# *M*onitoring and *E*valuation Toolkit

## for Programme Managers

# Planning and Managing an Evaluation

## Part V: Communicating and Using Evaluation Results

## 1. Introduction

The Toolkit is a supplement to the UNFPA programming guidelines. It provides guidance and options for UNFPA Country Office staff to improve monitoring and evaluation activities in the context of results-based management. It is also useful for other programme managers at headquarters and national levels. Many of the approaches described in this toolkit can be used as well for programme strategy development[1].

This part V of tool number 5 suggests steps and considerations for the effective communication and use of evaluation results. The content is based on a review of literature both from academia and international development agencies such as UNICEF, UNDP and bilateral donor agencies such as DANIDA, OECD, USAID and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

## 2. Assessing the quality of evaluations

One of the first tasks after the evaluation is completed is to disseminate its results to potential users. It is essential, however, to have already ascertained that the evaluation has produced timely and credible information and well-founded recommendations (see Tool number 5, Part VI on evaluation Standards). Poor evaluations should not be used, but only after careful consideration of what went wrong.

## 3. Sharing evaluation results

It is not sufficient to merely conduct evaluation as an information-gathering activity. It is also important to disseminate and communicate evaluation results to key stakeholders and other

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[1] For sake of brevity "programme" will be used throughout the toolkit to refer to a country programme as well as its sub-programme and project components.

audiences as soon as possible and in forms that are easy to understand and use. First, disseminate results to those with a direct interest in the programme being evaluated – especially to those with responsibility for making important decisions about the programme – and then to other potential users. In addition to delivering a final report, it is useful to organize meetings with various stakeholders using a variety of techniques such as visual displays and oral presentations to communicate evaluation results, and help users assimilate and interpret the information. For instance, the presenter (e.g., either the evaluator or the evaluation manager) can prepare information on the most important evaluation findings, and describe what the findings imply for programme implementation, redirection, funding, and expansion, as appropriate. Seminars, workshops and discussion groups can also be organized.    Such working sessions offer opportunities for stakeholders not only to hear  about  evaluation findings, but also interpret them and construct meaning – these are opportunities for learning.   In some cases, it may be worthwhile publishing the evaluation report either in its entirety or in shorter versions for dissemination to a wider audience (see Box 1 – Dissemination channels to consider). Ensuring openness and a wider access to evaluation results increases their credibility and use.

### Box 1 – Dissemination channels to consider

- Detailed written report
- Executive summary, summaries of evaluation findings and key conclusions
- Brochure on the principal evaluation lessons and recommendations
- Annual report
- Article in technical or organizational newsletter
- News release
- Press conference
- Media appearance
- Public meeting, public debate
- Seminar, workshop, or group discussion
- Electronically (e-mail, Internet, websites)

Using different dissemination channels is vital to enhancing organizational learning and sharing of experiences across organizations and with broader audiences.

## 4.    Follow-up

Disseminating evaluation results does not ensure implementation of recommendations and use of lessons learned. Active follow-up is necessary to implement recommendations made to programme managers, and incorporate lessons learned in future decision-making processes such as the development of a new programme or projects. At the conclusion of an evaluation, it is good practice for the evaluation manager to organize a meeting with the appropriate persons and institutions to establish an implementation plan based on the recommendations with a timetable

and identification of parties responsible for follow-up actions (See Box 2 - Using evaluation results).  The more stakeholders are involved in planning the next steps, the more likely they are to follow through on implementing evaluation recommendations. The evaluation manager should monitor the status of implementation and by so doing advocate the use of evaluation results.

### Box 2 – Using evaluation results

It is the responsibility of programme managers to:

- Systematically review the key evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations
- Identify which are accepted and supported and which are not
- In the case of a formative evaluation, determine whether any adjustments are necessary (i.e., in the programme strategy, the logical framework matrix, or activities) to improve programme effectiveness
- Establish an implementation plan, including the identification of specific follow-up actions and assignment of clear responsibilities with a timetable for undertaking them
- Monitor the status of implementation

*Source:* Adapted from USAID, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, TIPS # 11, 1997.

## Sources

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*This tool is subject to constant improvement.  We welcome any comments and suggestions you may have on its content.  We also encourage you to send us information on experiences from UNFPA funded and other population  programmes and projects which can illustrate the issues addressed by this tool. Please send your inputs to:*

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