in evaluation, NaMEA is a semi-autonomous agency directly reporting to the Office of the President.[4] Beyond its oversight role, NaMEA also carries out baseline studies, mid-term reviews and evaluations.[5]

In light of this, **the 2024, National Evaluation Capacity Readiness Assessment (NECRA)** showed that with regards to **Organisational Capacity** – there has been progress in Sierra Leone's evaluation landscape, particularly with the establishment of the National Monitoring and Evaluation Agency (NaMEA) as an independent agency under the Office of the President. In terms of areas for improvement, while NaMEA provides oversight, evaluation functions across MDAs remain fragmented, with many ministries lacking formalized M&E units. The absence of standardized structures across MDAs results in inconsistent evaluation planning, limited and unsystematic coordination, and reliance on ad-hoc donor-driven evaluations. Furthermore, the lack of a predictable funding mechanism for evaluations, as well as limited integration of evaluations into national budget planning, hinders the sustainability of evaluation functions.

As for **Individual Capacities**, the NECRA identified limited availability of qualified M&E personnel within MDAs. Evaluation expertise is often concentrated in donor-funded projects or some ministries which have better political and development partner backing, leaving gaps in other sectors. The NECRA also found that M&E training opportunities are inconsistent, with most practitioners acquiring skills informally, on the job, rather than through structured professional development programs. Additionally, the absence of university-accredited M&E courses further weakens the national pipeline for evaluators.

In regard to the creation of a **Conducive Environment for Evaluations**, the NECRA found that evaluations are often perceived as accountability tools rather than learning mechanisms, leading to resistance from senior officials who fear scrutiny. Evaluations are primarily conducted to fulfil donor requirements rather than inform national decision-making, limiting their utility in policy formulation. Furthermore, data management systems are fragmented, with many MDAs still relying on manual or outdated data collection methods, limiting the ability to conduct real-time, evidence-based evaluations.

Although M&E practices are becoming popular amongst local governments across the continent, sub-national M&E systems and plans turn out to be all about monitoring and no or little evaluation, a situation that signals a weak evaluation culture at the local level. Monitoring has been the norm in many countries, including Sierra Leone while Evaluation is undertaken to a much lesser degree, despite the common use of the term M&E.

Acknowledgments

The National Monitoring and Evaluation Agency (NAMEA) provides leadership in the monitoring and evaluation of policies, programs and projects including the national development plan. To support its roles and the work of other stakeholders, NAMEA has developed these guidelines. The guidelines received input from numerous stakeholders and has benefited from the contribution of many people.

Much appreciation goes to H. E. Rtd. Brig. Julius Maada Bio for vision in emphasizing the importance of evaluation for efficient and effective service delivery and his commitment to making evaluation a culture in ministries, department and local councils.

Appreciation is extended to UNICEF for its financial and technical support throughout the development of these Evaluation Guidelines. UNICEF's collaboration and sustained engagement were instrumental in moving this work from inception to completion.

To members of Sierra Leone Evaluation Association, and the evaluation write-shop team, and all other persons who contributed technical inputs to the development and finalization of the guidelines-the sustained engagement and critical review of the various drafts developed during the process were commendable. From the government ministers and members of government entities, including representatives of civil society groups, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, development partners, women's groups, youth groups, the level of interest and participation was outstanding.

Much appreciation to the staff of the National Monitoring and Evaluation Agency (NaMEA) who committed time and intellect to get this work done. The efforts of everyone who, in diverse ways, worked assiduously and contributed to the entire process were notably helpful. Special recognition goes to Henryson Jusu who initiated this work.

In conclusion, the production of the Sierra Leones first Evaluation Guidelines represents a transformative step for our nation. We are confident that, with efficient and effective utility of this guidance note, we will direct our development agenda to achieving the needs of the people of Sierra Leone and learn lessons to make evaluation better.

Dr. James Edwin
Director General
National Monitoring and Evaluation Agency
Government of Sierra Leone

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACC	Anti-Corruption Commission
AGO	Auditor General's Office
APR	Annual Progress Report
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
ERS	Economic Recovery Strategy
ETWG	Evaluation Technical Working Group
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
INTRAC	International NGO Training and Research Centre
KEQ	Key Evaluation Question
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MTNDP	Medium-Term National Development Plan
NaMED	National Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate
NaMEA	National Monitoring and Evaluation Agency
NEP	National Evaluation Plan
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Committee
PAR	Participatory Assessment Research
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RAR	Rapid Assessment Research
RTE	Real-Time Evaluation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VNRs	Voluntary National Reviews

Table of contents

Tables

Figures:

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the National Evaluation Guidelines

These guidelines aim to strengthen the quality of evaluation in Sierra Leone to produce relevant and reliable evidence in an impartial, transparent, and participatory manner. The Evaluation guidelines serve as a benchmark for high quality evaluations that can assess progress towards expected (and unintended) results. It also examines whether the policy framework coherently and efficiently contributed to collective outcomes and national development processes of the 2030 Agenda.

More specifically the guidelines seek to:

1. **Standardize evaluation procedures:** Establish a uniform framework for evaluating public sector interventions to ensure quality and due process.
2. **Clarify concepts and tools:** Define key evaluation concepts and methodologies to ensure shared understanding among stakeholders while building human capital.
3. **Foster an evaluation culture:** Beyond monitoring, enhance demand and confidence in evaluation. Document lessons learned and best practices to support organizational learning.
4. **Use findings effectively:** Institutionalize the use of evaluation results in policy-making, budgeting and program improvement, promoting learning within institutions.
5. **Enhance Evaluation Quality:** Improve the rigor, credibility, and usefulness of evaluations, ensuring they meet ethical standards.
6. **Integrate Equity and Cross-Cutting Issues:** Mainstream issues like gender equality and environmental sustainability in evaluations.
7. **Encourage Public Participation:** Involve beneficiaries and stakeholders in the evaluation process to ensure inclusivity.
8. **Ensure Independence and Credibility:** Protect evaluation integrity through measures like external reviews and impartial analysis.
9. **Demonstrate Accountability:** Show responsible use of public resources and results achieved to justify resource allocation and utilization to stakeholders.

These Evaluation guidelines complement the 2021 **National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy**[6] and its accompanying instruments such as a **National M&E Results Framework** and **Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual.** These efforts aim to embed a culture of evaluation in governance, ensuring that performance information is used in planning, budgeting, and decision-making at all levels.

1.2. Users and Scope of the Guidelines

These guidelines apply to all evaluations of public sector interventions in Sierra Leone, whether at national, sector, ministerial, or local government level. It also covers evaluations of programs of national interest carried out by non-state actors in collaboration with the government. Key users of the guidelines include:

- **NaMEA and Oversight Bodies:** NaMEA, as the central coordinating agency for M&E, will use the guidelines to oversee the evaluation function across government, provide technical support, and ensure compliance and quality. Other oversight entities (such as parliamentary committees or the Auditor General's office) can refer to the guidelines to understand the standards expected in government evaluations.
- **Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs):** MDAs will use these guidelines when planning and commissioning evaluations of their policies, projects, and programs. This ensures consistency in how evaluations are conducted across different sectors (e.g., health, education, agriculture).
- **Local Councils (LCs):** At sub-national level, local government bodies will apply the guidelines for evaluations of development initiatives in their jurisdictions, aligning local evaluations with national standards.
- **Evaluation Practitioners and Consultants:** Both internal and external evaluators/consultants contracted by government agencies should follow the guidelines. This includes international consultants, local consulting firms, and independent evaluators conducting evaluations on behalf of the government.
- **Development Partners and Donor Agencies:** Where donors support or participate in evaluations of official programs (for example, joint evaluations or evaluations of donor-funded projects implemented by government), these guidelines provide a common framework to ensure alignment with national evaluation processes.
- **Academia and Training Institutions:** Universities and training providers can use the guidelines to inform curriculum and capacity building for M&E, helping to train evaluators in line with national standards.

1.3. Structure of the guidelines

This document is organised into six chapters as well as annexes.

- **Chapter One: Introduction:** States the purpose of the document and intended audience.
- **Chapter Two: Fundamentals of Evaluation:** Explains key evaluation concepts, standards, and ethics, differentiating evaluation from monitoring and auditing. Aligns with international (OECD) standards.
- **Chapter Three: Evaluation Process:** Outlines the evaluation lifecycle, from planning to follow-up, with practical guidance on managing each step.
- **Chapter Four: Roles and Responsibilities:** Details the institutional arrangements and key actors in Sierra Leone's evaluations, emphasizing coordination and accountability.
- **Chapter Five: Evaluation Quality Assurance:** Focuses on ensuring evaluation quality and credibility through standards, checkpoints, and independent review mechanisms.
- **Chapter Six: Development of an Evaluation Plan:** Guides strategic evaluation planning at national and local levels, emphasizing alignment with national priorities and resource availability.
- **Annexes:** Provides additional tools and reference materials, including criteria for selecting interventions, an evaluation plan format example, a glossary, and an evaluator competency framework.

2. Fundamentals of evaluation

Key concepts

Definition of evaluation. The National Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy defines evaluation as the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results.

Purpose of evaluation. Government evaluations serve several key purposes:

- **Decision-making:** Provide credible evidence to support decisions on whether to continue, scale, modify, or discontinue an intervention.
- **Value and performance:** Systematically assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of public interventions.
- **Accountability:** Strengthen accountability and transparency by demonstrating how public resources are used and whether intended results are being achieved.
- **Impact assessment:** Examine the extent to which an intervention has achieved its intended outcomes and whether it has produced unintended effects—positive or negative.
- **Learning:** Generate lessons that improve the design and implementation of government policies, strategies, programmes, and projects.

Evaluations should generate credible and useful information that enables decision-makers to incorporate lessons into policies and future programming.

An evaluation essentially examines to what extent a public intervention has achieved its intended outcomes, how well resources have been used, and what lasting changes have occurred, in order to draw lessons for the future. Evaluations should produce information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into decision-making processes.

Use of evaluation. Evaluations provide evidence for policy-making, planning, budgeting, and resource allocation. By increasing understanding of *what works, what does not work, for whom, and under what conditions*, evaluation informs future government action.

Beyond findings and recommendations, the **process** of evaluation itself contributes to institutional strengthening by:

- improving shared understanding of results,
- increasing stakeholder engagement and ownership,
- nurturing an evaluation culture, and
- strengthening national and subnational evaluation capacity.

Evaluation, monitoring and audit. Evaluation complements other oversight and accountability instruments used by Government.

- **Monitoring** provides continuous tracking of activities and outputs.
- **Audits** verify financial and compliance integrity.
- **Evaluation** synthesizes information from monitoring, audits, research, and reviews, but goes further to address questions related to effectiveness, impact, value for money, and lessons learned.

Evaluations occur at specific milestones (e.g., mid-term, final, ex-post) and require methodological rigor using social science research methods.

Audience of evaluation. The audience for an evaluation may include program managers, senior officials, policymakers (Ministers, Parliament), academic institutions, donors, beneficiaries, and the general public. Evaluation design should be decided based on the needs of the audience and the likely influence on the use of the evaluation findings. Table 1: Monitoring vs Evaluation vs Audit[7]

Aspect	Monitoring	Evaluation	Audit
Main Purpose	Track ongoing progress of activities, outputs, and short-term results to support day-to-day management and timely adjustments.	Assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of a policy, programme, or project to inform decision-making, learning, and accountability.	Verify financial integrity, compliance with rules and procedures, and proper use of public resources through independent examination.
Focus	Focus on whether activities are being implemented as planned, resources are used efficiently, and outputs are being delivered on time.	Focus on the merit and worth of an intervention—its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact—and the causal factors behind performance.	Focus on financial integrity, internal controls, compliance with rules and regulations, and whether funds, assets, and procedures meet required standards.
Timing	Continuous/regular	Periodic (e.g. mid-term, final)	Periodic (e.g. annual or scheduled)
Led By	Implementers/managers	Internal/external evaluators	Independent auditors
Data Used	Routine reports, administrative data, and performance indicators	Monitoring data plus additional qualitative and quantitative evidence (e.g., surveys, interviews, case studies, document reviews)	Financial records, internal control systems, procurement and compliance documentation
Methods	Routine data collection, descriptive tracking, and performance measurement	Mixed-methods analysis using qualitative and quantitative approaches (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups, document reviews)	Financial audits, compliance testing, verification of internal controls, and risk-based audit procedures
Use of Results	Prevent and resolve bottlenecks, adjust implementation, improve day-to-day management	Inform policy decisions, strengthen learning, enhance accountability and programme improvement	Ensure financial accountability, strengthen internal controls, and recommend corrective actions
Independence	Low	Medium to High	High

2.2. Evaluation questions, criteria and matrix

Key evaluation questions: Key evaluation questions (KEQs) guide the entire evaluation process. They define what the evaluation must answer in a credible and evidence-based manner, and they shape the findings, conclusions, and recommendations that emerge from the evaluation. Selecting strong KEQs is therefore one of the most critical tasks of the design phase.

