



Stockholm Evaluation Unit - Guidelines

INTRODUCTION TO THE SEU

How it works and how we can support your project

Why Evaluate?

Evaluations are an important opportunity to ensure quality and accountability of operations at MSF, as confirmed by both the OCB Strategic Orientations 2020-2023 and the Operational Prospects 2020-2023.

'Evaluation is about assessing the design, strategy, implementation and results of our medical and humanitarian interventions, measured against established MSF or international standards.'

(SEU Steering Committee Framework, September 2019).

Both the Strategic Orientations 2020-2023 and the Operational Prospects 2020-2023 confirm MSF OCB's commitment to adopting a culture of evaluations, with the Prospects underscoring the decision taken by the SEU's Steering Committee that all operational projects should be routinely evaluated, by default.

Evaluations serve different purposes at different organizational and project levels.

On the mission and project level, an evaluation strives to improve what we do by looking at what works and what works less and by directly feeding this information back into the operational decision-making process. An evaluation can also confirm needs and assumptions.



On an organizational and managerial level, evaluations can inform program development and the implementation of strategic direction (such as the Operational Prospects). They are also an important tool to provide MSF governance, supporters/donors and patients and communities with documentation about the use and the results of MSF's work.

Evaluations ask questions in line with specific criteria, which can include:

Relevance: Do project objectives correspond with identified needs? Are our intervention choices appropriately prioritized to meet the most urgent needs first?

Appropriateness: Is the strategy appropriate in order to achieve the objectives?

Effectiveness: To what extent have the agreed objectives been achieved?

Coverage: To which extent do the activities reach the target population?

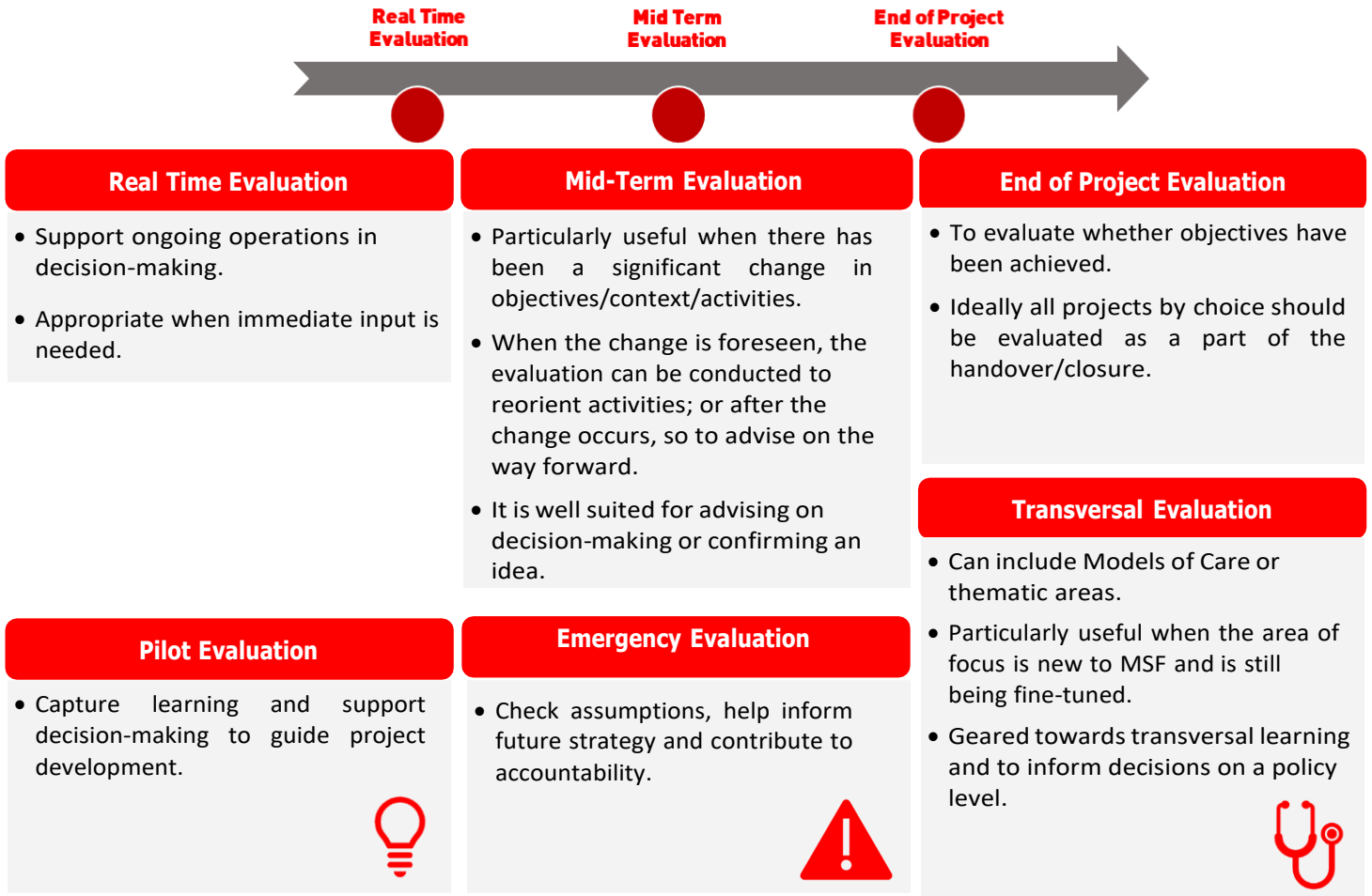
Timeliness: To what extent was the intervention timely?

