

Evaluation Glossary of the FOPH

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Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Introduction..... | 1 |
| 2. Terms of evaluation and evaluation management..... | 2 |
| 3. Alphabetical table of terms (index)..... | 7 |
| 4. Further reading..... | 9 |

1. Introduction

The Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) applies a utilization-oriented and participative evaluation approach, which contributes to provide the respective addressees and other interested parties with relevant and dependable evidence for taking decisions. This glossary serves the internal and external partners of the Evaluation and Research Service at the FOPH. It is intended to facilitate the understanding of a selection of terms specific to evaluation and to contribute to a terminological clarification in the specific working context. The selection of terms is deliberately narrow to ensure the clarity and expedience of the glossary in everyday work practice. Naturally, this means that many likewise relevant terms are not listed. In this respect, the existing more comprehensive coverage of the subject should be pointed out; particularly the literature listed in further reading.

The glossary has been compiled by Thomas Widmer (University of Zurich, Department of Political Science) and Herbert Brunold (FOPH, Evaluation and Research Service) with the involvement of staff members of the Evaluation and Research Service.

2. Terms of evaluation and evaluation management

The following glossary is arranged in five thematic sections relevant for the working context.

1. Instruments of knowledge acquisition in the context of public administration
2. Evaluation types in the FOPH
3. Evaluation focus in the chain of effects
4. Assessment basis and evaluation criteria
5. Selected instruments for the conduct of evaluation

| 1. Instruments of knowledge acquisition in the context of public administration | | |
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| Term (E/G/F) | Definition | Explanation, specifically in the context of the FOPH |
| monitoring Monitoring monitorage / monitoring / suivi | Monitoring describes a continuous observation of a characteristic over a period of time with the aim to identify corresponding changes. | Monitoring data often constitute an important basis for evaluations. In the area of competence of the FOPH, epidemiological data and data on health-related behavior play a particularly crucial role. |
| government research Ressortforschung recherche de l'administration | Government research refers to the scientific activity commissioned by the federal administration, which aims at describing, explaining, understanding and/or predicting. | «Government research is research initiated by the Federal Administration because it needs the results of this research to fulfil its tasks.» [Art. 16 para. 1, RIPA, SR 420.1] In the FOPH, a distinction is made between research and evaluation, which are each realized with specific competences and modalities. As a complement to monitoring and evaluation, the government research in the FOPH has the function to provide (new) knowledge for policy and strategy development and for the implementation of measures in the health area. The government research in the FOPH primarily involves contract research and contributions to third parties. It is practice-oriented and usually interdisciplinary. |
| audit Audit audit | Audit refers to the examination of actions within (public) institutions with regard to their regularity, their legality, and their economic efficiency. | In general, audits are embedded in a context of a supervisory function. At the FOPH, this primarily relates to the insurance supervision. Further, the FOPH can be subject to audits by third parties (such as the Federal Audit Office). |
| performance measurement Leistungsmessung mesure des performances | Performance measurement designates the recording of the performance of (public) institutions with regard to an objective. | In the FOPH, the terms performance measurement or output measurement are used. Repeated performance measurements using quantitative and qualitative data establish the basis to measure progress. Measuring performance and progress are the responsibility of the competent unit and primarily serve the purpose of project reporting. |
| evaluation Evaluation évaluation | Evaluation refers to a research-based service to systematically and transparently assess an object, such as a strategy, law, program, project, measure, etc. | Prerequisites for a systematic and transparent assessment are established through the provision of information bases (quantitative and qualitative data) and evaluation criteria. An evaluation assesses the merit (value independent of context) and/or the worth (value specific to context) of an object with the intention to provide a basis for its improvement (formative evaluation) or to draw a balance (summative evaluation). Evaluations should simultaneously be useful, feasible, proper, and accurate (see meta-evaluation). Namely, they respect ethical principles and contribute to the common good. |

