



## Evaluation Policy

**Standards, processes, and strategic goals of the  
international cooperation evaluation unit**





1.	Introduction	3
2.	Objective of the evaluation	4
3.	Quality standards	5
4.	Quality assurance	7
5.	Defining the evaluation programme	12
6.	Evaluation types, approaches, data collection methodology and analytical methods	13
7.	Evaluation criteria	14
8.	Capacity WORKS	15
9.	Combination of evaluation and appraisal mission	16
10.	Benefit and use of evaluation results	17
	Literature	18
	List of abbreviations	19
	Imprint	20

On behalf of



On behalf of the Federal Government of Germany, the Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt promotes the improvement of the framework conditions for economic, social and environmentally friendly action and thus supports the development of quality infrastructure.



**Author:**

Lukas Nagel



**This brochure can be found here:**

[www.ic.ptb.de/media/fileadmin/Publications\\_PTB\\_Info\\_Evaluation\\_Policy\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ic.ptb.de/media/fileadmin/Publications_PTB_Info_Evaluation_Policy_EN.pdf)

# 1. Introduction

This evaluation policy explains the standards, processes and strategic goals of the evaluation practice of the International Cooperation Group of the Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB). The evaluation policy is explicitly targeted at project teams, evaluators, partner institutions, the BMZ and the interested public.

PTB, the national metrological institute of Germany, is a scientific-technical federal authority falling within the competence of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK). PTB is the highest authority when it comes to correct and reliable measurements and employs a total of approximately 2,000 staff members. Within the scope of its mission, PTB's International Cooperation Group (Q.3, formerly 9.3) supports the harmonization of international metrology as well as the establishment and expansion of competent quality infrastructure (QI) in developing and emerging countries. This, in turn, contributes to sustainable, social and ecological development. The international cooperation projects are mainly carried out on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) but also on behalf of other donors such as the European Union.

PTB's evaluation system is oriented toward the BMZ guidelines *Leitlinien für die Evaluierung in der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit* [Guidelines for evaluation in development cooperation] (BMZ, 2021a) and the BMZ orientation guidelines *Evaluierungskriterien der bilateralen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit* [Evaluation criteria in bilateral development cooperation] (2021b). The BMZ guidelines are, in turn, based on the standards of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the standards of the Evaluation Society (DeGEval). The guidelines and standards together form a framework of evaluation principles and important quality standards that constitute a firm foundation and orientation for PTB's evaluation system.

In line with the aforementioned standards and guidelines, PTB is committed to evaluate its projects and to assure **accountability** toward the public and clients as well as enabling **organizational learning**. Of particular importance for this purpose is the independence of the evaluation unit which is ensured according to the BMZ Guidelines (2021a) by separating it from operative business. Since August 2020, evaluations are no longer handled by project coordinators in PTB's Group Q.3, *International Cooperation*, but by the evaluation unit which is part of the Working Group Q.01 (formerly 9.01), *Processes of International Cooperation*. This means that the responsibilities for the evaluation and the operational business lie in different sections. This enables the coordination of project evaluations by a centralized, independent body. To further increase the independence of the evaluation unit, external experts are contracted to conduct the evaluations. The selection of these evaluators is based on publicly accessible and transparent criteria (see the *Selection of evaluators* section in Chapter 4).

The next chapters describe the standards and processes of PTB's evaluation practice as well as strategic goals for the further development of the evaluation system. Chapter 2 describes the purpose of evaluations in relation to PTB's work in international cooperation. In Chapter 3, the quality standards of PTB's evaluation unit are presented and assigned to quality assurance processes. Chapter 4 describes the quality assurance processes and the procedure of a typical PTB evaluation. Chapter 5 explains the process of establishing the evaluation programme. Chapter 6 covers the evaluation types, approaches, methodology and analysis methods used. Chapter 7 describes the evaluation criteria used and their operationalization. Chapter 8 explains the role of Capacity WORKS in the evaluation process. Chapter 9 explains the procedure for conducting an evaluation together with an appraisal mission. Finally, Chapter 10 describes the processes for increasing the benefit and use of evaluation results.

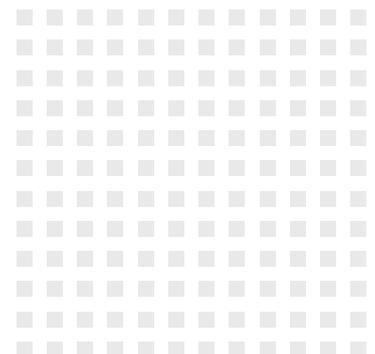
## 2. Objective of the Evaluation

In accordance with the BMZ guidelines (2021a), evaluations at PTB are defined as ...*systematic and objective analyses and evaluations of ongoing or completed development measures. These examinations usually include design, implementation and, especially, results of the development measures. They are intended to provide insights relevant for the operational level and, in appropriate cases, recommendations for improvements in design* (according to OECD DAC 1991 and 2002/2009, respectively).

In addition to this definition, PTB defines two evaluation objectives in accordance with the BMZ guidelines (2021a), namely that evaluations are intended to: 1) create transparency and provide accountability as well as 2) fostering knowledge management and organizational learning.

**Transparency and accountability** are to be provided to all stakeholders of PTB projects. These include the BMZ, partner institutions and the public which finances PTB projects with their taxes. Evaluation creates transparency and accountability by independently evaluating the projects in terms of impacts achieved, the sustainability of these impacts and the efficiency by which the impacts were achieved. The results of the evaluation are passed on to the BMZ and partner institutions and are publicly available on the PTB evaluation database<sup>1</sup>. Publication is only refrained from in justified individual cases. For instance, if the publication of the evaluation may have negative consequences for the persons involved. For all evaluations that started in 2023, the long version of the evaluation report is published in addition to the one-page evaluation document (*one-pager*) and seven-page summary.