Evaluations must address **evaluative**, not merely descriptive, questions. For example:

- *Descriptive:* "What were the results?"
- *Evaluative:* "How good were the results, for whom, and why?" Depending on the type of evaluation, causal questions may also need to be explored, such as:
- "To what extent were the results attributable to the intervention?"

KEQs determine the type of data to collect, how the data will be analysed, and how the evaluation findings will be reported. To be effective, KEQs should:

- **Reflect intended use:** They must be aligned with the needs of the primary users of the evaluation. KEQs should be asked only if decision-makers are prepared to act based on the answers.
- **Be broad and open-ended:** KEQs should not be yes/no questions. They differ from the detailed interview or survey questions used to collect data.
- **Be evaluable:** They must be feasible to answer with the

data available or to be collected during the evaluation.

- **Be limited in number:** A range of 3 to 7 KEQs (5 ± 2) is appropriate—broad enough to cover key areas but manageable enough to allow depth of analysis. These can then be broken down into more specific sub-questions.

Examples of key evaluation questions are provided in Annex 1.

Evaluation criteria support and structure the KEQs. The **questions come first**, and criteria are then used to frame the analysis and judgement of the intervention's performance.

The Government of Sierra Leone applies the **OECD-DAC evaluation criteria**, defined as follows:[8]

Table 2: OECD-DAC Criteria

OECD-DAC Criteria	Enquiry
Relevance	Is the intervention aligned with national priorities and responding to the needs of the community or country?
Coherence	How well does the intervention fit within the broader policy, institutional, and partner landscape?
Effectiveness	Is the intervention achieving its stated objectives and intended outcomes?
Efficiency	How well are financial, human, and material resources being used to produce results?
Impact	What broader changes—intended or unintended—has the intervention generated?
Sustainability	Are the benefits of the intervention likely to continue after external support ends?

Additional Humanitarian Evaluation Criteria

In humanitarian contexts, several additional criteria may be relevant to ensure that evaluations capture the specific nature of emergency response and life-saving assistance. These include **coverage, connectedness, coordination, protection, appropriateness, and timeliness**. These criteria complement the OECD-DAC framework and help assess how well humanitarian interventions meet urgent needs, uphold humanitarian principles, and link short-term response to longer-term recovery.

Examples include:

- **Coverage:** *To what extent did the response reach the population groups most affected by the crisis? Were there barriers preventing certain groups—such as persons with disabilities, women, or remote communities—from accessing assistance?*

- **Connectedness:** *Did the intervention consider longer-term recovery and transition needs, or did it risk creating dependency or negative long-term effects?*

- **Coordination:** *How well did the intervention coordinate with government, UN agencies, NGOs, and local actors? Were efforts duplicated or aligned?*

- **Protection:** *Did the intervention identify and mitigate risks of harm, exploitation, or abuse, particularly for vulnerable population groups?*

- **Appropriateness:** *Was the assistance suited to the cultural, social, and contextual realities of the affected population?*

- **Timeliness:** *How quickly and effectively was the intervention deployed to meet urgent humanitarian needs?*

These criteria should be used selectively, depending on the nature of the intervention being evaluated and the extent to which humanitarian response principles apply.

The evaluation matrix is a practical tool that synthesizes the core elements of the evaluation design. It clarifies *what* will be evaluated and *how* it will be examined. The matrix further refines the evaluation focus during the design phase by linking KEQs to their corresponding data strategies.

A typical evaluation matrix includes, for each evaluation question:

- the criteria that support the question,
- sub-questions or aspects to be explored,
- indicators or judgement criteria,
- data collection methods,
- data sources, and
- analysis approaches.

This structured approach ensures that the evaluation is methodologically sound, feasible, and aligned with the needs of decision-makers. (See Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix Template.)

2.3 Types of Evaluation

Evaluations can take different forms depending on their purpose, timing, scope, level of independence, and methodological approach. The choice of evaluation type should be guided by the objectives of the evaluation and the key evaluation questions.

Evaluations may be categorised in the following ways:

1. **By Timing**
   - **Ex-ante / Appraisal Evaluation:** Conducted before implementation to assess feasibility and expected results.
   - **Mid-term Evaluation:** Conducted during implementation to review progress, identify challenges, and adjust course.
   - **Final Evaluation:** Conducted at the end of implementation to assess results and performance.
   - **Ex-post Evaluation:** Conducted months or years after completion to assess long-term outcomes and sustainability.
2. **By Level of Independence**
   - **Internal Evaluation:** Conducted by government staff or implementing partners.
   - **External Evaluation:** Conducted by independent evaluators to enhance credibility and objectivity.
   - **Joint Evaluation:** Conducted collaboratively by multiple government entities or development partners.
3. **By Scope**
   - Project Evaluation
   - Programme Evaluation
   - Policy Evaluation
   - Thematic or Sectoral Evaluation.

Evaluations must clearly define their scope in relation to available resources and information.

4. **By Purpose**
   - **Formative Evaluation:** Supports learning and improvement during implementation.
   - **Summative Evaluation:** Assesses overall performance after implementation.
   - **Developmental Evaluation:** Supports innovation and adaptation in complex or rapidly changing environments.
5. **By Methodological Approach**
   - **Theory-based Evaluation**
   - **Impact Evaluation (causal analysis)**
   - **Participatory Evaluation**
   - **Real-time or Rapid Evaluation**

The methodological approach should respond to the evaluation questions and the context.

2.3.1 Type of evaluations by when they take place (Timing)

Evaluations may take place at different points in the project or programme cycle. The timing of an evaluation determines its purpose and the type of evidence it can generate. The main timing-based evaluation types are as follows:

Ex-Ante / Appraisal Evaluation

Conducted before implementation begins, to assess the relevance, feasibility, and expected results of a proposed intervention. Ex-ante evaluations help determine whether the design is sound and whether the intervention should proceed, be modified, or be scaled.

Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE)

Conducted midway through implementation to assess progress, identify strengths and weaknesses, and recommend adjustments for the remainder of the programme. MTEs are diagnostic in nature and often use mixed methods to provide actionable recommendations for course correction.

Final Evaluation

Conducted at or near the end of implementation to assess the overall performance of the intervention—its effectiveness, efficiency, and early outcomes. Final evaluations consolidate learning from the entire cycle and inform decisions about continuation, expansion, or redesign. *(Note: A final evaluation is distinct from an endline study, which focuses mainly on measurement rather than evaluative judgement.)*

Ex-Post Evaluation

Conducted months or years after completion to assess long-term outcomes, impact, and sustainability. Ex-post evaluations aim to understand whether benefits have endured and whether the intervention contributed to lasting change. They often require robust baseline and follow-up data.

Evaluability Assessment (EA)

An Evaluability Assessment is conducted prior to commissioning an evaluation to determine whether a programme or policy is ready to be meaningfully evaluated. It assesses the clarity of objectives, the strength of the theory of change, availability of data, feasibility of methods, and the likelihood that the evaluation will produce useful findings. EA is not an evaluation itself; rather, it is a diagnostic exercise that ensures that evaluations conducted later are credible, feasible, and cost-effective.

Real time Evaluations

A specialised evaluation conducted during the early phase of implementation—most commonly in humanitarian or emergency contexts. RTEs provide rapid, actionable feedback to operational teams, enabling immediate adjustments. They prioritise learning, use rapid data collection, and focus on issues emerging while the intervention is ongoing.[9]

2.3.2 Types of evaluation by conducting entity

The methodology and the degree of stakeholder engagement in the evaluation process are often shaped by who conducts the evaluations. Consequently, in the effort to maximise independence and impartiality, some evaluation types can at times de-prioritise participation. The types of evaluations[10] in question are:

- **Independent Evaluation:** An evaluation carried out by entities and persons free of the control of those responsible for the design and implementation of the intervention. This offers a high level of independence and impartiality but often limits participation of programme staff.

- **Internal Evaluation:** Evaluation of an intervention conducted by a unit and/or individuals reporting to the management of the donor, partner, or implementing organization. This often limits the level of independence and impartiality but offers a high level of participation for programme staff.

- **External Evaluation:** The evaluation of an intervention conducted by entities and/or individuals outside the donor and implementing organizations. This offers a high level of independence and impartiality but often limits participation

- **Joint Evaluation:** An evaluation to which different donor agencies and/or partners participate. This often limits the level of independence and impartiality but offers a high level of participation for programme staff. It should be noted that there are various degrees of "jointness" depending on the extent to which individual partners cooperate in the evaluation process, merge their evaluation resources and combine their evaluation reporting.

- **Participatory Evaluation:** Evaluation method in which representatives of agencies and stakeholders (including beneficiaries) work together in designing, carrying out and interpreting an evaluation. This often limits the level of independence and impartiality but offers a high level of participation for programme staff.

- **Self-Evaluation:** An evaluation by those who are entrusted with the design and delivery of an intervention. This often limits the level of independence and impartiality but offers a high level of participation for programme staff.

In the Sierra Leonean context, evaluations should, to the extent possible, prioritize national ownership and inclusiveness. Regardless of whether an evaluation is internal, external, or donor-led, it should strive to adopt a participatory approach that meaningfully involves national institutions, programme stakeholders, and intended beneficiaries. In light of this, nationally driven evaluations as the preferred standard, with participation and collaboration as essential components for all evaluation types.

2.3.3 Types of evaluation by subject / scope

Evaluations vary in breadth and scope, and consequently, in the depth of analysis that is possible or required. The subject of an evaluation regardless of whether it is a single project, a sectoral programme, or a national development initiative will influence the type of questions asked, the methods used, and the usability of findings. In light of this, the types of evaluations by subject / scope can include:

- **Project Evaluations:** are types of evaluations that are typically narrower in scope and are intended for analysis of design, implementation, and outcomes relative to clearly defined objectives and logical frameworks. Project evaluations are useful for assessing effectiveness and efficiency at the operational level and drawing lessons that can inform similar future interventions. However, there is a risk that knowledge created may be siloed and limited in scope without necessarily being connected to broader sectoral or policy-level learning.

- **Sector / Thematic Evaluations:** are types of evaluations that look at interventions within a sector or sub-sector, such as education or health, in order to assess collective outcomes and policy alignment. The scope for these evaluations is relatively broader and directed at strategic coherence and programmatic synergies.

- **Donor Funded Cross-cutting and Programme-Level Evaluations:** are types of evaluations that look at cross-sectoral support provided by a single funding agency to the government. These are intended at providing a holistic view of effectiveness of interventions and development strategies with the aim of improving project / programme level learning, to support policy-level dialogue and / or system-wide learning. These types of evaluations may touch on either of the abovementioned types and require the integration of multiple data sources and stakeholder perspectives.

2.3.4 Types of evaluations by methodological approach[11][12]

MDAs commissioning evaluations should be mindful of the methodological biases of some evaluators, who may be more driven by the approaches they are familiar with rather than by the intended use of the evaluation. In order to tackle this issue, it is helpful to clarify the kind of evidence needed, the depth of analysis, the appropriate team composition, and the implications for timing and resources. This can be done by making a distinction between process-focused evaluations and outcome/impact focused evaluations. It is important to note however that these are not mutually exclusive and can overlap.

1. Process-Focused Evaluations

These types of evaluations examine how an intervention is being implemented and focus on systems, mechanisms, participation and adaptation. Process evaluations assess whether a project or programme is being implemented as intended and how contextual and organizational factors influence progress. This is particularly important in programs involving institutional or cultural change, where local ownership and iterative learning are key to sustainability. These evaluations often use participatory approaches, involving stakeholders in setting milestones and conducting periodic joint reflections. This fosters adaptive learning and responsive implementation. An external evaluator or facilitator may support this process as needed.

2. Outcome and Impact-Focused Evaluations[13]

These evaluations focus on the *results* an intervention has achieved and examine the extent to which the observed changes can be plausibly linked—or causally attributed—to the intervention. They generate evidence on effectiveness, impact, and value for money, supporting strategic decisions on scaling, redesign, or discontinuation.

Outcome evaluations[14] assess the **short- to medium-term results** of an intervention and examine the extent to which intended outcomes have been achieved. They explore changes in knowledge, behaviours, service delivery, systems strengthening, or other intermediate effects that occur before long-term impact.

Outcome evaluations typically answer questions such as:

- What outcomes have been achieved, for whom, and in what contexts?
- To what extent did the intervention contribute to these changes?
- What internal or external factors influenced progress?

These evaluations support learning and adaptive management during implementation and inform decisions for subsequent phases of programming (UNEG, 2016).

- **Impact Evaluation**

Impact evaluations assess the **causal effect** of an intervention on outcomes of interest—whether these outcomes occur in the short, medium, or long term. The defining feature of impact evaluation is its focus on estimating what *would have happened in the absence of the intervention* (the counterfactual).