| 2. Evaluation types in the FOPH | | |
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| Dimension of localization | Evaluation type / Definition | Explanation, specifically in the context of the FOPH |
| steering location of an evaluation Ort der Steuerung einer Evaluation lieu du pilotage d'une évaluation | Distinction between an evaluation <i>steered</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – within an organization or project under consideration (self-evaluation / Selbstevaluation / auto-évaluation) or – outside of an organization or project under consideration (heteronomous evaluation / Fremdevaluation / évaluation hétéronome). <p>A <i>self-evaluation</i> is an evaluation, which is steered by the actors responsible for the object of evaluation.</p> <p>A <i>heteronomous evaluation</i> is an evaluation, which is steered by actors outside of the object of evaluation.</p> | As part of the steering of an evaluation decisions are made regarding the intended use location and the execution location of an evaluation. Central decisions relating to the steering of an evaluation concern the aim, purpose and questions of the evaluation as well as the determination of applicable evaluation criteria. |
| execution location of an evaluation Ort der Durchführung einer Evaluation lieu de la réalisation d'une évaluation | Distinction between an evaluation <i>executed</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – within an organization or project under consideration (internal evaluation / interne Evaluation / évaluation interne) or – outside of an organization or project under consideration (external evaluation / externe Evaluation / évaluation externe). <p>An <i>internal evaluation</i> is an evaluation, which is executed within an organization or project under consideration.</p> <p>An <i>external evaluation</i> is an evaluation, which is executed outside of an organization or project under consideration.</p> | The decision on the execution location of an evaluation is made as part of the steering of an evaluation. |
| (intended) use location of an evaluation Ort der (intendierten) Nutzung einer Evaluation lieu de l'utilisation (envisagée) d'une évaluation | Distinction between an evaluation intended to be <i>used</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – within an organization or project under consideration (formative evaluation / formative Evaluation / évaluation formative (aussi évaluation endoformative)) or – outside of an organization or project under consideration (summative evaluation / summative Evaluation / évaluation sommative (aussi évaluation recapitulative)). <p>A <i>formative evaluation</i> is an evaluation, which is performed with the intention to trigger learning processes, to thereby lead to an improvement of the object of evaluation.</p> <p>A <i>summative evaluation</i> is an evaluation, which is performed with the intention to draw a balance in order to provide proof of performance and/or effectiveness of the object of evaluation to third parties.</p> | The decision on the intended use location of an evaluation is made as part of the steering of an evaluation. |
| temporal location of an evaluation Zeitliche Verortung einer Evaluation temporalité de l'évaluation | Distinction, if an evaluation refers to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a future object (prospective evaluation / prospektive Evaluation / évaluation prospective, ex ante evaluation / ex ante Evaluation / évaluation ex ante), – a current object (accompanying evaluation / begleitende Evaluation / évaluation in itinere) or – a «realized or completed» object (retrospective evaluation / retrospektive Evaluation / évaluation rétrospective, ex post evaluation / ex post Evaluation / évaluation ex post). <p>A <i>prospective evaluation</i> (also ex ante evaluation) is an evaluation concerned with the assessment of a future strategy, program, project or another future object.</p> <p>An <i>accompanying evaluation</i> is an evaluation concerned with the assessment of a current strategy, program, project or another current object.</p> <p>A <i>retrospective evaluation</i> (also ex post evaluation) is an evaluation concerned with the assessment of a realized or completed strategy, program, project or another «realized or completed» object.</p> | Evaluations are generally accompanying or retrospective studies. |

| 3. Evaluation focus in the chain of effects | | |
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| Term (E/G/F) | Definition | Explanation, specifically in the context of the FOPH |
| input Input input / moyens / intrants | Resources (means), in whichever form, used for the realization of a strategy, program, project or another object. | The input of a strategy etc. also includes the concept underlying a strategy (the strategy in terms of the paper). A concept evaluation would therefore also be an evaluation of the input. |
| process Prozess processus | Connection of activities and events associated with the realization of a strategy, program, project or another object. | The distinction between what is part of the process and what is not depends on how the process is delimited from the upstream (input) and downstream (output, outcome, impact) level of effect as well as from the context. Depending on the definition of the system boundaries, the process can vary in extent (as in the case of strategies, which exhibit a multilevel structure or which are federally implemented). |
| output Output produits / extrants | Services and products directly rendered and created through a strategy, program, project or another object and directed towards the addressees. | The direct addressees often constitute the <i>target group(s)</i> (Zielgruppe / groupe cible) of an object. The target group, however, may also be reached indirectly, e.g. through multiplier programs. |
| outcome Outcome réalisation / effet direct | Changes (immediately) occurring among the direct addressees of a strategy, program, project or another object. | Evaluations assessing the outcome also require data based information on the output to ensure causal attribution. |
| impact Impact impact | Changes caused by a strategy, program, project or another object occurring among persons, groups, organizations or other objects beyond the direct addressees. | Evaluations assessing the impact also require data based information on the output and outcome to ensure causal attribution. |
| context Kontext contexte | Surroundings, in which an evaluation object (such as a strategy, program, project, etc.) is embedded and which influences the form, the development and the preconditions for effects of an object. In other words, it comprises of a constellation of external factors, which may influence an evaluation object. | The context must always be taken into consideration in evaluations — regardless of the focus being on one or multiple elements of the chain of effects. Only in this way is it possible to provide a balanced assessment. |