**Knowledge management and organizational learning** are to be strengthened by evaluations at partner institutions, on the management level of the project coordinating Group Q.3, in the project teams and in the evaluation unit. Together with the partner institutions, workshops are conducted to validate the results and to discuss the recommendations. The recommendations are directed to the project team, the partners, the management level of Group Q.3 and the evaluation unit. The final reports are forwarded to all stakeholders. Within PTB, presentations for the project coordinating Group Q.3 are conducted, appropriate evaluations are forwarded to respective working groups and *lessons learned* are processed in a peer exchange between project coordinators. The implementation of PTB's inhouse recommendations to the project team, the management level of Group Q.3 and to the evaluation unit (Q.01) are addressed in the form of a *follow-up sheet* (for more information, please refer to Chapter 10, *Use of Evaluation Results*).



<sup>1</sup> Link to the website of one of the regional sections (see <https://www.evaluiert.ptb.de/en/>): <https://www.ptb.de/cms/en/ptb/fachabteilungen/abtq/gruppe-q3/ref-q31.html>

## 3. Quality Standards

As already explained in the introduction to the evaluation policy, PTB is guided by the *Quality Standards for Development Evaluation* of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2010) and the *Standards for Evaluation* of the DeGEval – Evaluation Society (Gesellschaft für Evaluation e.V., 2016). These standards also form the basis for the BMZ guidelines (BMZ, 2021a) and the BMZ orientation guidelines (2021b).

To show how the OECD/DAC and DeGEval standards and their embedding in the BMZ guidelines are reflected in PTB's evaluation system, the quality standards need to be operationalized and transformed into tangible quality criteria. For this purpose, PTB uses the derivation of quality criteria from the *Meta-evaluation on the Quality of (Project) Evaluations in German Development Cooperation* by DEval (Guffler et al., 2022). PTB has extended these quality criteria and assigned them to quality assurance processes in the table below. The adherence to these processes ensures that the quality criteria are met and are described in detail in Chapter 4, *Quality assurance*.

### Methods and reporting

Quality criterion (QC)	Quality assurance (see Chapter 4)
1. Description of the evaluation object 2. Description of the project context 3. Consideration of this context in the results 4. Description of the learning interest 5. Adequacy of the methodical approach	Internal and external preliminary discussion, inception report, annotated report template
6. Traceability of sources 7. Adequacy of the summary 8. Application of OECD/DAC criteria 9. Coherence of conclusions drawn from the collected data	Annotated reporting template
10. Depiction of causal/probabilistic relationships	Annotated reporting template (quality assurance of Q.3 projects, e.g. indicators in module proposal)
11. Adequacy of request for quote	Terms of Reference (ToR)

### Participation, independence and fairness

12. Participation of partner institutions	Internal preliminary discussion, inception report, validation workshop
13. Participation of stakeholders	Internal preliminary discussion, validation workshop, closing presentation
14. Taking partner efforts into account (considering national evaluation policies: procedures, national guidelines, recommendations, evaluation plans, etc.).	Inception report
15. Evaluation ethics (protecting the evaluation participants, handling sensitive data, data protection) 16. Evaluation efficiency	Internal preliminary discussion

*Continued on next page*

17. Consideration of capacity development (by involving local capacities) 18. Consideration of joint evaluations 19. Including local evaluators 20. Gender balance	Selection of evaluators, internal preliminary discussion
21. Competence of the evaluators	Evaluator pool, criteria for selection of evaluators
22. Organizational independence of the evaluators 23. Impartiality of the evaluators	Criteria for the selection of evaluators, statement of organizational and personal independence
24. Accessibility of the evaluators' report (including the summary) 25. Accessibility for stakeholders 26. Transparency of differences of opinion between evaluators and PTB	Final discussion

**Benefit and use**

27. Timely results 28. Evaluation efficiency 29. Sufficient human and financial resources for the evaluation	Internal and external preliminary discussion, Terms of Reference
30. Recommendations are geared to the target group 31. Usefulness and practical orientation of recommendations	Internal and external preliminary discussion, annotated reporting template, study documents and follow-up
32. Management response	Annual dialogue held with management level of Group Q.3