Impact evaluations provide the strongest evidence on what works, for whom, and under what conditions. Because they aim to establish causality, they require rigorous methodological designs, including:

- **Experimental designs**
  These involve random assignment of participants to treatment and control groups, enabling the clearest estimation of causal impact. *Example:* Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs).

- **Quasi-experimental designs**
  Used when randomisation is not feasible. These methods construct a credible comparison group using empirical strategies such as:

  - Difference-in-Differences (DiD)
  - Regression Discontinuity (RD)
  - Propensity Score Matching (PSM)

- **Non-experimental / theory-based approaches**
  Used when experimental or quasi-experimental designs are not possible or appropriate. These approaches rely on:

  - statistical controls,
  - comparative case designs, and
  - explicit theory-based causal reasoning (e.g., Contribution Analysis, Process Tracing).

These methods aim to build a plausible case for causal contribution by triangulating multiple sources of evidence and examining alternative explanations.

I. **Theory-based evaluations** draw on a well-articulated theory of change to understand the mechanisms through which the intervention is expected to lead to results. Evaluators test, validate and refine the theory using evidence and stakeholder knowledge.

II. **Contribution Analysis (CA)** assesses whether the intervention plausibly contributed to observed outcomes by assembling and triangulating evidence, testing the theory of change, and examining alternative explanations.. .[15] This is particularly relevant in the Sierra Leonean context, where evaluations often deal with complex governance, social development, and multi-stakeholder programmes where isolating direct causal effects is challenging

3. Other Methods

- Thematic Evaluation: Examines cross-cutting themes (e.g., gender equality, disability inclusion, climate resilience) across multiple programmes or sectors. looks at themes such as gender equality, disability inclusion and climate resilience among others. This focus runs across programmes and sectors assessing the extent to which a given themes / themes have been integrated and the associated results.

- Meta Evaluation/ Synthesis Evaluation: Reviews multiple evaluations to assess methodological quality, identify cross-cutting lessons, and inform improvements in future evaluation practice.

Methods of data collection

The selection of data collection methods should be guided by the evaluation questions, the type of evaluation being conducted, and the contextual realities of the intervention. Decisions about methodology are typically made by the Evaluation Technical Working Group (ETWG) or Reference Group, in consultation with evaluators and key stakeholders.

Evaluations should draw on both **qualitative and quantitative** methods, and MDAs/LCs are encouraged to use **triangulation** to enhance credibility, deepen understanding, and ensure robust findings. Common data collection methods include:

1. Desk Review (Document Review)

Analysis of secondary data that does not require fieldwork. Sources may include:

- project documents
- monitoring reports
- administrative data
- statistical reports
- previous evaluations
- policy documents

2. Quantitative Methods

- **Surveys / Questionnaires**
  Structured instruments administered to a sample of beneficiaries or stakeholders to collect numerical data on perceptions, behaviours, or outcomes. Surveys may be conducted:

- digitally: KoBo Toolbox, Tangerine (MBSSE), SurveyCTO, RapidPro

- paper-based (although MDAs are encouraged to transition to electronic data collection)

- **Mobile Phone Surveys / SMS Surveys**
  Useful for rapid data collection, especially during emergencies or in hard-to-reach areas.

3. Qualitative Methods

- **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**
  Semi-structured interviews with individuals who have specialised knowledge of the intervention (e.g., managers, community leaders, service providers).

- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**
  Group discussions with participants who share similar characteristics or experiences, used to explore perceptions, experiences, and social norms.

- **Observation**
  Systematic observation of behaviours, service delivery processes, or environments.

- Overt observation: participants know they are being observed.

- Covert observation: used only in special cases and with ethical safeguards.

- **Case Studies**
  In-depth examination of specific communities, districts, or programme components to explore how and why results occurred

4. Digital and Remote Data Collection Methods

- **Online Surveys**

Questionnaires distributed via web-based platforms to reach dispersed populations.

- **Digital Communities / Online Platforms**

Engagement through moderated online groups or forums to gather insights on programme issues — used selectively due to access barriers.

Methods of data analysis

The method of data analysis depends on the nature of data collected and the evaluation questions. Evaluation typically involves both **qualitative** and **quantitative** data, and the credibility of findings is strengthened through triangulation and systematic analysis.

1. Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data—such as interview transcripts, focus group discussions, observations, and documents—is analysed through systematic categorisation, coding, and interpretation. Common approaches include:

- **Thematic Analysis:** Identifying patterns and themes emerging from the data.
- **Content Analysis:** Examining frequency, meaning, and context of key concepts.
- **Framework Analysis:** Coding data against predefined categories (e.g., OECD-DAC criteria).
- **Narrative or Case-based Analysis:** Understanding processes or change pathways.

Software commonly used includes **NVivo**, **Atlas.ti**, and **MAXQDA**.

2. Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data—such as surveys, administrative datasets, and monitoring indicators—is analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Common techniques include:

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Means, proportions, frequencies, cross-tabulations.
- **Inferential Analysis:** Correlation, regression, significance testing.
- **Disaggregation:** Gender, disability status, geographic area, socioeconomic groups.

Software commonly used includes **Excel**, **SPSS**, **Stata**, **R**, and **EViews**.

3. Mixed-Methods Integration

Mixed-methods analysis combines qualitative and quantitative evidence to develop a coherent understanding of results. Approaches may include:

- **Triangulation:** Verifying findings through multiple sources and methods.
- **Convergence Analysis:** Checking whether quantitative and qualitative findings align.
- **Sequential Analysis:** Using one method to explain or deepen results from another.

4. Additional Analytical Approaches in Evaluation

Depending on the evaluation purpose and design, additional approaches may be applied:

- **Contribution Analysis:** Assessing the plausibility that an intervention contributed to observed outcomes, by testing the Theory of Change and considering alternative explanations.
- **Cost-Effectiveness Analysis:** Comparing costs with outcomes achieved (without monetising benefits).
- **Cost-Benefit Analysis:** Comparing monetised benefits and costs to assess value for money.
- **Econometric Modelling:** Using advanced statistical modelling (e.g., regression analysis) to assess relationships or estimate programme effects when appropriate data are available.
- **Case Study Analysis:** In-depth analysis of specific sites, communities, or intervention components.

5. Consideration of Methodological Limitations

Evaluators must identify limitations that may affect findings, such as:

- data quality issues,
- bias or non-response,
- limited sample size,
- absent baseline data,
- contextual changes.

These limitations should be transparently reported and considered in interpreting findings.

3. Evaluation Principles, Standards and Ethics[16]

NaMEA's guiding principles reflect the core values that underpin all evaluation work in Sierra Leone. These principles are mutually reinforcing and form an overarching framework that governs the design, conduct and use of evaluations. They are aligned with the **OECD-DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance (1991)**, the **African Evaluation Guidelines**, and the **UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2020)**.

All MDAs and Local Councils must ensure that evaluations adhere to the following guiding principles:

3.1 Evaluation Principles

- Independence: Evaluations must be free from undue influence, conflict of interest, or external pressure. Findings, conclusions and recommendations should be impartial and based solely on evidence.
- Objectivity: Evaluations should be based on credible, verifiable evidence. Interpretations and judgments must be clearly distinguished from factual reporting.
- Transparency: Evaluation processes, methods, data sources, findings, conclusions and recommendations should be documented and communicated clearly and openly to stakeholders.
- Validity: Evaluation findings must logically follow from the evidence collected. The methods used should be appropriate for answering the evaluation questions and aligned with the Terms of Reference.
- Reliability: Evaluation processes should be systematic and replicable. If repeated in similar conditions, the evaluation should produce comparable results.
- Partnership: Evaluations should promote national ownership and collaboration among MDAs, LCs, development partners, and evaluators. Stakeholders should be meaningfully engaged throughout the process.
- Feasibility: Evaluations should only be undertaken when they are technically feasible, cost-effective, and likely to produce useful findings. Evaluability Assessments may be used to determine feasibility.
- Do No Harm: Evaluations must be designed and implemented to avoid harm to individuals or communities, with particular attention to safeguarding, privacy, dignity and protection risks.
- Cost-effectiveness: Evaluations should be planned and implemented efficiently to maximise value for money while maintaining quality.
- Usability: Evaluations must generate practical, actionable recommendations that support decision-making, policy improvement, and learning.

3.2 Ethical Standards

Evaluations conducted under the authority of NaMEA must adhere to the highest ethical standards, consistent with the **UNEG Ethical Guidelines (2020)**.

- Respect for people and cultures: Evaluators should respect local customs, values and cultural norms. Engagement should be sensitive to gender, ethnicity, disability, language, and other forms of identity.
- Inclusiveness and gender equality: Evaluations should apply a gender-responsive and inclusive lens throughout design, data collection, analysis and reporting.
- Informed consent and voluntary participation: Participants must be informed about the purpose of the evaluation, how their data will be used, and that participation is voluntary.
- Anonymity and confidentiality: Personal information must be protected. Data should be stored securely, and identities must not be disclosed without consent.
- Integrity and responsibility: Evaluators are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of their findings, avoiding misrepresentation, and acting with honesty and professionalism.
- Accuracy and completeness: Evaluators should report significant findings, including unexpected results or limitations, even if they fall outside the original scope.
- Prevention of malpractice: Evaluators must not engage in fraudulent practices, falsify findings, or provide misleading conclusions that could negatively influence policy or decision-making.

3.3 Child-Sensitive Evaluation and the Involvement of Children

Children and adolescents are key stakeholders in many government programmes and services. In line with the **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989)**, the **African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC, 1990)** and national child protection commitments, evaluations should, where appropriate and feasible, include the perspectives of children and young people. Child-sensitive evaluation ensures that children's experiences, views, and priorities inform programme improvement and policy decisions.

Principles for Involving Children in Evaluation

Respect for Children's Rights

Evaluations must uphold children's rights to participation (CRC Article 12), protection, privacy, and non-discrimination. Children should be engaged only when it is in their best interest and when participation adds value to the evaluation.

Meaningful and Voluntary Participation

Children should participate voluntarily, with clear information provided in age-appropriate language about the purpose of the evaluation, what participation involves, and their right to decline or withdraw at any time.

Safety and Do No Harm

Evaluators must ensure that participation does not expose children to harm, stress, stigma, or retaliation. Safeguarding protocols—including safe locations, trained facilitators, referral pathways, and risk mitigation measures—must be in place.

Inclusiveness

Children's participation should reflect gender balance and include children with disabilities, children in rural and remote areas, children affected by emergencies, and other vulnerable groups. Reasonable accommodations must be provided.

Child-Friendly Methods

Engagement methods should be adapted to children's age, development, and comfort level. Examples include:

- drawings and visual tools
- storytelling
- participatory ranking
- photo-voice
- games and scenario-based discussions
- simple surveys.

These methods help children express experiences in non-threatening ways.

Qualified Personnel

Sessions involving children must be led by evaluators or facilitators trained in:

- child safeguarding
- child-friendly communication
- trauma-informed approaches
- ethics in working with children

Where appropriate, child protection officers or social workers should be present.

Informed Consent and Assent

Both **parent/guardian consent** and **child assent** are required. Evaluators must clearly explain:

- the purpose of the evaluation
- how the information will be used
- confidentiality protections
- the voluntary nature of participation

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Data collected from children must remain confidential. Personal information must be anonymized, securely stored, and never used in ways that identify the child or place them at risk.

Feedback to Children

Children who participate have the right to know how their contributions influenced the evaluation. Evaluators should provide age-appropriate feedback at the end of the process.

Appropriateness of Context

Evaluators must assess whether involving children is feasible and ethical based on:

- sensitivity of topics
- cultural norms
- potential risks

- availability of safeguards
- timing and resources

Participation should only occur where conditions meet minimum standards of safety and ethical conduct.

When to Involve Children

Children may be involved when:

- the programme directly affects them (education, health, social protection, WASH, child protection)
- their perspectives are essential to answer the evaluation questions
- safe, ethical, child-friendly engagement can be guaranteed

Children should **not** be involved when:

- risks cannot be adequately mitigated
- the topic is likely to cause distress
- confidentiality cannot be assured
- evaluators lack the capacity to facilitate child-safe engagement.

4. Developing an evaluation plan

4.1 Purpose

The purpose of the National Evaluation Plan (NEP) is to prioritise evaluations to be conducted through NaMEA within a given period. MDAs and LCs will refer to these guidelines to develop and implement their own individual evaluation plans while NaMEA will provide technical support based on request.

These plans are essential to decision making processes, enabling:

- **Planning:** by providing structure and direction for conducting evaluations;
- **Prioritisation:** by selecting the most strategically important interventions for evaluations;
- **Resourcing:** by identifying necessary funding (source and quantity), personnel and timelines to ensure feasibility.

It is at this stage that the decision to commission an evaluation is made. Therefore, the process through which evaluations are prioritized and initiated must be transparent, evidence-informed, and stakeholder-owned.