Impact: Did the program make a difference?



Evaluation opportunities

The appropriate time to conduct an evaluation will depend on several factors, including where in the project cycle you are, but also what is your intended use of the findings. Here are some opportunities that can be considered when planning:



Stockholm Evaluation Unit

The Stockholm Evaluation Unit (SEU) is the primary mechanism to support OCB in conducting evaluations of projects. It is based at MSF-Sweden headquarters and largely financed by both MSF-Sweden and MSF OCB.

The SEU consists of seven full time employees: three Evaluation Managers, two Evaluation Officers, the SEU Process and Communication Officer (PCO) and the SEU Head of Unit. The Evaluation Managers all have MSF field experience, and each have an area of expertise (medical referent, methodology and organizational). The PCO ensures that processes and systems function smoothly, and manages outreach and communication. The Head of the SEU is ultimately responsible for quality control and often the first point of contact to initiate an evaluation. While the SEU primarily supports external evaluations, we also support colleagues in other exercises that can contribute to driving quality, accountability and thinking on decision-making within the movement, such as internal reviews.

The SEU is accompanied by a Steering Committee (SC), which includes representatives from OCB-Ops (DirOps), Medical Department (DepMedDir), GD office (DepGD), OCB Board, MSF Sweden's Board, and MSF-Sweden (GD). The SC is chaired by one of its members and meets quarterly. The SEU regularly reports to the OCB and MSF-Sweden Boards on activities and plans.

The SEU is one of three units within the movement working specifically on evaluations. The other two are: the Vienna Evaluation Unit (VEU) and the Interdisciplinary Network for Evaluations and Lessons-learned Exercises (RIDER) in Paris. Whereas RIDER works primarily with OCP, the VEU works with the different OCs. For more information, see <https://evaluation.msf.org/>.

Who we are

SteerCo

MSF



Our Approach

Initiating an evaluation at OCB

- ✓ All OCB operational projects should be evaluated by default. Decisions of when (end of project, mid-term, real time, transversal) to evaluate should be formalized as a part of strategic platforms, such as the AROs, CoPros and roundtables.
- ✓ All operational evaluations should be guided and managed by the SEU. The DirOps and SEU Head of Unit manage the list of evaluations, the Steering Committee arbitrates if necessary.
- ✓ All evaluations of OCB operations are financed through a centralized budget; the project mission does not need to budget for the bulk of the evaluation but might need to provide some support (i.e., local transportation, accommodation) during the evaluators' project visits.
- ✓ Evaluations often begin with the Commissioner(s)' thoughts on the evaluation's objective and intended use, which are then fine-tuned with help of the SEU (by answering scoping questions, dialogue etc.). There is no need to prepare and submit Terms of Reference (ToR) at the onset.

Who does what during an evaluation?

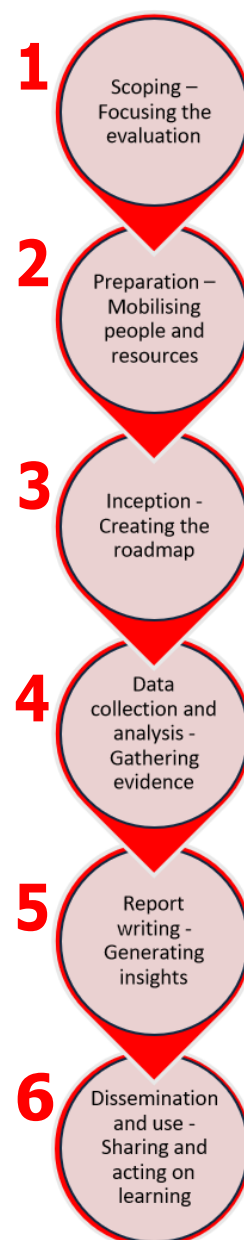
The SEU guides and manages the evaluation process in accordance with **professional standards**, systematically undertaking **quality assurance** throughout. The Commissioner oversees the evaluation process and therefore endorses its key milestones and deliverables (i.e., validates the ToR, inception report and draft/final report). He/she is expected to facilitate communication and agreement between the key stakeholders and arbitrate if/when necessary. A Consultation Group of primary stakeholders is set up to advise on issues associated with the evaluation. The Evaluator(s), often external, conducts the evaluation, evidencing **data collection and analysis**. Everyone works in **adherence to MSF policy**, including the Behavioural Commitments.

Want to get in touch?

To request an evaluation, you can either get in touch directly with the Head of the SEU (Linda Öhman; linda.ohman@stockholm.msf.org) or any of the Evaluation Managers. More information is available on the [MSF OCB Intranet](#) and <https://evaluation.msf.org/> (external).

Documentation detailing processes and roles and responsibilities, as well as templates for the various steps, are available from the SEU.

The evaluation process is set up in six steps:



Stockholm Evaluation Unit
<http://evaluation.msf.org/>
Médecins Sans Frontières

This document was prepared and produced by the Stockholm Evaluation Unit (SEU).
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Cover photo: @Kenny Karpov, 2022. Title: Members of the MSF medical team work late into the night on medical evaluations on board the Geo Barents, a rescue ship operated by MSF. Rotation 8. Central Mediterranean Sea.
Photographer: Kenny Karpov.