**Overview of quality standards**

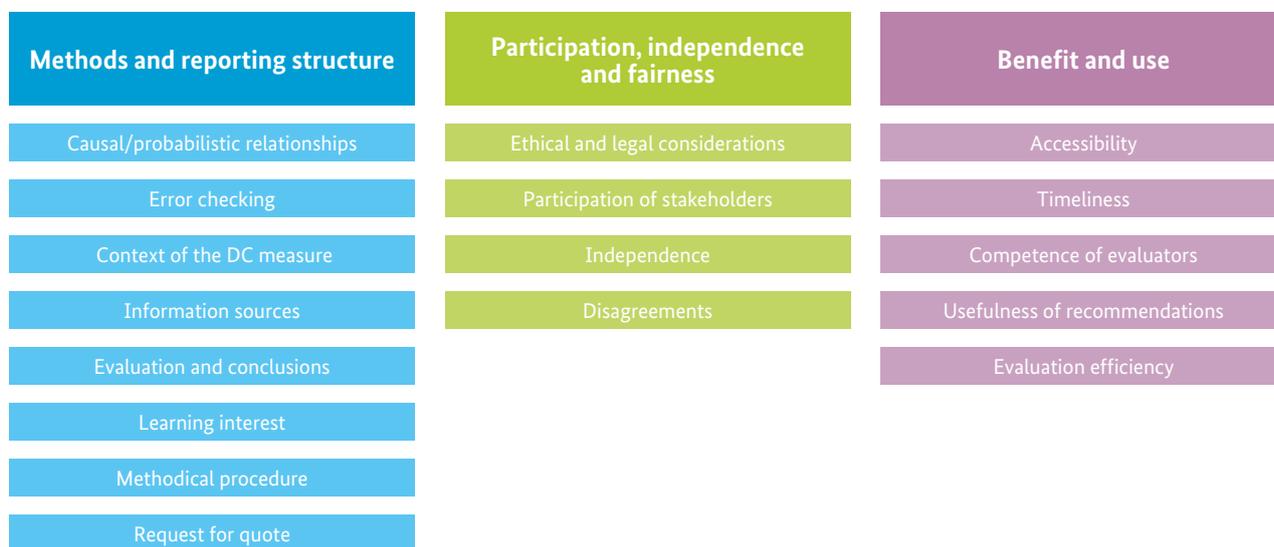


Figure 1: Overview of quality standards. Source: Guffler et al., 2022.

# 4. Quality Assurance

The evaluation unit uses several quality assurance processes to ensure compliance with the above quality criteria:

## Internal preliminary discussion

The internal preliminary discussion is held with the evaluation team, the project team and the section head, while the external preliminary discussion (see below) also includes the specific main evaluators and technical evaluators. The first step of the internal preliminary discussion is to ensure that sufficient funds are available for the project. Then, as laid down in the evaluation ethics, careful consideration is given to whether one evaluation or parts of an evaluation should be omitted due to potential risks or harm to participants. If this is not the case, evaluation planning begins. The rough time frame of the evaluation and the estimated financial and human resources are discussed (QC 27–29). In terms of evaluation efficiency, the possibility of remote or hybrid evaluation is explored, and the potential usefulness of the evaluation is weighed against its expected costs. The timing of the evaluation (as specified in the evaluation programme) ensures that the results can be integrated into the appraisal mission of the (potential) follow-up project. If no follow-up project is planned, the learning objective of the evaluation may focus on sector-specific (e.g. energy, food, textiles) or instrument- and/or process-specific content. Thereby, relevant insights from one project can be transferred to other projects (QC 30).

## Selection of evaluators

PTB commissions independent (external) evaluators to perform the evaluations. It is mandatory that the evaluation is carried out by at least one independent principal or lead evaluator (PE). However, usually the evaluation team consists of two to three evaluators: the lead evaluator, a technical evaluator (TE) and/or, if applicable, a *project coordinator in the evaluation team* (PCE). All members of the evaluation team play an active role in the data acquisition, analysis, evaluation and presentation of the results. The specific division of tasks between both evaluators differs in each evaluation and is discussed in the preparatory meeting which forms the basis for the terms of reference.

The selection of the team of evaluators should be based on several **criteria**:

1. Principle evaluators (PE) or technical evaluators (TE) have at least performed one evaluation at PTB.
2. To ensure impartiality, the evaluators must not be involved 1) on the political level, 2) on the operational level, 3) in projects in an advisory capacity or 4) be one of the direct beneficiaries of the project. Therefore, the evaluators sign a *Declaration of Organizational and Personal Independence*, in which they confirm their organizational and personal independence in writing.
3. At least one local PE or TE should participate in each evaluation. Again, it is important to maintain the organizational and personal independence which in the small field of quality infrastructure can often only be ensured by using a PE or TE from another country in the region.
4. If possible, cooperation with existing structures (evaluation units, scientific institutes or similar) should be established in order to jointly carry out the evaluation.
5. If all the previous criteria are met and competence is equal, attention should be paid to gender balance in the team of evaluators.

The following **competencies** should be covered by the team of evaluators:

1. Solid evaluation experience is required (PE)
2. Technical expertise in the field relevant to the project (e.g. environment, energy, pharmacy, economic development, etc.) must be ensured (TE, if possible also PE).
3. Knowledge and experience in QI must be ensured (TE, if possible also PE).
4. Knowledge of the country/region is required (TE, if possible also PE).
5. Development policy knowledge and experience, proficiency in the procedures of German technical cooperation (PE)

In addition, the following **general requirements** should be met:

- Sensitivity for cross-sectional aspects (gender, poverty, socio-cultural, environment)
- Excellent spoken and written skills of the respective evaluation language
- Competence in evaluation methods: Appropriate handling and knowledge of quantitative and qualitative methods of empirical social research
- Above-average analytical skills, combined with the ability to properly document an analysis and its findings in writing
- The ability to work under pressure, work well in a team, interculturally appropriate behaviour
- Ability to work in a tropical environment
- Lead evaluator has an educational background in economics, natural sciences, engineering, political sciences or social sciences

Evaluators who meet the above criteria can be admitted to the **evaluator pool**. Admission is based on a technical review of the criteria by two members of the evaluation team and the approval of the head of Working Group Q.01.

The selection of evaluators for a **project evaluation** is a five-step process:

1. In the internal preliminary meeting, minimum and desired criteria are discussed on the basis of the subject of the evaluation, which are important for the selection of the expert (e.g. knowledge in the field of metrology or familiarity with international economic organizations).
2. Based on the agreed minimum criteria, the responsible EVA searches the expert pool for TEs who fulfil the minimum criteria and proposes them to the project team. The project coordinator searches for TE candidates. The Project Coordinator prepares the request for proposals for PEs and TEs.
3. Dispatch of the requests for proposals – after checking by EVA – to at least 3 potential candidates for the position as PE and 3 potential candidates as TE by the project.