4.2 Evaluation Plan Development Process

The following steps will guide the preparation of an evaluation plan:

i. **Select an intervention to be evaluated**: This will be done according to the set criteria as specified in **Annex 3**: Criteria for Selecting an Intervention for Inclusion into an Evaluation Plan

ii. **Specify the evaluation title and type**. '*Title*' refers to the intervention to be evaluated, for instance, 'Evaluation of the impact of school feeding programme in Sierra Leone', while '*type*' refers to the nature of evaluation, for instance, 'mid-term evaluation (MTR of the FQSE)', 'end-term evaluation or impact evaluation' etc.;

iii. **Identify the intended outcome of the intervention selected for evaluation**;

iv. **Describe the utility and users of the evaluation findings and recommendations**;

v. **Specify the commissioning institution and its key partners**;

vi. **Set the evaluation start and end dates**; and

vii. **Estimate the evaluation budget**. This should realistically estimate sources of funding, and factors such as timing, logistical costs, etc.

Preparation of an evaluation plan will adhere to the format prescribed in **Annex 4**: Evaluation Plan Format: Economic Sector: Agriculture Example . Once a ministry, department, or agency has developed its evaluation plan, it will be presented to stakeholders for validation and, thereafter, finally submitted to the relevant Head of MDA/LC and other authorities for approval . The document will subsequently be forwarded to NaMEA for incorporation into the National Evaluation Plan.

4.3 Evaluation Plan Review

The evaluation plan is not a static document but dynamic enough that may require adjustment as circumstances change. Adjustments to the evaluation plan should be considered as part of the annual review exercise. Changes that can be made include but are not limited to:

- Extending the completion date for evaluations subject to clear justifications and approvals;
- Changing the scope and purpose of evaluations due to changes in the context (for example, crisis settings);
- Deletion or removal of an intervention(s) scheduled for evaluation (in exceptional circumstances).

Any adjustments to the evaluation plan must be clearly supported with a detailed rationale and should be communicated to the evaluation commissioning body and/or the department responsible for M&E.

4.4 Compliance with the Evaluation Plan

NaMEA will coordinate the monitoring of the implementation of the NEP, with the relevant MDAs and LCs. NaMEA will also coordinate monitoring and evaluation of implementation of management responses to recommendations/evidence for decision-making emanating from completed evaluations.

Table 3 below outlines the elements of an evaluation plan.

Table 3: Elements of an Evaluation plan

Section	Description
Program Background	Describes the program that is being evaluated.
Goals and Objectives	Describes the purpose of the evaluation. It specifies the goals, objectives, and intended audience/ stakeholders.
Scope	Describes what will be undertaken as part of the evaluation, and what is considered to be out-of-scope
Evaluation Questions, outcomes, and Indicators	Evaluation questions, outcomes, and indicators are often included in an evaluation framework.
Methods	Describes how evaluation data will be collected.
Budgets	Describes what financial resources are available for the evaluation.
Reporting and validation	Describes the strategy for developing and sharing results and developing recommendations, and how to bring stakeholders together for validation of the report
Roles and Responsibilities	Describes who will be involved in the evaluation and how
Timeline	Outlines a schedule for developing the evaluation plan, data collection, data analysis, and reporting of results

5. Evaluation Process

Evaluations in the public sector will be conducted according to the three outlined phases and steps below.

Figure 1: Evaluation Processes

Phase 1: Pre-Evaluation	Phase 2: Evaluation Implementation	Phase 3: Post-Evaluation
1. Assess Evaluability 2. Define Purpose 3. Choose Type & Questions 4. Identify Stakeholders 5. Plan Budget & Timeline 6. Draft ToR 7. Form Working Group 8. Recruit Evaluators)	9. Start with Inception phase 10. Collect & Analyze Data 11. Develop, Validate & Finalize Report	12. Respond to Findings 13. Apply the Results 14. Share the Report

The following key elements must be considered by MDAs/LCs throughout the three phases of the evaluation process. This will ensure that the process is conducted according to plan and that it is utilisation focused.

Table 4: Elements and issues to be considered in the evaluation process

Element	Issues
What	The scope, objectives, and key questions to be asked during the evaluation.
Why	Relates to the context and rationale for the evaluation and identifies the intended users of the evaluative evidence
Who	Involves the roles and responsibilities of the evaluator and the management of the evaluator.
How	The data collection method and the type of analysis employed to answer the key evaluation questions (what), the plan for communicating the evaluation evidence, and the ultimate utilisation of the evaluative evidence.
When	The timing of evaluation in the programme cycle. key milestones and deliverables according to the timeframe in the evaluation plan.
Resources	Involves both human and financial resources and necessary logistical arrangements for the evaluation process.

5.1 Phase 1: Pre-Evaluation

Step 1: Evaluability assessment

This phase entails conducting an evaluability assessment of an intervention identified for evaluation based on the existing approved evaluation plan. An evaluability assessment is done by the commissioning institution to ascertain if a planned evaluation is feasible and reasonable. The evaluability assessment focuses on project design, information availability, and institutional context in terms of practicality and utility (see **Annex 5**: Evaluability Assessment Checklist).

This phase establishes what is to be evaluated, what information is needed, what it will be used for and by whom. The evaluability assessment will determine whether a programme is ready for evaluation and, if so, how the evaluation should be designed to ensure maximum efficacy and to allow evaluators to accurately measure the programme's effect. At the end, an evaluability assessment report that recommends whether the intervention is evaluable or not is prepared. (see Annex 6: Outline of Evaluability Assessment Report). If the assessment clears the intervention for evaluation, the head of the commissioning institution appoints an evaluation manager to lead the next steps of the evaluation process.

Step II: Define the Purpose of the Evaluation

Before designing an evaluation, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the programme theory or logic – how the programme works or will work, and what it is trying to achieve and why. This is based on robust problem identification which informs the design (for example, the theory of change and logic model). The process of defining the purpose of an evaluation is participatory and iterative to ensure maximum buy-in and ownership by various stakeholders. The purpose may include:

- Understanding the extent to which the design and/or the implementation process of a development intervention contributes to its success;
- Identifying the challenges or success factors; Identifying the conditions in which the intervention can successfully be replicated;
- Assessing whether the resources have been spent efficiently and/or effectively; and
- Assessing the intervention's impacts – whether the intended change at each level of the logic model was realised.

Step III: Determine the type of evaluation, the questions, and who will undertake the evaluation

The evaluation manager should determine the purpose and type of evaluation (see Chapter 2.3. Types of Evaluation), the key evaluation questions, and who will undertake the evaluation. More than one type of evaluation can be considered. For example, design evaluation can be combined with process/implementation evaluation or outcome evaluation can be combined with process/implementation evaluation. To provide structure to the evaluation, the evaluation criteria discussed in Chapter 2 (Evaluation questions, criteria and matrix) can be adopted. Key evaluation questions (KEQs) will vary from one intervention to another, and the choice and formulation of questions is dependent on the needs of stakeholders and the intended use of the evaluation. Clear KEQs are essential to enable relevant evaluation findings for both decision- and policymakers.

Step IV: Define the stakeholders, their roles, and the mode of engagement

Key stakeholders (See Chapter 5 Roles and responsibilities across the evaluative process) to be involved in the evaluation should be identified and their roles and modalities of engagement defined (consultation/discussion of documents, country workshop, accompanying group, comments on the draft report, resource mobilization responsibilities, etc.). Stakeholders are generally categorised into three groups: – those who will be implementing the programme (programme managers), those who are served and affected by the programme (beneficiaries), and those who are interested in the programme, financing the evaluation and will use the evidence derived from the evaluation for various purposes (government, development partners). The success of the evaluation is largely determined by these stakeholders being kept fully abreast, involved, and supportive of the process and the emerging evaluation evidence.

Step V: Prepare an evaluation schedule and budget

Evaluation requires adequate financial and logistical resources. It is, therefore, essential that the budgeting process is comprehensive and covers all costs related to the evaluation. Items to be considered during preparation of the evaluation budget include:

- Professional fees for all evaluators or thematic experts conducting the evaluation (including relevant taxes);
- Additional and non-professional costs such as daily subsistence allowance, transport expenses, etc;
- Translation costs for interviews, field visits, validation, and dissemination workshops;
- Any costs related to focus group meetings or data collection meetings (venue hire, catering, participants' transport costs, etc.);
- Communications costs, including editing, publication, and dissemination costs; and
- Stakeholder, validation, or ETWG/RG workshop costs.

All relevant programme staff should be involved in the budgeting process or consulted about the budget and should be encouraged to provide feedback. Once the budget has been decided, it is necessary to prepare an evaluation schedule to assist the ETWG and evaluation teams to manage the evaluation.

Step VI: Prepare Terms of Reference (ToR)

The Terms of Reference (ToR) document defines all aspects of how the evaluation consultant, or the evaluation team will conduct the evaluation. The ToR forms the basis of a contractual agreement and serves as the main reference document during the evaluation. It should be drafted by the commissioning institution with the involvement of various stakeholders and reviewed in consultation with ETWG to ensure high quality standards. Where the ETWG has not yet been officially constituted, it should be initiated at this stage, or technical experts provisionally engaged to support the ToR development.

Developing an accurate and well-specified ToR is a critical step in managing a high-quality evaluation. In cases where the ToR is developed for a non-competitive process (for example, internal), it is still advisable to provide an opportunity for discussion to clarify the expectations of all involved parties. In cases where the evaluation is to be conducted by an external evaluator, the ToR should be annexed to the contract as an integral part of the legal agreement between the commissioning institution and the evaluator. It should further clarify and note adhesion to the provisions and guidelines of the commissioning institution. The ToR should detail the extent of services, the number and quality of deliverables, and the timeline for the evaluation (Annex 7: Format for TOR provides a standard format).

Step VII: Constitute an Evaluation Technical Working Group (ETWG)

The ETWG should ideally be initiated during or before the drafting of the ToR to provide early-stage technical input on evaluation scope, criteria, and methods.

Once the budget and the ToR have been approved, the Head of MDA or the commissioning institution will formally appoint an ETWG/Reference group (RF)- see format in **Annex 8:** Format for ETWG Appointment Letter). The ETWG/RF will comprise technical experts in the field relevant to the evaluation being conducted. The group provides feedback on the evaluation process from a technical and methodological perspective. Other roles and responsibilities for the ETWG are presented in Chapter 5: Roles and responsibilities across the evaluative process.

Step VIII: Identifying an evaluator

Once the ETWG has been commissioned, the commissioning institution should initiate the recruitment process for the evaluator. The ToR forms the basis for identification/ recruitment of the evaluator and describes the requisite evaluative, methodological, analytical, and thematic knowledge. Gender balance should be considered in the selection of an evaluator. Recruitment should be done in compliance with government procurement rules and regulations.

In the event of the evaluation being conducted internally, the Head of the MDA/LC or commissioning institution will constitute an evaluation team comprising the staff from the institution.

Where an internal evaluation team is constituted, safeguards to minimise bias (such as external peer review or oversight by NaMEA) should be applied.

5.2 Phase 2: Evaluation implementation

The implementation stage includes documents gathering and review, entrance/inception meetings with relevant stakeholder, data collection, data analysis, preparation and presentation of inception and final report and drafting of the management response. This entails management of the evaluation and to ensure that the process is effectively structured to deliver the evaluation assignment.

Step IX: Briefing the evaluator and presentation of inception report

To initiate the evaluation, the commissioning institution holds a briefing session with the evaluator. The session should cover the following:

i. Information to be provided to the evaluators.

ii. Documents relating to the development intervention.

iii. The ToR further discussed for clarify and understanding by both parties (evaluator and evaluation commissioning MDA;

iv. Ethical principles to be followed by the evaluators; and

v. Evaluation norms and standards in the public sector.

The evaluator then prepares an inception report which is presented to the ETWG within specified days of signing the contract. The report should be discussed and approved by the ETWG in preparation for the commencement of the evaluation (Annex 9: Outline of an Inception Report provides a standard outline).

The inception report should detail the evaluators' understanding of what is being evaluated and why. It should also include information on proposed sources of data and data collection procedures, overall evaluation design and methodology including sampling techniques, techniques, and tools to be used (for example, the questionnaire, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, etc.), and a detailed work plan for the evaluation.

Step X: Data collection and analysis

Once the inception report has been approved, the evaluator can commence collection of the data. The data collection process is followed by rigorous analysis of the data. Thereafter the evaluator debriefs the commissioning institution and the reference group with the preliminary findings. Where possible, debriefings may include key stakeholders. This provides an opportunity to discuss preliminary findings and address any factual errors or misunderstandings prior to the compilation of the evaluation report.

All data collection must adhere to ethical standards, including safeguarding, informed consent, confidentiality, and (where required) ethical clearance.

Step XI: Review of the draft report and receiving the final report

Upon receipt of submission of the draft evaluation report, the evaluation manager shares it with the reference group for comments which should be submitted within a stipulated timeframe. The evaluator (s) is/are given time to address the suggested comments and then the draft final report is submitted.