| 4. Assessment basis and evaluation criteria | | |
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| Term (E/G/F) | Definition | Explanation, specifically in the context of the FOPH |
| relevance Relevanz pertinence | Importance of a strategy, program, project or another object with regard to resolving existing problems. | Relevance may be considered as a fundamental question of an evaluation or an assessment criterion. Relevance is a measure of importance of an evaluation object (e.g. policy / strategy / program / measure) with regard to solving a problem. The determination of relevance is primarily based on identifiable needs and interests of stakeholders. The needs and interests may change over time. |
| expedience / fit for purpose Zweckmässigkeit opportunité | Utility of a strategy, program, project or another object with regard to resolving existing problems. | Expedience / fit for purpose may be considered as a fundamental question of an evaluation or an assessment criterion. Expedience / fit for purpose focuses on the extent of suitability of an object (such as a measure) to solve a specific problem or to achieve a fixed objective, respectively. The criteria to assess the suitability are: conformity of objectives, adequacy, practicability and utility. A weak effect of an object may not only be attributed to insufficient implementation, but also to a lack of expedience / fit for purpose. |
| coherence Kohärenz cohérence | Internal harmony of the individual elements constituting a strategy, program, project or another object. | Coherence may be considered as a fundamental question of an evaluation or an assessment criterion. In the FOPH, a distinction is made between internal and external coherence. Internal coherence focuses on the consistency of objectives, means and measures. External coherence, by contrast, focuses on the consistency of actions with respect to external activities. |

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| effect Wirkung = Effekt = Auswirkung effet | Difference between a state, which can be causally attributed to an intervention, and an unaffected state. | |
| effectiveness / efficacy Wirksamkeit = Effektivität effectivité / efficacité | Extent to which the intended effects of a program, project or another object actually occur. | Effectiveness / efficacy can be considered as a fundamental question of an evaluation or an assessment criterion. A distinction is made between effectiveness (under real conditions) and efficacy (under ideal conditions). The degree of goal attainment is a measure to determine the effectiveness or efficacy. |
| economy Wirtschaftlichkeit rentabilité / économie | Ratio between the resources invested and the achieved results. | Economy may be considered as a fundamental question of an evaluation or an assessment criterion. In the broader sense, economy includes <i>efficiency</i> (Effizienz / efficience), <i>cost-effectiveness</i> (Kosten-Wirksamkeit / coût-efficacité), <i>cost-utility</i> (Kosten-Nutzwert / coût-utilité) and <i>cost-benefit</i> (Kosten-Nutzen-Relation / rapport coût-utilité (aussi rapport coût-bénéfice)). While costs are taken into account as a monetary value, – effectiveness is expressed in units of effectiveness (such as the number of prevented infections with a disease), – utility is expressed in units of utility (such as ‚Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALY)‘) and – benefit is expressed as the monetary value of the benefit. In the narrow sense, economy describes productivity, i.e. the ratio of input and output. |
| sustainability Nachhaltigkeit durabilité / viabilité / pérennité | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Durability of a characteristic; in the context of evaluation, often the durability of an effect, concerning the persistence (or transience) of an ascertained effect. 2. Multidimensional assessment criterion, which integrates criteria for social, economical and ecological dimensions. | The term sustainability may be susceptible to misunderstanding due to its two meanings. Its use should always involve an explanation of the term. If sustainability is intended to signify «durability», the proper term «durability» should be used. |

| 5. Selected instruments for the conduct of evaluation | | |
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| Term (E/G/F) | Definition | Explanation, specifically in the context of the FOPH |
| program picture Programmbild image du programme | Visual presentation of an evaluation object (such as a strategy, program, project, etc.), which allows the program designers to visualize the intended connections and sequence of effects. The visual presentation shows how the respective activities occur and how they take effect. | Program picture is a generic term. There is a multitude of different terms used for program picture (partly associated with a specific conception); most prominently « <i>effect model</i> » (Wirkungsmodell / modèle d'effets), « <i>logic model</i> » (logisches Modell / modèle logique) and « <i>program theory</i> » (Programmtheorie / théorie du programme) Program pictures may be designed as causal models (including intervention and causal hypotheses) or as process schemes. In that regard, a clarification should always be provided. The FOPH commissions the development of « <i>effect models</i> » including the determination of the corresponding indicators of effect and accompanying explanatory reports. |
| meta-evaluation Meta-Evaluation méta-évaluation | Meta-evaluation is an evaluation of an evaluation, i.e. a systematic and transparent assessment of one or multiple evaluations based on the criteria <i>utility</i> (Nützlichkeit / utilité), <i>feasibility</i> (Durchführbarkeit / faisabilité), <i>propriety</i> (Korrektheit / déontologie) and <i>accuracy</i> (Genauigkeit / precision) as well as further relevant criteria. | At the FOPH, the term meta-evaluation is primarily used for the quality review of externally commissioned draft evaluation reports by the Evaluation and Research Service. In addition to the extensive quality review of evaluation project reports, the FOPH, if needed, also commissions externally conducted meta-evaluations to specific problems. The criteria utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy are specified in the SEVAL-Standards 2000 (Widmer/Landert/Bachmann 2000); the SEVAL-Standards 2016 contain further criteria. |