4. Evaluation of the offers based on the evaluation matrices for TE and PE defined in the request for proposals by the project coordinator. The final decision on the selection of the main evaluators is made by the person(s) responsible for evaluation. When selecting the technical evaluator, the person responsible for evaluation has a right of veto to ensure compliance with the criteria described in the evaluation policy.
5. Dispatch of the necessary documents to the administration of the documents for PE and TE by the project team with details of the project for invoicing and contact of the PC(s) for further processing.

An exception to the condition of operational independence for evaluators are *project coordinators in the team of evaluators* (PCEs). PCEs are deployed to strengthen the learning function of evaluations. Their participation in evaluations should be used for their own learning experiences and for competence building, which will then be applied in their own project implementation and serve to increase the exchange of *lessons learned* and best practices among the regional sections.

However, some criteria apply to the **participation of PCEs**:

- PCEs are temporarily relieved from their regular project-related tasks
- PCEs may not participate in evaluations of their own regional sections
- PCEs should have at least two years of professional experience with project coordination in GroupQ.3
- PCEs must be proficient in the working language of the project
- PCEs must have experience in the thematic focus of the project to be evaluated (e.g. through work in their own projects).
- If several PCs have expressed their interest in an evaluation, the selection will be based on the following criteria: technical background of the PCE, interest in running their own project and relation to the current or planned tasks.

The participation of PCEs in evaluations may affect the organizational and operational independence and thus the credibility of the evaluation since staff from the operational area evaluate their colleagues from other areas and a conflict of interest may arise. However, this potential risk is counterbalanced by the cooperation with external PEs and TEs. In addition, a transparent presentation of the participation of the PCE in the evaluation report can increase the credibility of the evaluation report. Advantages of the participation of PCEs are also a strong increase in usefulness as the learning experience of the project coordinators can be directly transferred to their own project and the multiplier function that the project coordinator has for the generated knowledge. The positive effect on the usefulness and use of evaluations takes into account the potentially weakened – although compensated for – independence and credibility.

#### External preliminary discussion

In the external preliminary discussion, a common understanding of the evaluation process is built between the evaluators, the project team, the evaluation coordinators and the section head. The focus here is particularly on usefulness, which is ensured by involving the relevant stakeholders and discussing their learning interest and their specific evaluation questions (QC 1–4, 12, 13). In the internal discussion, the project team is invited to collect and actively contribute the needs and learning interests of the partner institutions in steering meetings of the project. For an efficient course of the evaluation, a clear distribution of roles among the parties involved is also recorded, and a clear understanding for the annotated reporting template and the inception report (QC 1–4) is established. Based on the learning interest, the evaluators suggest the evaluation design which will be discussed and adapted, if needed (QC 5). Depending on the case, the external preliminary discussion can be divided into two parts to grant the evaluators more time to present a needs-based evaluation design for discussion. If a remote or hybrid remote evaluation is possible (e.g. for global or regional projects), please refer to the PTB guide *Remote Evaluations – Initial Experience and Recommendations* (Lange, Telfser & Wallerath, 2020). It contains recommendations, learning experiences from past evaluations and tips that evaluators can use for guidance.

#### Terms of reference and statement of organizational and personal independence

Based on the external preliminary discussions, the contracts which contain the ToRs are drafted for the evaluators. The ToRs and/or supplementary contract terms must include the following items: 1. purpose of the evaluation, 2. users, 3. goals, 4. methods, 5. financing (composition of the budget plan), 6. timeframe, 7. publication rights and 8. assignment of tasks and responsibilities of PE and TE. In addition to the ToRs, the evaluators have to sign a statement of independence. In the *Erklärung über organisationale und persönliche Unabhängigkeit* [Declaration of Organizational and Personal Independence], the evaluators assure that they are neither 1) politically, 2) nor operationally, 3) nor in an advisory capacity involved in the project, 4) nor belong to the project's target group, and that they are organizationally independent and impartial as individuals.

In the ToRs, evaluators also commit to PTB's evaluation ethics which are oriented to the Red Cross standard (IFRC, 2011) and comply with the DeGEval standards (DeGEval, 2016), OECD/DAC standards (OECD, 2010) and the BMZ guidelines (2021a):

Evaluations have to be conducted under ethical and legal considerations, with particular attention to the well-being of those involved in and affected by the evaluation. Evaluations should comply with international as well as national standards and regulations to keep risks, damage and stress as low as possible for the evaluation participants. The evaluators should respect the traditions, culture and dignity of the participants. This includes differences due to religion, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and ethnicity. Special attention should be given to discrimination and gender inequality (in compliance with the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights). In the same way, the principle *Do no harm* applies. Evaluators should inform the evaluation participants of their rights, gain their approval, ensure the confidentiality of the participants and refrain from any illegal or potentially harmful activity.

### Inception report

The purpose of the inception report is to ensure evaluability and, if necessary, to adjust the formulation of the questions as well as to verify practical feasibility and to verify compliance with quality standards and cross-sectional topics of the BMZ Guidelines (2021a): due diligence for human rights, equal opportunities, (including gender sensitivity, *Leave no one behind*<sup>2</sup>), climate sensitivity, conflict sensitivity and *Do no harm*. In addition, various methodological and reporting aspects are quality assured at this stage: the object of the evaluation, context of evaluation, framework conditions of the project, central questions and learning interest as well as the data collection methods and their evaluation. In addition, the inception report states the request that the evaluators engage in dealing with partnership-based approaches (national evaluation policies, such as national guidelines, recommendations, evaluation plans, etc.) and consider them in the evaluation design. If evaluation plans of the partner country provide for similar evaluations, a potential cooperation will be checked and, if possible, initiated. Finally, the inception report will be shared for comments with the partner institution. If the inception report contains no further unresolved issues, it is officially approved, and the field phase and/or data acquisition starts.