The draft final report is validated in a stakeholder validation workshop. Comments from the validation workshop are incorporated into the final report by the evaluator within a given number of days after which it is presented to the commissioning institution for approval, publishing, and dissemination. The reports are subjected to quality assessment as outlined in Chapter 5 Roles and responsibilities across the evaluative process (Annex 10: Structure of an Evaluation Report provides a standard structure).

5.3 Phase 3: Post-Evaluation

The evaluation is designed, conducted, and reported upon to meet the needs of the intended users. Findings, conclusions, recommendations, and lessons should be clear, relevant, targeted, and actionable to enable the evaluation to meet its intended learning and accountability objectives. The evaluation is delivered on time to ensure optimal use of the results.

Step XII: Preparing the evaluation management response

When the final report is received by the implementing agency, a management response should be prepared. The management response should include the following:

- An overall statement regarding the evaluation itself – especially its accuracy and usefulness.
- A statement by management on the key recommendations; and
- A response for each of the recommendations made, including an indication of the timeframe for the implementation of the recommendations. The units responsible should be appointed to ensure implementation accountability.

The commissioning institution will be required to monitor the implementation of evaluation recommendations and report on the progress (Annex 11: Management Response Template provides a reference template). If certain recommendations are rejected, the management response should specify the reasons for doing so.

Implementation of the management response should be tracked through an action plan, with periodic reporting to NaMEA and relevant oversight authorities.

Step XIII: Use of evaluation findings

Evaluation findings will be utilised for evidence-based decision-making with a view to improve service delivery and to facilitate the realisation of the national development agenda. Implementing agencies are required to use evaluation findings to inform corrective measures during implementation, to inform planning, and to enable sound budgeting and design of future programmes and projects, replicate, upscale in size and geographic coverage.

Step XIV: Publish the final evaluation report

Once an evaluation is complete, the commissioning institution provides feedback to the stakeholders involved in the intervention. Systematic dissemination, storage, and management of the evaluation reports is important to allow for ease of access for all stakeholders (including MDAs and Local Councils), to maximise the learning benefits of the evaluation, increasing accountability, and to contribute to the existing knowledge on similar interventions. The sharing and dissemination of the evaluation findings should be done by means of a structured mechanism and this forms an integral part of the system of evidence dissemination and utilisation.

MDAs/LCs will require a clear dissemination strategy which aligns with the constitutional publishing and publicising requirements. The dissemination strategy may involve:

- Presenting the results at public meetings.
- Presenting the results on websites.
- Using the media to publicize the outcomes of the intervention; or
- Publishing reports and papers.

6. Roles and responsibilities across the evaluative process

Different actors play specific roles that ensure the evaluation lifecycle from planning, implementation, and post-evaluation is technically sound and fit for purpose. The planning and implementation phases are primarily led by the commissioning institutions (MDA, LC). During the implementation phase, an appointed internal or external evaluator conducts data collection, analysis and reporting with the oversight of an Evaluation Technical Working Group and Evaluation Manager. During the post-evaluation phase, MDAs or LCs are responsible for developing a management response and applying the findings. NaMEA provides technical support and monitors uptake and learning across institutions while parliament and oversight bodies encourage integration of evaluation findings in policy, planning and budgeting.

In light of this, NaMEA is the custodian of the national evaluation function as technical lead and is responsible for setting standards, providing guidance and coordination of the implementation of the NEP across MDAs and LCs. NaMEA also has an oversight role and leads in the development and revision of the National Evaluation Guidelines and other standards. While NaMEA is the custodian of the evaluation functions, the implementation responsibility as stated above lies with MDAs and LCs who are expected to integrate evaluations into their programming and report back to NaMEA.

In light of this, the various roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined. Table 5 presents a list of the main evaluation actors and their respective roles and responsibilities. The list is only for guidance as the individual nature of each evaluation will determine its unique actors.

Table 5: Summary of Evaluation Actors, roles, and responsibilities

Actors/ stakeholders	Roles and responsibilities
Head of the MDA or Commissioning institution	• Recommends approval for evaluation plan. • Mobilises resources. • Recommends commissioning of evaluations and evaluation firms and is part of the signatories of all contracts relating to the evaluation. • Participates in the selection of an evaluation manager. • Participates in the ETWG/ Reference Group (RF). • Where internal evaluations are conducted, appropriate safeguards (e.g., NaMEA oversight or external peer review) should be applied to ensure credibility and impartiality.Contributes to the review and approval of evaluation reports as part of the ETWG/RF.
Evaluation manager	• Leads the development of the ToR of the evaluation. • Manages the selection and recruitment of both internal and external evaluators. • Manages the contractual arrangements, budget, and the personnel involved in the evaluation. • Assists evaluation teams in creating and utilising tools and monitoring systems to track contract deliverables. • Provides executive and coordination support to the reference group. • Provides the evaluators with administrative support and the requisite data. • Connects the evaluation team with senior management and key evaluation stakeholders and ensures a fully inclusive and transparent approach to the evaluation; and • Is accountable for the quality and approval of final terms of reference, final evaluation reports, and management responses.

External evaluators	• Fulfil the contractual arrangements in line with the set evaluation norms and standards and ethical guidelines by:
	  • Developing an inception report.
	  • Drafting evaluation reports.
	  • Briefing the management and stakeholders on the progress and key findings and recommendations as needed; and
	  • Finalising the evaluation report and considering the comments and questions that arise from the validation process.
	  • Overall responsibility for the quality of all deliverables

Development partners	• Participate in preparation of the evaluation plan for programmes and projects that are jointly funded. • Take part in the review of key evaluation deliverables, including terms of reference, the inception report, and successive versions of the draft evaluation report; and • Provide financial and technical support.

Actors/ stakeholders	Roles and responsibilities
Evaluation Technical Working Group (ETWG) or Reference Group (RF)	• Defines or confirms the profile, competencies and roles and responsibilities of evaluators and assesses the candidates submitted for the evaluation; • Reviews the draft ToR. • Reviews and the inception report. • Assists in making available any information that is required by evaluators. • Supervises the performance of the evaluation team. • Reviews the draft evaluation report and ensure that the final draft meets quality standards; and • Oversees the evaluation process on behalf of commissioning institution and ensures that ethical clearance has been obtained from the appropriate national ethics authority and that ethical requirements are complied with throughout the evaluation.
End Users / Beneficiaries	• Provide information on implementation and impact of programme/project being evaluated by means of public participation forums; • Participate in the Validation of evaluation reports; and • Receive feedback on evaluation exercise through briefs and reports.
Office of the President in collaboration with MoPED and MoF	• Endorses the National Evaluation Plan (NEP); • Mobilises resource for the NEP. • Supports review of norms, standards, guidelines, and tools to support the quality enhancement of evaluations; • Approves NEP implementation reports.
NaMEA Board	• Endorses the National Evaluation Plan (NEP); • Mobilises resource for the NEP. • Endorses norms, standards, guidelines, and tools to support the quality enhancement of evaluations; • Endorses NEP implementation reports; and • Endorses evaluation reports • Endorsement follows the sequence defined in national administrative procedures to avoid duplication and ensure clarity of authority
National Monitoring and Evaluation Agency (NaMEA)	• Prepares norms, standards, guidelines, and tools to support the quality enhancement of evaluations. • Coordinates development and implementation of NEP. • Tracks implementation and prepare reports of the NEP. • Establishes and maintains a database of independent assessors. • Provides a central repository of MDAs/LCs evaluation reports. • Provides technical support to MDAs /LCs on public sector evaluations; • Develops NEP resource mobilisation strategy; and • Initiates and coordinates the review of the Evaluation Guidelines. • Submits evaluation reports to the NaMEA Board and Office of the President for endorsement.
Parliament	• Approves and commissions evaluations of public interest interventions and receives reports. • Works with parliamentary caucus on evidence-informed decision-making; and • Ensures utilisation of evaluation findings/recommendations in a timely manner – policy formulation, budgeting, legitimizing actions etc. • Ensures national or Local Council budget allocation for evaluation.
Ministry of Local Government	• Links Local governments with national government on evaluation matters; and disseminates, advocates, and sensitises Local Councils on the Evaluation Guidelines. • Approve Local Council Evaluation Plans (LCEP) in line with NEP. • Recommends evaluations of public interest to be undertaken within the Local Council • Adopts the Evaluation Guidelines. • Commission evaluations at sub-national level. • Approves budget for evaluation that is initiated by local councils. • Submits evaluation reports to NaMEA; and • Ensures the recommendations in the evaluation reports are implemented
Ministry of Planning & Economic Development (MoPED)	• Approves National Development Policy/Plans and Implementation. • Approves Public Investment Management Processes. • Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation of Government programs and policies. • Supports evaluations and uses evaluation reports for VNRs and SDG reporting
Ministry of Finance	• Liaise with all Ministries/Departments /Agencies for budget formulation, disbursements and execution. • Collaborate with MoPED and NaMEA for M&E in Sierra Leone

7. Evaluation quality

7.1 Evaluation Quality Assurance

Quality assurance spans the entire evaluation process right from its design to the finalisation of the evaluation report. Evaluation quality is determined by how well the evaluation adheres to key principles of Credibility, Independence and Impartiality, Usefulness and relevance, Clarity and Coherence or reporting and Contribution to Learning and accountability.[17]

Accordingly, consistent application of high-quality elements of evaluation should be adhered to throughout all stages of the evaluation. This includes the development of the ToR for the evaluation, the selection of the evaluator, and the ETWG. (See Annex 12: Evaluation Quality Assurance Checklist).

7.2 Evaluation Quality Assessment

All public sector evaluations must comply with professional standards and meet the evidence needs of their intended users. To ensure quality and credibility, completed evaluation reports may undergo an independent quality assessment.

The commissioning institution should maintain a database of qualified assessors who can objectively review evaluation reports. The assessor must be **independent from the evaluation team and the commissioning unit** to avoid conflicts of interest. External quality assessment is encouraged for major or strategic evaluations but may not be required for all evaluations. If an assessor is engaged, they should possess relevant methodological and thematic expertise to ensure a credible review.

7.3 Quality assessment process

Once an evaluation is completed and submitted by the evaluator, the commissioning institution updates its evaluation repository and identifies evaluations to undergo quality assessment. The assessment process should not exceed four weeks. The process includes three main steps:

Step 1: Initiation

- The commissioning institution selects an independent assessor from the approved database.
- A contract is issued to the assessor (individual or firm), funded from the evaluation budget.
- The assessor receives the final evaluation report, Terms of Reference, inception report, data collection tools, and any supporting documentation.

Step 2: Quality Review

The assessor conducts an **objective desk-based review**. The assessment includes:

- Reviewing all evaluation documentation (ToR, inception report, datasets, annexes, etc.).
- Completing the quality assessment template and providing detailed comments.
- Preparing a summary of key strengths, weaknesses, and gaps.
- Referencing all documents used.

Note: Quality assessors **do not collect primary data** (e.g., interviews with beneficiaries), as this falls outside the scope of quality assurance and risks compromising independence and ethics.

Step 3: Finalisation and Validation

- The assessor submits the quality assessment report to the commissioning institution and NaMEA.
- The commissioning institution reviews the assessment to confirm completeness, methodological integrity, and adherence to the quality assessment template.
- Once validated, the assessment report is uploaded to the national evaluation repository.
- For internal evaluations, the findings are used to identify institutional capacity gaps and inform future training and support.

7.3.1 Quality assessment and weighting

These guidelines prescribe a standard rating scale for evaluation quality assessment. Scoring is based on criteria aligned with international norms (credibility, methodology, evidence quality, usefulness, and clarity). Criteria related to utilisation—such as conclusions and recommendations—carry greater weight.

Each evaluation receives an overall score represented as a percentage.

7.3.2 Interpretation of assessment score results

Assessment criteria cover five major dimensions:

1. **Understanding the Evaluation's Purpose and Scope**
   - Clarity of purpose
   - Definition of scope
   - Appropriate stakeholder identification

2. **Structure and Content of the Report**
   - Executive Summary
   - Background and context
   - Evaluation questions and methodology
   - Findings
   - Conclusions
   - Recommendations
   - Lessons learned

3. **Quality of Evidence and Analysis**
   - Soundness of data collection methods
   - Rigour of data analysis
   - Strength of evidence base
   - Objectivity and minimisation of bias

4. **Clarity and Communication**
   - Clear and concise presentation
   - Appropriate use of visualisations
   - Accessibility to intended users

5. **Overall Rating:**

Using the above dimensions, the assessor assigns an overall quality score. Scoring should follow the standard rubric in Annex 12.