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| <p>evaluation management Evaluationsmanagement gestion de l'évaluation</p> | <p>Evaluation management ensures the process management and quality assurance of an evaluation project.</p> | <p>The guidelines for evaluation in the federal government (Widmer 2005) contain information on the promotion and assurance of quality with regard to specific phases. They are based on the SEVAL-Standards 2000 (Widmer/Landert/Bachmann 2000) and support the evaluation management at the FOPH.</p> <p>The utilization-oriented and participative evaluation approach of the FOPH shapes the design of the seven process phases of evaluation management at the FOPH:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Needs assessment and setting of priorities / Bedarfserhebung und Prioritätensetzung / Identification des besoins et priorisation 2. Planning / Planung / Planification 3. Formulation of terms of reference / Ausarbeitung des Pflichtenhefts / Elaboration du cahier des charges 4. Competitive commissioning / Auftragsvergabe im Wettbewerb / Mise au concours et adjudication du mandat 5. Accompanying evaluation activities / Begleitung der Evaluationsaktivitäten / Accompagnement des activités d'évaluation 6. Reporting and diffusion of findings / Berichterstattung und Verbreitung der Resultate / Rapport et diffusion des résultats 7. Utilization follow up / «Follow up» – Nutzung der Resultate / «Follow up» de l'utilisation des résultats <p><i>Evaluation planning</i> (Evaluationsplanung / planification d'une évaluation) is understood to mean the process and product of preparatory actions to design an evaluation without its realization.</p> <p>The <i>terms of reference</i> (Pflichtenheft / cahier des charges (aussi termes de référence)) are a written document containing the responsibilities and tasks of the body carrying out the evaluation. They serve as a basis for a more detailed evaluation concept.</p> <p><i>Project organization</i> (Projektorganisation / organisation de projet): <i>Evaluation managers</i> (Evaluationsmanagerinnen und –manager / gestionnaires d'évaluation) are the evaluation professionals on the part of the evaluation commissioners. They significantly contribute to the quality and the actual benefit of evaluations and promote a good culture of evaluation within and outside of their organization. In the FOPH, evaluation managers operate as project leaders in the Evaluation and Research Service.</p> <p>A <i>steering group</i> (Steuerungsgruppe / groupe de pilotage) is a body with decision-making power, which consists of two or more persons representing the commissioners.</p> <p>An <i>advisory group</i> (or <i>monitoring group</i>) (Begleitgruppe / groupe d'accompagnement) is a body with an advisory support function, which consists of two or more persons; generally <i>stakeholders</i> (Beteiligte & Betroffene / partie prenantes et groupes concernés) of the evaluation.</p> <p><i>Valorization</i> (Valorisierung / valorisation) refers to the dissemination and utilization of an evaluation and its results.</p> |
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3. Alphabetical table of terms (index)