### Validation workshop

After the completion of the data collection phase, a validation workshop with the partner institutions, the evaluators, the project team and, if possible, with the evaluation coordinators is organized. At the workshop, open and critical exchange is sought in which the results of the evaluation and the resulting recommendations are discussed. In this way, the workshop contributes to the involvement of the partner institutions (QC 12) as well as to the benefit and use of the evaluation results.

### Annotated reporting template for the full version of the evaluation report

The full version of the evaluation report is commented by the section head, the project team, the evaluation coordinators and the partner institutions. Thereafter, the com-

ments are accepted or rejected by the evaluators with a justification. The purpose of commenting the evaluation report is to provide quality assurance of the requirements stated in the inception report. In addition, an evaluation matrix will be considered for future use to provide a clearer picture of the sources used and their resilience (QC 32). In addition, the informational content of the summary, the adherence to the OECD/DAC criteria, the coherence of the empirical conclusions and compliance with the BMZ orientation guidelines, including other evaluation aspects, and the presentation of the interdependencies are examined (QC 33–35). Finally, it is verified that all recommendations are directed to a clear addressee and contain useful information that can be implemented in practice by that recipient (QC 30). The report will then be sent to the partner institution for review (QC 12).

### Final discussion

The final discussion involves the project team, the evaluators, the evaluation coordinators, and the section head (QC 13). It serves to clarify open questions, discuss recommendations and plan the publication of the one-pager, summary and full version (QC 5, 23). The one-pager, summary and full version of the evaluation report are made available to the partner institutions (QC 6, 24). Any disagreements are debated in the final discussion and, if they persist, the evaluator's opinion is included in the evaluation report (QC 25). In individual cases, PTB reserves the right to attach a statement to the evaluation report (QC 7).

### Study documents and follow-up

Recommendations directed to the project team are documented in a so-called *follow-up sheet*. The project team successively documents the implementation of the recommendation or states the reason for its non-implementation in the follow-up sheet which is reviewed by the responsible evaluator after one year. All recommendations that relate to the entire operational area are collected, validated and discussed with the section and group heads, who then submit a management response which accepts or rejects the recommendations and states the reasons. The same process is applied to the evaluation unit which collects all recommendations that are addressed to it and issues a statement.

<sup>2</sup> *Leave no one behind* (LNOB) is one of the principles of the Agenda 2030 which mandates that people with the least development opportunities be reached first. This principle, in the context of the evaluation's inception report, is intended to emphasize the requirement that the opinions and needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups must be taken into account in the evaluation, and that the development measure itself must also be examined for its inclusiveness.

### Meta-evaluations

In addition to the standard quality assurance mechanisms, the PTB evaluation unit also participates in meta-evaluations. They allow an external audit of the evaluation unit and serve to identify further development potential. Such evaluations are usually commissioned by PTB. However, they can also be performed within the course of DEval evaluations.

### Quality assurance of the projects (Q.3)

In addition to the processes of the evaluation unit (Q.01), the quality assurance processes of project coordination in the International Cooperation Group (Q.3) also have an impact on the quality of evaluations. In particular, it is essential to ensure the use of *SMART* indicators<sup>3</sup> in module proposals to plausibly verify interdependencies later on. Furthermore, baseline data, monitoring data and progress reports are key data resources of the evaluation. Based on these reasons, a close exchange with the persons responsible for quality assurance and monitoring in the respective section of Group Q.3 is crucial.



© iStock

---

<sup>3</sup> Indicators should be *specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timed*.



# 5. Defining the Evaluation Programme

The annual evaluation programme determines which projects will be evaluated. The process for evaluating the projects aims to balance accountability and organizational learning and is implemented in several steps:

1. The preparation of the programme starts with the recording of all projects that will end in the following year. This population covers the period from the beginning of the second quarter (Q2) of the following year (e.g. 1 April 2025) up to the end of the first quarter (Q1) of the subsequent year (e.g. 31 March 2026).
2. The project coordinators from the International Cooperation Group (Q.3) nominate up to three projects from the population for which they believe there is particular learning potential. These projects will be included in the evaluation programme in any case.
3. A random sample will be taken of projects that, including the projects nominated by Q.3, cover a total of 70 % of the population.
4. The annual plan will be updated, if necessary, e.g. in the case of project extensions.

If certain projects from the evaluation programme (projects that have already been drawn) are unexpectedly extended, they will be mandatorily carried over to the following year's programme without undergoing the random drawing again. Such projects will therefore be evaluated in addition to the 70 percent of projects that were drawn at random. However, if it can be anticipated that a project will be extended, it will not be included in the population but will participate in the next year's sampling procedure. If, contrary to expectations, the project is not renewed, it must still be evaluated in the same year so that the sampling process cannot be bypassed.

The procedure meets the requirements of accountability by randomly selecting a representative number of projects. It also ensures that projects with specific learning potential can be nominated by the project coordinating Group Q.3 and thus are not excluded from the sample by chance. This also meets the need for organizational learning.