Table 6: Rating of the Evaluation

Score Range	Rating
90–100%	Excellent
70–89%	Good
50–69%	Adequate (acceptable for use)
0-49%	Below acceptable standard (not suitable for informing policy decisions)

8. Glossary

Accountability	The obligation of public institutions to demonstrate, explain, and justify their actions, decisions, and performance results in relation to agreed rules, standards, and commitments. Accountability includes compliance, transparency, and answerability to stakeholders.
Audit	A systematic examination of financial accounts, compliance with regulations, and due process.
Activities	Actions taken or work performed through which inputs are utilized to produce outputs.
Assessor	An independent and qualified expert—either methodological or subject-matter—appointed to conduct an objective quality assessment of a completed evaluation report. The assessor must be independent from the evaluation team and commissioning body.
Commissioning institution	Ministry, department or agency or Local Council whose responsibility is to plan, initiate, oversee, and coordinate an evaluation.
Data	Raw facts (quantitative or qualitative) that are collected and form the basis of what is known.
Data sources	Processes that generate indicator values, where one gets data They include reports, research, programme level monitoring data, surveillance, surveys, financial information of donors, or clients' satisfaction surveys.
Evaluability	The extent to which an intervention is ready and suitable to be evaluated. It assesses whether the intervention has clearly defined objectives, a logical design or theory of change, available and reliable data, stakeholder clarity, and an institutional context that allows a credible, useful, and feasible evaluation to be conducted.
Evaluation	A systematic and objective assessment of a project, programme, or policy—its design, implementation, and results—to determine its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, impact, and sustainability, as well as the extent to which intended and unintended objectives have been achieved.

Evaluation Manager	An officer of the MDA/LC or commissioning institution assigned the primary responsibility to oversee and coordinate an evaluation.
Evaluation plan	A written document that outlines what evaluations to be undertaken by an organization within a given period with details on type, purpose, key partners, source of funds, estimated costs and responsible agency clearly described.
Evaluation Technical Working Group (ETWG) or Reference Group (RF)	A team formed from internal and external evaluation stakeholders to provide feedback on the evaluation process from a technical and methodological perspective.
Interventions	The different types of development and humanitarian efforts that may be evaluated using these guidelines, such as a project, programme, policy, strategy, thematic area, technical or humanitarian assistance, policy advice, an institution, financing mechanism, instrument, or other activity
Inspection	A general examination of an organisational unit, issue, or practice to ascertain the extent to which it adheres to normative standards and good practices and to make recommendations for improvement or corrective action.
Impacts	The ultimate long-term changes arising from the implementation of interventions, i.e. the difference (positive and/or negative), resulting from the implementation of an intervention.
Indicator	A variable (sign or element) that measures one aspect of an intervention that is directly related to its objectives.
Inputs	The financial, human, material and information resources used to produce outputs.
Monitoring	The continuous tracking and reporting of implementation progress of a programme/project, its inputs and intended outputs, outcomes and impacts
Outcomes	The expected changes or immediate effects on the intended beneficiaries occurring because of the implementation of an activity.
Outputs	Tangible or Intangible products or services resulting from the implementation of an intervention.
Public Sector Institutions	This refers to any institution established under the National or Local Government
Quality assurance	Ex-post review of a completed evaluation report to determine whether it meets quality standards.
Research	Ex-post review of a completed evaluation report to determine whether it meets quality standards.
Review	A systematic process of inquiry used to generate new knowledge or deepen understanding of a topic, phenomenon, or problem. Research may be descriptive, exploratory, explanatory, or experimental, and uses structured methods to answer specific questions. Unlike evaluation, research does not necessarily assess the merit, worth, or value of an intervention.
Triangulation / mixed method	A review is an assessment of the performance or progress of an intervention, conducted periodically or on an ad hoc basis. Reviews are generally less comprehensive and less rigorous than evaluations and tend to focus on operational or implementation aspects. They may take place at different stages of an intervention but do not replace formal evaluations.
Triangulation / mixed method	The use of multiple data sources, methods, analytical approaches, or perspectives to strengthen the credibility and validity of evaluation findings. Mixed methods specifically refer to the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches, while triangulation involves cross-verifying information from different sources to reduce bias and increase robustness.

9. Annexes

Annex 1: Examples of key evaluation questions

The examples of evaluation questions are aligned with the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. It should be noted that the questions are illustrative and should be contextualised based on the local setting, purpose of the intervention and national priorities. Evaluators and stakeholders are encouraged to adapt questions to reflect the specific context of evaluation.

Table 7: Sample of Evaluation Questions

Evaluation question	Supporting Evaluation Criteria
• To what extent is the intervention appropriately designed to meet the needs and priorities of the population, including marginalized and vulnerable groups? • To what extent is the intervention aligned with national development priorities, sector policies, and relevant international commitments (including human rights treaties)? • To what extent has the intervention remained relevant as needs, priorities, or contextual conditions (including crises) evolved? • To what extent do Government-supported interventions enhance the use of disaggregated (e.g., by sex, age, location, disability, ethnicity) socio-economic and demographic data for evidence-based policymaking?	**Relevance**
• To what extent is the intervention coherent with other national policies, plans, and sector strategies? • To what extent does the intervention complement or duplicate the work of other MDAs, development partners, or actors? • To what extent has the MDA contributed to effective functioning of coordination mechanisms at national and local levels?	**Coherence**
• To what extent have the expected outputs and outcomes been achieved or are likely to be achieved? • What unintended positive or negative effects have emerged? • How effectively were stakeholders (including beneficiaries, women, youth, persons with disabilities, and local authorities) involved in implementation? • To what extent has the intervention promoted national ownership and participatory mechanisms? • In which areas (geographic, thematic, institutional) has the intervention achieved the most progress, and why? • In which areas has progress been limited, what constraints contributed, and how can these be addressed?	**Effectiveness**
• Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes? • Have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost-effective? In general, do the results achieved justify the costs? Could the same results be attained with fewer resources? • Have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner? • How effectively does project management monitor project performance and results? • Is a monitoring and evaluation system in place and how effective is it? • Have appropriate means of verification for tracking progress, performance and achievement of indicator values been defined? • Is relevant information and data systematically being collected and collated? Is data disaggregated by sex (and by other relevant characteristics, if relevant)? • Is information being regularly analysed to feed into management decisions?	**Efficiency**

Evaluation question	Supporting Evaluation Criteria
• Can observed changes (in attitudes, capacities, institutions, etc.) be causally linked to the project's interventions? • In how far is the project making a significant contribution to broader and longer-term development impact? Or how likely is it that it will eventually make one? Is the project strategy and project management steering towards impact? • What are the realistic long-term effects of the project on the poverty level and the decent work condition of the people?	**Impact**
• To what extent has the MDA been able to support its beneficiaries in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure ownership and the durability of effects across the development-humanitarian continuum • How effective and realistic is the exit strategy of the project? Is the project gradually being handed over to the national partners? Once external funding ends will national institutions and implementing partners be likely to continue the project or carry forward its results? • Are local councils and chiefdoms willing and committed to continue with the supported activities? How effectively has the activity built local ownership? • Are national partners able to continue with the project? How effectively has the project built the necessary capacity of people and institutions (of national partners and implementing partners)? • Has the activity successfully built or strengthened an enabling environment (laws, policies, people's attitudes, etc.)? • Are the project results, achievements, and benefits likely to be durable? Are results anchored in national institutions and can the partners maintain them financially at end of project? • Can the project approach or results be replicated or scaled up by national partners or other actors? Is this likely to happen? What would support their replication and scaling up? • To what extent does the intervention reflect on and take into account factors which, by experience, have a major influence on sustainability like e.g. economic, ecological, social and cultural aspects? • To what extent are the (counterpart) organisations (financially, personnel-wise and in terms of organisation) capable and prepared to maintain the positive effects of the development interventions without support in the long term?	**Sustainability**

Annex 2: Evaluation matrix template

The below gives a template for the evaluation matrix. Examples of a completed evaluation matrix can be found in existing published evaluation reports such as the Country Programme Evaluation Report of UNICEF Sierra Leone 2020-2024; Summative Evaluation of Global Partnership for Education's Country-level Support to Education (2018)

Key Evaluation Question (KEQ)	Criteria	Sub-Questions	Indicators / Judgement Criteria	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Data Analysis Methods
The overarching question aligned with DAC criteria (e.g., "To what extent is the intervention achieving its intended outcomes?")	DAC criterion: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability	Specific aspects that evaluators must explore to answer the KEQ	Clear qualitative/ quantitative signals used to judge performance (e.g., level of alignment, degree of participation, change observed)	Documents, administrative data, KIIs, FGDs, surveys, monitoring reports, financial reports	Document review, key informant interviews, surveys, focus groups, observation	Thematic analysis, content analysis, descriptive statistics, contribution analysis, triangulation

Annex 3: Criteria for Selecting an Intervention for Inclusion into an Evaluation Plan

The following criteria may guide the selection of interventions to be included in an evaluation plan. Interventions do not have to meet all criteria simultaneously, but should satisfy at least one or more of the following considerations:

i. Key priority projects in Medium Term National Development Plan

ii. Key priority projects in the Local Councils' Development Plan

iii. Medium, large, and mega as per Project Investment Plan Guidelines.

iv. Projects which are piloted with the intention of being scaled up or mainstreamed may be prioritized even if they fall below major financial thresholds mentioned above.

v. An area where an evaluation has been requested due to public interest or by a development partner

vi. When an evaluability assessment proves the project can be evaluated

vii. An intervention that has not been evaluated recently;

viii. At a critical stage where decisions are to be taken for which an evaluation (cost-benefit analysis) is needed;

ix. Policy, Programme or Project has inbuilt mechanisms for evaluations.

x. Are linked to the SDGs; and

xi. any other reason that may necessitate conducting an evaluation.

Annex 4: Evaluation Plan Format: Economic Sector: Agriculture Example

Policy/ Programme/ Project	Title (specifying Type)	SDG	Key Result Areas (objectives)	Key Performance indicators	Outcomes	Use of Evaluation Findings	Commissioning Institutions/ Partners	Expected Evaluation start and date	Budget	Source of Funding	Person responsible
Irrigation Development project	Impact Evaluation of Irrigation Development project.	SDG 2- End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.	100% food and nutrition security.	Proportion of food secure population.	Increased quantity of food produced from irrigated land Area.	Inform Future planning and Budgeting Processes, and reporting on the SDG and VNRs	MDA: MAFS	-	SLL XX million	EU/ Donor	Director of Agriculture

Annexe 5: Evaluability Assessment Checklist

PROJECT DESIGN			
Element / component	**Key Questions**	**Yes/ No**	**Comment(s) for justification**
Clarity	• Are the long-term impact and outcomes clearly defined and measurable? • Does the program have a coherent results or logical framework? • Are the proposed steps towards achieving these clearly defined?		
Relevance	• Is the project objective clearly relevant to the needs of the target group, as identified by any form of situation analysis, baseline study, or other evidence and argument? • Is the intended beneficiary group clearly identified?		
Plausibility	• Is it likely that the project objective could be achieved, given the timeline and context?		
Validity and reliability	• Are there valid indicators for each expected result level (output, outcome, and impact levels)? For example, will they capture what is expected to happen? • Are they reliable indicators? For instance, will observations by different observers find the same thing? • Are indicators Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART)?		
Testability	• Is it possible to identify which linkages in the causal chain will be most critical to the success of the project, and thus should be the focus of evaluation questions?		
Contextualization	• Have assumptions about the roles of other actors outside the project been made explicit? (both enablers and constrainers) • Are there plausible plans to monitor these in any practicable way?		
Do **baseline** measures exist? If baseline data exists in the form of survey data, is the raw data available, or just selected [summary] data? If baseline data is in the form of national or subnational statistics, how disaggregated is the data?	If baseline data is not yet available, are there specific plans for when baseline data would be collected and how feasible are these?		
Is **data being collected** for all the indicators? Is there significant missing data? Are the measures being used reliable? (For instance, is Measurement error likely to be a problem?)	Is the data collection frequent and timely enough to support evaluation?		
Is there a record of who was involved in what project activities and when?	Are the intended and actual beneficiaries identifiable?		

PROJECT DESIGN	
Is gender disaggregated data available? In the control group? In any midterm or process review?	In the baseline? For each of the indicators during project intervention?
Do existing M&E systems have the capacity to deliver? Are responsibilities, sources and Periodicities defined and appropriate? Is the budget adequate?	Where data is not yet available, do existing staff and systems have the capacity to do so in the future?
INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT	
Accessibility to and availability of stakeholders? Are staff and key stakeholders likely to be present, or absent on leave or secondment? Can reported availability be relied upon?	Are there physical security risks? Will weather be a constraint?
Resources available to do the evaluation. Funding available for the relevant team and duration? People with the necessary skills available at this point?	Time available in total and in country? Timing within the schedule of all other activities?
Is the timing, right? Has the project accumulated Enough implementation experience to enable useful lessons to be extracted? If the evaluation was planned in advance, is the evaluation still relevant?	Is there an opportunity for an evaluation to have an influence?
UTILITY	
Who wants an evaluation? Can they be involved in defining the evaluation? Will they participate in an evaluation process?	Have the primary users been clearly identified?
What do stakeholders want to know? Are these realistic, given the project design and likely data availability? Can they be prioritized? How do people want to see the results used?	What evaluation questions are of interest to whom? Is this realistic?
What sort of evaluation process do stakeholders want? Could these work, given the evaluation questions of interest and likely information availability, and resources available?	What designs do stakeholders express interest in?
What ethical issues exist? Are they likely to be manageable? What constraints will they impose?	Are they known or knowable?
What are the risks? Have previous evaluation experiences prejudiced stakeholders' likely participation?	Will stakeholders be able to manage negative findings?