| <i>English</i> | <i>German</i> | <i>French</i> | <i>Reference</i> |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| accompanying evaluation | Begleitende Evaluation | évaluation in itinere | Section 2, temporal location of an evaluation |
| accuracy | Genauigkeit | précision | Section 5, meta-evaluation |
| advisory group / monitoring group | Begleitgruppe | groupe d'accompagnement | Section 5, evaluation management |
| audit | Audit | audit | Section 1, audit |
| coherence | Kohärenz | cohérence | Section 4, coherence |
| context | Kontext | contexte | Section 3, context |
| cost-benefit ratio | Kosten-Nutzen-Relation | rapport coût-utilité / rapport coût-bénéfice | Section 4, economy |
| cost-effectiveness | Kosten-Wirksamkeit | coût-efficacité | Section 4, economy |
| cost-utility | Kosten-Nutzwert | coût-utilité | Section 4, economy |
| economy | Wirtschaftlichkeit | rentabilité / économie | Section 4, economy |
| effect | Wirkung = Effekt = Auswirkung | effet | Section 4, effect |
| effect model | Wirkungsmodell | modèle d'effets | Section 5, program picture |
| effectiveness / efficacy | Wirksamkeit = Effektivität | effectivité / efficacité | Section 4, effectiveness / efficacy |
| efficiency | Effizienz | efficience | Section 4, economy |
| evaluation | Evaluation | évaluation | Section 1, evaluation |
| evaluation management | Evaluationsmanagement | gestion de l'évaluation | Section 5, evaluation management |
| evaluation managers | Evaluationsmanagerinnen & -manager | gestionnaires d'évaluation | Section 5, evaluation management |
| evaluation planning | Evaluationsplanung | planification d'une évaluation | Section 5, evaluation management |
| execution location of an evaluation | Ort der Durchführung einer Evaluation | lieu de la réalisation d'une évaluation | Section 2, execution location of an evaluation |
| expedience / fit for purpose | Zweckmässigkeit | opportunité | Section 4, expedience / fit for purpose |
| external evaluation | Externe Evaluation | évaluation externe | Section 2, execution location of an evaluation |
| feasibility | Durchführbarkeit | faisabilité | Section 5, meta-evaluation |
| formative evaluation | Formative Evaluation | évaluation formative / évaluation endoformative | Section 2, (intended) use location of an evaluation |
| government research | Ressortforschung | recherche de l'administration | Section 1, government research |
| heteronomous evaluation | Fremdevaluation | évaluation hétéronome | Section 2, steering location of an evaluation |
| impact | Impact | impact | Section 3, impact |
| input | Input | input / moyens / intrants | Section 3, input |

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| (intended) use location of an evaluation | Ort der (intendierten) Nutzung einer Evaluation | lieu de l'utilisation (envisagée) d'une évaluation | Section 2, (intended) use location of an evaluation |
| internal evaluation | Interne Evaluation | évaluation interne | Section 2, execution location of an evaluation |
| logic model | Logisches Modell | modèle logique | Section 5, program picture |
| meta-evaluation | Meta-Evaluation | méta-évaluation | Section 5, meta-evaluation |
| monitoring | Monitoring | monitorage / monitoring / suivi | Section 1, monitoring |
| outcome | Outcome | réalisation / effet direct | Section 3, outcome |
| output | Output | produits / extrants | Section 3, output |
| performance measurement | Leistungsmessung | mesure des performances | Section 1, performance measurement |
| process | Prozess | processus | Section 3, process |
| program picture | Programmbild | image du programme | Section 5, program picture |
| program theory | Programmtheorie | théorie du programme | Section 5, program picture |
| project organization | Projektorganisation | organisation de projet | Section 5, evaluation management |
| propriety | Korrektheit | déontologie | Section 5, meta-evaluation |
| prospective evaluation | Prospektive Evaluation | évaluation prospective | Section 2, temporal location of an evaluation |
| relevance | Relevanz | pertinence | Section 4, relevance |
| retrospective evaluation | Retrospektive Evaluation | évaluation rétrospective | Section 2, temporal location of an evaluation |
| self-evaluation | Selbstevaluation | auto-évaluation | Section 2, steering location of an evaluation |
| stakeholders | Beteiligte & Betroffene | parties prenantes et groupes concernés | Section 5, evaluation management |
| steering group | Steuerungsgruppe | groupe de pilotage | Section 5, evaluation management |
| steering location of an evaluation | Ort der Steuerung einer Evaluation | lieu du pilotage d'une évaluation | Section 2, steering location of an evaluation |
| summative evaluation | Summative Evaluation | évaluation sommative / évaluation récapitulative | Section 2, (intended) use location of an evaluation |
| sustainability | Nachhaltigkeit | durabilité / viabilité / pérennité | Section 4, sustainability |
| target group | Zielgruppe | groupe cible | Section 3, output |
| temporal location of an evaluation | Zeitliche Verortung einer Evaluation | temporalité de l'évaluation | Section 2, temporal location of an evaluation |
| terms of reference | Pflichtenheft | cahier des charges / termes de référence | Section 5, evaluation management |
| utility | Nützlichkeit | utilité | Section 5, meta-evaluation |
| valorization | Valorisierung | valorisation | Section 5, evaluation management |

4. Further reading

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Further information and working tools for evaluation can be found on the website www.bag.admin.ch/evaluation.