## Evaluation programme procedure

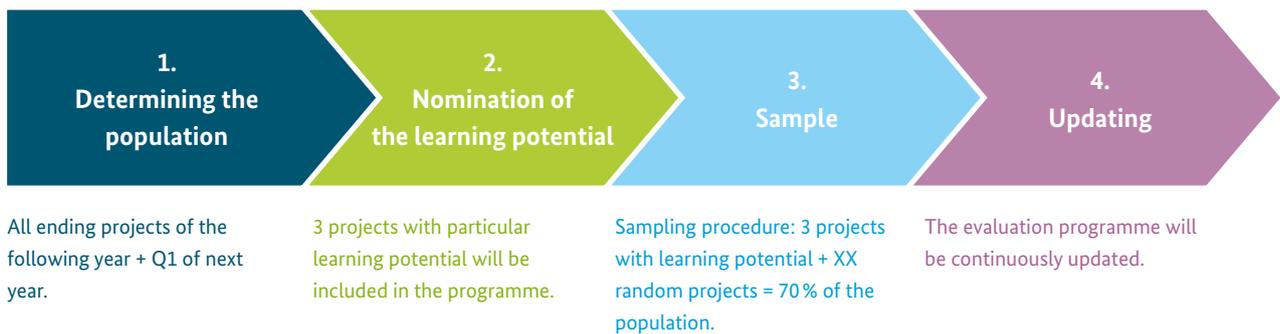


Figure 2: Evaluation programme procedure. Source: Inhouse Presentation.

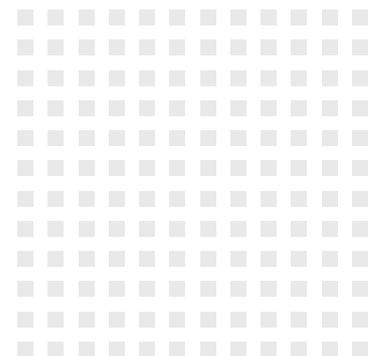
# 6. Evaluation Types, Approaches, Data Collection Methodology and Analytical Methods

In accordance with the BMZ guidelines (2021a), PTB mainly uses final evaluations since impact can usually be assessed and evaluated at the end of the project at the earliest. Final evaluations are usually conducted during the last six months of the project and completed at the end of the project term. If necessary, additional evaluations can be carried out, such as ex-post evaluations to assess the durability of impacts over time, interim evaluations or cross-sectional evaluations. In the future, these additional types of evaluations will have a more prominent place in the portfolio of the evaluation units.

The evaluation methodology will be adapted to the object of the evaluation and may vary from evaluation to evaluation. Typically, however, PTB's evaluations are theory-based *realist evaluations*. They assume a cause-effect relationship that is probabilistic rather than deterministic. The realist evaluation also assumes that the success of a project measure depends on the context in which the measure is carried out and of the stakeholders who operate in that context and perceive it in different ways. Interviews are therefore used as the most frequent means of data collection. Online surveys and the compilation of descriptive statistics, as well as additional survey methods, can also be used, depending on the evaluation subject.

In the future, the variety of methods evaluated at PTB is to be expanded. For this purpose, the systematic embedding of evaluation types, evaluation approaches, survey methods and analysis methods will be examined in a continuous process. Among other things, the contribution analysis approach is to be piloted in this context in order to achieve a stronger focus on a cause-effect relationship of the project logic. In each evaluation, however, it will be decided which methodology seems most appropriate and should be used.

Due to the relatively low project volume of PTB compared to other implementing organizations such as GIZ or KfW, *rigorous impact evaluations* (RIEs) are not included in PTB's portfolio of methods for the time being. The costs of such a methodology would not be in proportion to the benefit of the results and the project commission value. Therefore, the DeGEval quality criterion of *evaluation efficiency* would not be met. However, the possibility of using rigorous methodologies is continuously tested, and individual piloting is carried out on suitable projects.



# 7. Evaluation Criteria

The developmental impact is assessed based on the six OECD/DAC criteria (2010) – relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact on development policy and sustainability – and the associated guiding questions. The further operationalization of the criteria and the formulation of the sub-questions are based on the BMZ orientation guidelines (BMZ, 2021b). Additional questions that serve the learning interests of the partner institutions could be included in the sense of usefulness and utilization of the evaluation results.

These OECD/DAC criteria are evaluated along a six-level marking scale (see below). The overall project rating is based on the average of scores for the OECD/DAC criteria, with all criteria weighted equally. If the effectiveness, impact or sustainability are rated 4 or lower, this is considered a knock-out criterion, and the total rating is downgraded to 4.