Annexe 6: Outline of Evaluability Assessment Report

Introduction

Provide background information about the intervention (Policy/ Project/Programme) to be evaluated. Briefly explain the purpose of the assessment including the methodology. Some of the methodologies include review of programme documentation; Analysis of the information system (needs); Interview of the main stakeholders and Analysis of the programme.

Assessment

Before filling out each section below, note that

- for every row, answer Yes if the condition is met, and No if it is not.
- At the end of each section, count the number of "Yes" responses and calculate the percentage by dividing the Yes" responses by the number of criteria / questions.
- Use the percentage to guide your decision using the criteria provided.

The assessment answers the following questions:

II. Does the quality of the design of the Programme allow for the evaluation?

a) Is the justification of the intervention realistic?

b) Are the objectives of the programme clear, realistic and commonly understood by the stakeholders?

c) Are there SMART performance indicators?

d) Are the performance indicators monitored adequately?

e) Is the log frame flexible and responsive to external factors? Were there modifications to the intervention logic and why?

Program Design Quality Criterion	Yes	No
Justification of the intervention		
Clear, realistic and commonly understood objectives		
SMART performance indicators		
Performance indicators are adequately monitored		
Flexible and responsive logframe		
	%	%

If Yes > 50%: The programme is evaluable. Proceed to plan or commission an evaluation.

If 80% > No > 50%: Some areas need improvement. Recommend modifications to improve evaluability before evaluation proceeds.

If No > 80%: The programme is currently not evaluable. Recommend delaying the evaluation until major issues are addressed (e.g., missing data, unclear objectives, poor design).

III. Are the results of the programme verifiable based on the planned collection systems?

a) Is baseline data available to track change?

a) Is there a monitoring system with data collected on a regular basis against performance indicators?

a) Is the current stage of the implementation of the programme appropriate for evaluation?

Availability of data criterion	Yes	No
Baseline data		
Programme document		
Progress reports		
Reviews (tripartite reviews)		
Independent project evaluation reports		
Minutes of meetings		
Studies		
Presentations		
Mission reports		
Agreement(s) / MOU		
Financial documents (budget revisions)		
	%	%

if Yes > 50%: the evaluation can take place

if No > 50%: the evaluation cannot take place

IV. Is the implementation phase of the programme ready for an evaluation?

a) Has more than 70% of the programme budget been spent?

b) Has a critical mass of planned activities been implemented?

c) Are only minor or non-essential activities remaining?

Implementation readiness criterion	Yes	No
>70% budget expenditure		
Critical mass of activities implemented		
Minor activities remain to be done		
	%	%

if Yes > 50%: the evaluation can take place

if No > 50%: the evaluation cannot take place

V. Would the evaluation be feasible, credible and useful?

d) Does the timing of the evaluation fit into the programme cycle (usefulness of evaluation at that point in time)?

e) Have the building blocks of the programme, if any, been previously evaluated?

f) Can external factors (political, climatic, security, etc.) hamper the evaluation?

g) Is the budget sufficient for the evaluation exercise envisaged?

h) Are key stakeholders available for interviews in the field and in HQ during the planned evaluation time period?

Evaluation Feasibility, Credibility, and Usefulness criterion	Yes	No
Appropriate evaluation timing (useful evaluation at that point in time)		
Prior evaluations of building blocks of the programme (if any)		
The political situation is conducive to the evaluation (travels are possible to project locations and to stakeholders' locations)		
The security situation is conducive to the evaluation (travels are possible to project locations and to stakeholders' locations)		
The climatic situation is conducive to the evaluation (travels are possible to project locations and to stakeholders' locations)		
Availability of key stakeholders in the field (no national events, such as elections, holidays, during the evaluation time period)		
Availability of key stakeholders at HQ (no national events, such as elections, holidays, during the evaluation time period)		
Adequate evaluation budget		
	%	%

If Yes > 50%: the evaluation can take place

If No > 50%: the evaluation cannot take place

Recommendation

Based on the above, the assessment recommends the following:

i. Proceed to plan or commission an evaluation.

ii. Recommend modifications to improve evaluability before evaluation proceeds

iii. Recommend delaying the evaluation until major issues are addressed (e.g., missing data, unclear objectives, poor design).

Annex 7: Format for TOR

	Elements	Description
1	Title	Provide a clear and informative title that includes: • The name of the policy, programme, or project • The type of evaluation (e.g., baseline, midterm review, endline, impact evaluation) • Keep it short and specific
2	Background Information	Offer contextual information on the intervention. This should include: • The implementation period, geographic coverage, and organizational framework • The implementing organization and its partners • Objectives and intended outcomes of the intervention • Evolution of these objectives or target groups over time • Social, political, regulatory, and economic context affecting implementation • Roles of key stakeholders in implementation, and how these have changed (if applicable) • Identification of rights holders and duty bearers (e.g., beneficiaries and those responsible for delivering on their rights) • Any previous evaluations, studies, or monitoring reports; attach the M&E framework if available
3	Rationale of evaluation	Clearly explain why the evaluation is being conducted: • Whether the intended impact was achieved • What are the intended learning, accountability, or decision-making objectives? • What decisions will be informed by the evaluation?
4	Objectives of the evaluation	List specific, measurable objectives that the evaluation aims to achieve: • At most six specific objectives is reasonable • These should align with the project documents and be realistic in scope
5	Scope of the evaluation	Define the boundaries of the evaluation: • Geographic and thematic coverage • Time period under review • Primary users and intended stakeholders of the evaluation results
6	Evaluation Questions	• Each objective of the evaluation needs to have its own standalone key evaluation questions. For example: Objective 1- To what extent is the program implementing its activities according to plan? KEQ(s)- Have we been reaching the intended beneficiaries – both refugees and host community subgroups in terms of gender, ethnicity, location and socio-economic backgrounds? • Evaluation OECD Criteria will also need to be included (where necessary) to provide structure into understanding the progress of the intervention. See Table 2 in this document for the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria.
7	Evaluation Design	Outline the methodological approach: • Given the purpose of the evaluation, its questions, objectives and the context of the evaluation, most evaluations may use a mixed method design • Methods of data collection will need to be explained and justified. The methods may include document reviews of key strategic documents and program reports; key informant interviews, observation; questions and so on.
8	Evaluation Work Plan	Provide a proposed timeline with deliverables and deadlines: • Identify expected outputs (inception report, draft report, final report, etc.) • Mention format requirements and languages for reports • Specify who reviews/delivers each output and when
9	Budget and Payment Schedule	Include: • The total budget for the evaluation. • A payment schedule (typically tied to deliverables) • Who covers what costs (e.g., travel, data collection) • Total budget and funding sources, including any donor contributions
10	Management Arrangements	Clarify how the evaluation will be overseen: • Role of Board/Steering Committee • Technical Working Group (TWG)/Reference Group (RG) • Reporting arrangements- who the evaluation project manager will be and to whom the service provider will report
11	Application criteria and selection	Define how applicants will be selected: • Required competencies and qualifications (team composition, technical/subject expertise, experience in evaluation, ethics, etc.) • Request for previous work samples (if relevant) • Explain how proposals will be scored or evaluated • Indicate where to send applications, contact information, and submission deadline.

Annexe 8: Format for ETWG Appointment Letter

Letter Head of the Ministry, Department/Agency

Address

Dear Ms/Mr/ Dr/ Mr./Mrs./Dr./Prof/ Rev

Subject: Evaluation of the [insert name of INTERVENTION...POLICY, PROGRAMME, PROJECT STRATEGY...] [insert period of time covered by the INTERVENTION] – Constitution of the Evaluation Technical Working Group (ETWG)

Dear [insert name]

I am pleased to invite you to participate in the Evaluation Technical Working Group that is being set up to oversee the evaluation of the [intervention.]. The objectives of the evaluation are:

....

....

The evaluation manager, [insert name], will have day-to-day responsibility for the management of the evaluation and will coordinate the reference group. The [insert the name of the agency/institution/organization] regards reference groups as indispensable to the production of evaluation reports that will be of value to both [insert the name of the agency/institution/organization] and our stakeholders considers the involvement of them in the reference group to be extremely important for the success of evaluations.

While the independence of an evaluation team must not be compromised, the reference group plays a crucial role in ensuring that all available information is taken into account by the evaluators; that the evaluation progresses as planned and in line with its terms of reference; that its factual basis is accurate and complete; that the balance and overall quality of the analysis on which the conclusions and recommendations as based is as robust as possible; and that optimal arrangements are made for feedback and dissemination of the evaluation results of the study.

I therefore hope you will consider it worthwhile to join the reference group and contribute to this valuable work. For further information or queries on this evaluation, please get in touch with [insert name and email address of evaluation manager], who will manage and lead this exercise within the agency/institution/organization.

Please find attached draft TOR of the evaluation.

With best regards,

[Name of agency/institution/organization representative]

Attachments:

Annexe 9: Outline of an Inception Report

	Elements	Description
1	**Title/ Cover page**	Will include the following: • Policy/program/Project name • Type of the evaluation or review targeted as per the ToR, can be specific such as Design evaluation; Outcome evaluation; Impact evaluation and so on • Title should be short, specific and informative • Prepared for and by should be written and contact details • Date of submission
2	**Background and Context**	• This should illustrate the understanding of the project/ outcome to be evaluated from the evaluator perspective.
3	**Evaluation objective, purpose and scope**	• A clear statement of the objectives of the evaluation and the main aspects or elements of the intervention to be examined
4	**Evaluation criteria and questions**	• The criteria that the evaluation will use to assess the intervention. Key Evaluation Question (these may include changes to the understanding of the intervention) • Evaluation matrix- key evaluation questions and how they will be answered via the methods selected.
5	**Evaluation approach and methodology**	• This should highlight the conceptual models to be adopted with a description of data collection methods, sources, and data analysis methods to be used. • A rationale for their selection should be included and their limitations; data-collection tools, instruments; and discussion of reliability and validity for the evaluation and the sampling plan, including the rationale and limitations.
6	**Evaluation design**	• Given the purpose of the evaluation, its questions, objectives and the context of the evaluation, most evaluations may use a mixed method design • methods of data collection will need to be explained and justified. The methods may include document reviews of key strategic documents and program reports; key informant interviews, observation; questions and so on. • Evaluation approach will also need to be described. For example, utilization focused evaluation, empowerment evaluation, gender responsive evaluation, and participatory evaluation.
7	**Evaluation Plan**	• Schedule of activities- A revised schedule of key milestones, time frames, deliverables and responsibilities including the evaluation phases; data collection, data analysis, reporting and validation and dissemination of findings. For non-resident evaluator, the in-country and out-of-country periods should be specified to inform the budget (DSA and airfares)
8	**Budget**	• Evaluation budget - detailed resource requirements tied to evaluation activities and deliverables in the work plan. The budget should be within the advertised overall budget in the ToRs, should it be more, a justification needs to be captured
9	**Tentative Evaluation report outline**	• A report outline should be in line with the provided outline by government institution. Normally there are outlines to provide structure to the findings.

Annexe 10: Structure of an Evaluation Report

Length of the Report - The maximum acceptable length of the report would normally be 30 to 50 pages (annexes excluded).

	Elements	Description
1	**Cover page**	• This should indicate: the title of the project, the name(s) of the evaluator(s) (or the company), and the date the report was submitted.
2	**Table of Contents**	• It should include page numbers and list of tables, graphics, boxes, annexes, and photos
3	**Abbreviations/ Acronyms**	• Report should be accompanied by acronyms for easy read e.g., NaMEA
4	**Map of the region**	• This is not always necessary, yet in some cases it might be useful to help the reader familiarize himself with the country/region; especially if the report contains a lot of geographical names.
5	**Executive Summary**	• It should be a summary that contains the context of the evaluation, purpose, scope, methodology, main findings, conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned. • The executive summary should be a "stand-alone" document of at most 5 pages.
6	**Introduction**	• The introduction should not be more than one page. It should contain the: Purpose of the evaluation/review; • Scope and methodology of the evaluation; Structure of the report
7	**Project description and evaluation profile**	• Background of the project/programme being evaluated • Brief background to the region/country (political, social, economic, and historical) • Economic, social and cultural dimensions of the intervention to be evaluated • Linkages to other interventions • Stakeholders • References to relevant documents and mandates • Other information (phases, timeline, budgets, etc.).
8	**Evaluation Design and Methodology**	• Purpose and scope of the evaluation • what results were expected to be achieved • Main stages of the evaluation process: instruments used; sample design; data collection procedures; types of analysis.
9	**Evaluation finding**	• Clear statement of findings in response to eval questions.
10	**Lessons learned**	Lessons learned should help to: • Strengthen decision-making – Replicate similar type of interventions elsewhere or upscale the intervention; • Improve future projects – Prevent mistakes for future similar interventions; • Build institutional knowledge and share best practices – Contribute to general knowledge and share best practices in intervention of the project being evaluated
11	**Conclusions**	• Conclusions should be based on the analysis of the findings and supported by evidence. They should: • Add value to the findings • Answer to key evaluation questions • Focus on issues of significance related to key areas mentioned in the TOR
12	**Recommenda-tions**	• The recommendations should be directed to concerned stakeholder, e.g., NaMEA, Ministry of Finance, UNDP or partner institution/agency, etc. The use of a table can be a way to organize them. • They should: • Contain suggestions to improve future performance • Be supported by evidence and findings • Be adequate in terms of the ToR • Facilitate implementation (realistic and objective).
13	**Annexes**	Annexes can include: • List of People interviewed/met • Timetable of field work • List of important documentation consulted • Data collection instruments • Programme of Evaluation/Review • Terms of Reference of the Evaluation • Theory of Change and Logical framework

Annexe 11: Management Response Template

No	Recommen-dation and Action(s)	Responsible Office / Department	Responsible entity	Timeline	Action taken and Support-ing docu-ment i. Not started ii. Underway iii. Completed iv. Cancelled	Remarks (Example started but stalled; not started because.....)
1	**Recommen-dation 1**					
Action 1						
Action 2						
2	**Recommen-dation 2**					
Action 1						
Action 2						
Action 3						

Endorsed by:

Name: ______________________________

Designation ________________________

Signature: __________________________

Date: _______________________________

Annexe 12: Evaluation Quality Assurance Checklist[18]

Dimension	Criteria	Key Questions / Indicators	Yes / No / Partially	Comments
1. Purpose and Scope	Relevance	Is the purpose of the evaluation clearly stated and aligned with national or institutional priorities?		
	Scope	Are the objectives, users, and coverage (geographic, thematic, temporal) of the evaluation clearly defined?		
2. Design and Methodology	Appropriateness	Is the evaluation design appropriate to answer the key questions? Does it use a credible and ethical methodology?		
	Indicators	Are outcomes and indicators clearly linked to evaluation questions and intervention objectives?		
	Gender and Equity	Does the methodology consider gender, equity, and social inclusion dimensions?		
3. Findings	Validity	Are findings supported by evidence and clearly presented?		
	Logical Flow	Do the findings logically follow from the data collected and methods used?		
	Stakeholder Perspectives	Have perspectives from key stakeholders (e.g., MDAs, beneficiaries) been captured and reflected?		
4. Conclusions and Lessons Learned	Derivation	Are conclusions well-grounded in the findings and clearly stated?		
	Learning	Are lessons learned relevant, insightful, and potentially replicable where applicable?		
5. Recommendations	Actionable	Are recommendations specific, realistic, and clearly directed at particular stakeholders? Are they within the scope of the evaluation? Can they be implemented?		
	Prioritization	Are recommendations prioritized and linked to the findings and conclusions?		
6. Report Quality and Presentation	Structure	Is the report well structured, easy to navigate, and does it follow the standard format (see Annex 10: Structure of an Evaluation Report)		
	Clarity	Is the writing clear, non-technical (where needed), and appropriate for decision-makers?		
	Use of Visuals	Are visuals (charts, tables, annexes) effectively used to communicate key findings?		
7. Use and Utility	Stakeholder Engagement	Were stakeholders adequately engaged throughout the evaluation process?		
	Utility	Does the evaluation provide useful and timely information for decision-making and policy dialogue?		
	Dissemination Plan	Is there a clear plan for dissemination and follow-up on recommendations?		

10. REFERENCES

Asian Development Bank. (2006, January). *Guidelines for preparing performance evaluation reports for public sector operations*. ADB.

Department for International Development. (2005, July). *Guidance on evaluation and review for DfID staff*. DfID.

African Evaluation Association. (2002). The African evaluation guidelines. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 25*, 481–492. https://www.elsevier.com/locate/evalprogplan

Forss, K., & Carlsson, J. (1997). The quest for quality—Or can evaluation findings be trusted? *Evaluation, 3*(4), 481–501.

Goldman, I., et al. (2021, December). *How to establish a national evaluation system* (Guideline No. 6) [Technical report].

Goldman, I., Olaleye, W., Ntakumba, S., Makgaba, M., & Waller, C. (2020). Mere compliance or learning – M&E culture in the public service of Benin, Uganda and South Africa. In I. Goldman & M. Pabari (Eds.), *Using evidence in policy and practice: Lessons from Africa* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Government of Sierra Leone. (2020, December). *National monitoring and evaluation policy*.

Government of Sierra Leone, National Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate. (n.d.).

Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. (1988). *The personnel evaluation standards*. Sage.

Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. (1994). *The program evaluation standards*. Sage.

Mayne, J. (2008, November). *Building an evaluative culture for effective evaluation and results management* (ILAC Brief).

Mensah, C. (2020). Beyond monitoring and evaluation plans: Towards an evaluation culture in Ghanaian local government. *eVALUation Matters*, First Quarter, IDEV.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB). (2009, October). *Evaluation policy and guidelines for evaluations*.

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad). (2022). *Guidelines for the evaluation process and for preparing reports for the Department for Evaluation*.

ODA Evaluation Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. (2012, April). *ODA evaluation guidelines* (7th ed.).

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2019). *Survey on policy evaluation: Institutionalisation, quality & use of policy evaluation*.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2020, February). *Evaluation criteria flyer*.

Patel, M., & Russon, C. (1998). Appropriateness of the program evaluation standards for use in Africa. Paper presented in modified form to the African Evaluation Association, 1999.

Raab, M., & Stuppert, W. (2014). *Review of evaluation approaches and methods for interventions related to violence against women and girls (VAWG)*. Department for International Development (DfID).

Republic of Kenya. (2022, November). *Guidelines for the institutionalization of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in the health sector*.

Rogers, P. (2014, September). *Theory of change* (Methodological Briefs, Impact Evaluation No. 2). RMIT University; International Initiative for Impact Evaluation; BetterEvaluation; UNICEF.

Smith, N., Chircop, S., & Mukherjee, P. (1993). Considerations on the development of culturally relevant evaluation standards. *Studies in Educational Evaluation, 19*, 3–13.

Twende Mbele. (2022, March 10). *Guideline No. 1: Establishing a national monitoring and evaluation or evaluation policy*. https://www.twendembele.org

European Union. (n.d.). *What is evaluation?* https://ec.europa.eu/enrd/what-evaluation_en.html

Ton, G., Apgar, J. M., & Mayne, J. (2019). *Contribution analysis and estimating the size of effects: Can we reconcile the possible with the impossible?* Centre for Development Impact. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330983586_Centre_for_Development_Impact_Contribution_Analysis_and_Estimating_the_Size_of_Effects_Can_We_Reconcile_the_Possible_with_the_Impossible

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (n.d.). *Evaluating development co-operation*. https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2021/03/development-co-operation-tips-tools-insights-practices_d307b396/evaluating-development-co-operation_0b086a36/5602e1f7-en.pdf

Rogers, P. (2020). *Monitoring and evaluation for adaptive management* (Working Paper Series No. 4). BetterEvaluation. https://www.betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/Real%20time%20evaluation%20paper%20Dec%202020%20FINAL.pdf

UNICEF. (2020). *GEROS guidance handbook.* https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/global-evaluation-reports-oversight-system-geros

UNICEF. (2024). *Intermediate moderated programme for evaluation systems strengthening.*

LIST OF USEFUL WEB BASED RESOURCES

DAC, DAC member states and international organisations with online evaluation guidance

DFID Evaluation Department
http://insight/evd

DAC
http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluationnetwork

CIDA
http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/cida_ind.nsf/49d9f10330ed2bb48525677e00735812/061a4e025fc6fe2785256c6b00155e2d?OpenDocument

Danida
http://www.um.dk/da/menu/Udviklingspolitik/MaalOgResultatstyring/Evaluering/Guidelines/Evaluation Guidelines

EC
http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/evaluation/methods/guidelines_en.pdf

DIDC Finland
http://global.finland.fi/julkaisut/yleis/pdme/index.html

IFAD
http://www.ifad.org/gbdocs/eb/ec/e/34/EC-2003-34-WP-3.pdf

JICA
http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/evaluation/guideline.pdf

SIDA
http://www.parcinfo.org/e-learningDownloads.asp

RESOURCE CENTRES

ALNAP (The Active Learning Network on Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Assistance)
The ALNAP Evaluative Reports Database offers access to the evaluative reports of humanitarian action in order to ensure experiences and learning are shared, and to foster discussion on good practices.

Centre for Aid and Public Expenditure
The Centre for Aid and Public Expenditure was established in 1999 and has since then carried out high quality policy-focused research on aid instruments, budget processes and the reform of public expenditure systems.

Eldis
ELDIS is a gateway to information on development issues, providing free and easy access to wide range of high quality online resources.

IDRC (The International Development Research Centre)
The Evaluation Unit promotes the use of state-of-the-art evaluation and management methodologies and practices throughout IDRC and with its Southern initiatives.

MandE
A news service focusing on developments in monitoring and evaluation methods relevant to development projects and programmes with social development objectives.

PARC (Performance Assessment Resource Centre)
The PARC supports international efforts to improve performance assessment in international development practice. The PARC has been set up to support the evaluation work of development partners in both the South and the North.

Poverty Action Lab
The Poverty Action Lab serves as a focal point for development and poverty research based on randomised trials. The objective is to improve the effectiveness of poverty programmes by providing policy makers with clear scientific results that help shape successful policies to combat poverty.

Endnotes

1 Government of Sierra Leone, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, "Sierra Leone's Medium Term National Development Plan 2024 – 2030," 2024, https://sldevelopmentencyclopaedia.org/5_mtndp/5_2/28.01.24.Abridged%20Version_MTNDP2024_2030.pdf.

2 Government of Sierra Leone, "National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy," 2021.

3 Government of Sierra Leone, "The National Monitoring and Evaluation Agency Act, 2024," https://named.gov.sl/documents/.

4 Government of Sierra Leone.

5 Government of Sierra Leone, "Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019 - 2023," 2019, https://www.slurc.org/uploads/1/0/9/7/109761391/sierra_leone_national_development_plan.pdf.

6 Government of Sierra Leone, "National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy".

7 European Union, "What Is Evaluation?," n.d., https://ec.europa.eu/enrd/what-evaluation_en.html.

8 OECD (2019), Better Criteria for Better Evaluation: Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/15a9c26b-en.

9 Rogers, P. (2020). Real-time evaluation. Monitoring and Evaluation for Adaptive Management Working Paper Series No. 4. BetterEvaluation. https://www.betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/Real-time-evaluation-paper-Dec-2020.pdf

10 U UNICEF & CLEAR Anglophone Africa. (2024). Intermediate Moderated Programme for Evaluation Systems Strengthening (IMPrESS): Annual Report 2024. UNICEF.

11 Mayne, J. (2012). Contribution Analysis: Coming of Age? Evaluation, 18(3), 270–280.

12 Ton, G., Apgar, J. M., & Mayne, J. (2019). Contribution Analysis and Estimating the Size of Effects: Can We Reconcile the Possible with the Impossible? Centre for Development Impact Practice Paper 18.

13 Gertler, P., Martinez, S., Premand, P., Rawlings, L., & Vermeersch, C. (2016). Impact Evaluation in Practice (2nd ed.). World Bank.

14 United Nations Evaluation Group. (2016). UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation. UNEG.

15 Ton, G., Apgar, J. M., & Mayne, J. (2019). Contribution Analysis and Estimating the Size of Effects: Can We Reconcile the Possible with the Impossible? Centre for Development Impact Practice Paper No. 18.

16 United Nations Evaluation Group. (2020). UNEG ethical guidelines for evaluation. UNEG.

UNICEF. (2018). Engaging adolescents and children in monitoring and evaluation. UNICEF.

UNICEF. (2019). Minimum standards for child participation. UNICEF.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2009). General comment No. 12: The right of the child to be heard (CRC/C/GC/12). United Nations.

African Union. (2018). Guidelines on child participation in Africa. African Union Commission.

17 UNICEF, "GEROS Guidance Handbook," 2020, https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/global-evaluation-reports-oversight-system-geros.

18 Adapted from the Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System (GEROS)

Ensuring Value for Money, Transparency and Accountability for Development Results and Better Service Delivery.

National Monitoring and Evaluation Agency (NaMEA)
No 1 Old Rail Line Tengbeh Town,
Freetown, Sierra Leone

UNICEF Sierra Leone
Central Medical Stores Compound
New England
Freetown, Sierra Leone

www.unicef.org/sierraleone
UNICEF Sierra Leone

for every child