## The OECD/DAC criteria

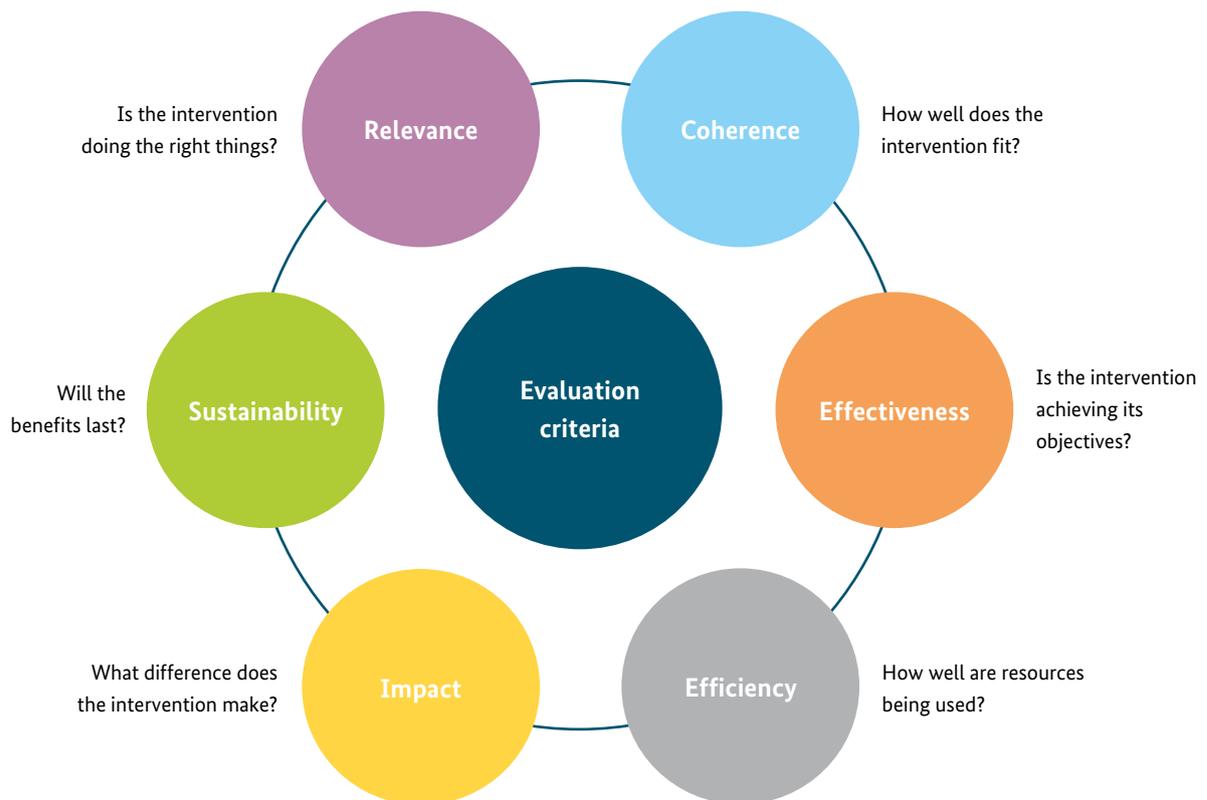


Figure 3: The OECD/DAC criteria. Source: BMZ (2021b).

### Marking scale for the evaluation of the OECD/DAC criteria

Score	Mark	Description
very successful	1	very good result, clearly above expectations
successful	2	good result, entirely meets expectations
successful to a limited extent	3	satisfactory; results are below expectations, but mainly positive
rather unsuccessful	4	unsatisfactory result; below expectations and negative results prevail despite several positive results
mainly unsuccessful	5	negative results clearly prevail despite several positive partial results
entirely unsuccessful	6	the project has failed completely; situation has rather deteriorated

## 8. Capacity WORKS

Capacity WORKS is a management model for project steering that was developed in 2006 by the former GTZ. The model includes five essential success factors (strategy, cooperation, steering culture, processes, learning and innovation) and several *tools* to achieve these factors. The application of specific Capacity WORKS tools is mandatory at PTB. Due to the great importance of Capacity WORKS in the implementation of the projects, it is also part of the evaluations and is assessed in the context of the Capacity WORKS self-assessment. The results are summarized under the OECD/DAC criterion of effectiveness in the sub-question on the quality of implementation.



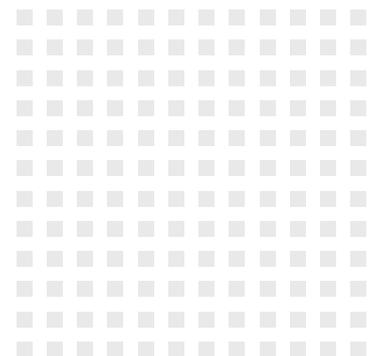
© iStock

# 9. Combination of Evaluation and Appraisal Mission

Since mid-2016, evaluations and appraisal missions of follow-up projects can be combined at PTB. According to the standards of DeGEval (2016), evaluations must be useful (usefulness), be carried out in a realistic and diplomatic manner (feasibility), be legally and ethically correct (correctness) and produce technically appropriate information (accuracy). Adherence to these standards can be compromised by the proximity of evaluations to appraisal missions of follow-on projects. To avoid this, the evaluation unit has prepared a guiding document to regulate the process at potentially conflicting points and to provide clear guidance on the combined approach.

Regarding the selection of evaluators, it is specified that the appraisal and evaluation can be carried out by the same team of evaluators should there be sufficient technical and methodological qualification. If the team of experts is not suitable for conducting the appraisal mission, the regional section is free to add a person to the team who will be responsible for appraisal questions. The preliminary discussion should explicitly address possibly arising conflicts between the project appraisal and evaluation and preventive strategies on how to avoid them. For this purpose, the template for the preliminary discussion is supplemented by the item *possible conflicts in the area of tension between the audit and evaluation*. Following the preliminary meeting, appraisal mission and evaluation can be regulated in one and the same contract with the evaluators, but separate ToRs must be used. Furthermore, in the case of a combined procedure, the inception report is supplemented by a short report called the *Examination*. The field phase must distinguish between evaluation and appraisal in its implementation. Meetings with partner institutions can either take place on two different dates or the interview guide must provide a clear distinction between the two areas. In this case, the dual function of the interview must be communicated to the interview partners at the beginning. In addition, the transition from the evaluation to the appraisal part of the interview guide must be made clear in the interview. It is best to start with the evaluation part in order to reduce any possible bias in the answers to the evaluation part

that might arise from the focus on a follow-up project. In general, other participants present during the review may participate in combined interviews. Evaluators have the option to reduce the number of participants at any time, to ask certain participants to participate in the interview at a later date or to arrange separate interviews. If it is deemed necessary in advance, two consecutive sessions for the evaluation and examination can be scheduled in order to limit the group of participants to the topic at hand, especially in situations that are likely to be controversial. Validation workshops for the appraisal mission and evaluation will be carried out at separate times. It is self-evident that the appraisal mission and evaluation have to be documented in two separate reports.



# 10. Benefit and Use of Evaluation Results

The benefit of evaluation result is mainly marked by providing accountability toward the public and BMZ as well as serving the purpose of organizational learning.

To provide *accountability* toward the BMZ, all evaluation products (one-pager, summary and full version of the evaluation report) are submitted to the Ministry. In addition, it is possible to present the evaluation results to the relevant departments of the Ministry and to schedule a discussion. Up to now, only the one-pager and the summary were available to the public on the PTB website. In the future, the full version will also be published making PTB's work even more transparent to the public.

To make organizational learning as effective as possible, specific stakeholders are involved in specific information formats. Follow-up sheets and learning documentation are used for the project team, the management level of project coordination in Group Q.3 and the evaluation unit in order to track the implementation of recommendations after one year. Recommendations must be either accepted or rejected and state the reasons. The follow-up sheets therefore not only serve a monitoring function but also provide a form of documentation that allows a systematic analysis of the implementation of recommendations. The results of PTB's evaluations and the meta-evaluations in which PTB participates are forwarded to expert project coordination working groups of Group Q.3.

The results are also communicated to Group Q.3 in the form of a presentation, to which PTB-external persons are also invited, e.g. evaluators from the pool of evaluators and short-term experts employed in PTB projects. The interested public, the scientific community and other implementing organizations have the possibility to access the published evaluation reports via the PTB website. For this purpose, a database with a filter function has been created to facilitate access. Finally, learning on the part of the partner institutions is ensured by active involvement in the evaluation process, a workshop for validation and discussion of the results as well as by sharing

the evaluation products. In the future, additional formats for the communitization of the identified good practices and *lessons learned* in the evaluation will be developed. These formats shall be embedded in knowledge management and training processes to ensure the utilization of evaluation results – also during personnel turnover.



# Literature

Lange, S., Telfser, K., & Wallerath, S. (2020). *Remote Evaluations – Initial Experience and Recommendations*. [https://www.ic.ptb.de/media/fileadmin/Publications/PTB\\_Info\\_Remote\\_Evaluations\\_EN.pdf](https://www.ic.ptb.de/media/fileadmin/Publications/PTB_Info_Remote_Evaluations_EN.pdf)

Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). (2021a). *BMZ Paper 4. Leitlinien für die Evaluierung der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit*. <https://www.bmz.de/resource/blob/92884/bmz-leitlinien-evaluierung-2021.pdf>

Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). (2021b). Grundsätze der Evaluierung. Evaluierungskriterien der bilateralen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit. Orientierungslinien des BMZ. <https://www.bmz.de/resource/blob/92894/evaluierungskriterien.pdf>

DeGEval – Evaluation Society (2016). *Standards für Evaluation*. [https://www.degeval.org/fileadmin/Publikationen/DeGEval-Standards\\_fuer\\_Evaluation.pdf](https://www.degeval.org/fileadmin/Publikationen/DeGEval-Standards_fuer_Evaluation.pdf)

*Evaluierung* (no date). Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. Retrieved on 07 February 2023 at <https://www.bmz.de/de/ministerium/evaluierung>

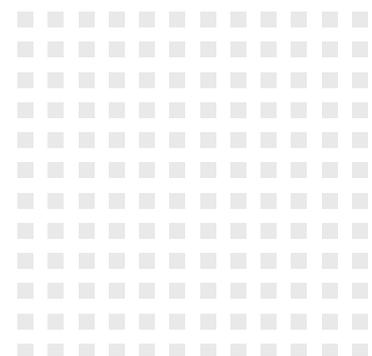
Guffler, K., Kunert, L., Wittenberg, M. and Herforth, N. (2022), *Meta-Evaluierung zur Qualität von (Projekt-)Evaluierungen in der deutschen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit*, German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval), Bonn.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2011). IFRC Framework for Evaluation. <https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/IFRC-Framework-for-Evaluation.pdf>

OECD (2010). *DAC-Reihe Leitlinien und Grundsatztexte: Qualitätsstandards für die Entwicklungsevaluierung*. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264085183-de>

# List of Abbreviations

HWG	Head of Working Group
BMWK	Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
DeGEval	DeGEval – Evaluation Society (Gesellschaft für Evaluation e.V.)
DEval	German Institute for Development Evaluation
EVA	PTB staff in charge of the coordination of evaluations
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
PE	Principal evaluator or lead evaluator
IR	Inception report
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PC	Project coordinator
PCE	Project coordinator in the evaluation team
PTB	Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt
TE	Technical evaluator
QI	Quality infrastructure
SH	Section head/Head of section
RIE	Rigorous impact evaluation
ToR	Terms of reference



# Imprint

**Published by**

Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt  
Bundesallee 100  
38116 Braunschweig  
Germany

**Responsible**

Dr. Friederike Stein  
+49 531 592-9030  
iz-evaluierung@ptb.de  
[www.ptb.de/cms/en/ptb/fachabteilungen/abtq/ag-q01.html](http://www.ptb.de/cms/en/ptb/fachabteilungen/abtq/ag-q01.html)

**Text**

Lukas Nagel

**Title image**

© iStock

As of: January 2024

Translated and updated: January 2025





## Contact

Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt

International Cooperation

Dr. Friederike Stein

Phone +49 531 592-9030

[iz-evaluierung@ptb.de](mailto:iz-evaluierung@ptb.de)

[www.ptb.de/cms/en/ptb/fachabteilungen/abtq/ag-q01.html](http://www.ptb.de/cms/en/ptb/fachabteilungen/abtq/ag-q01.html)

This brochure can  
be found here:

