

The new OECD DAC evaluation criteria: what changes for agriculture and food security?

Session Notes

12 February 2020
15:00 – 16:00 CET

Recording Link:

<http://fao.adobeconnect.com/p27liw6o11yp/>

ABOUT THIS WEBINAR

The goal of the webinar was to present the revised OECD DAC Criteria to interested members of the [EvalForward Community of Practice](#) and to stimulate a discussion on their contextualization in the agriculture / food security sector.

SPEAKERS

- Megan Kennedy-Chouane, Senior Policy Analyst, OECD
- Rachel Sauvinet Bedouin, Senior evaluation officer, FAO

ORGANIZING TEAM

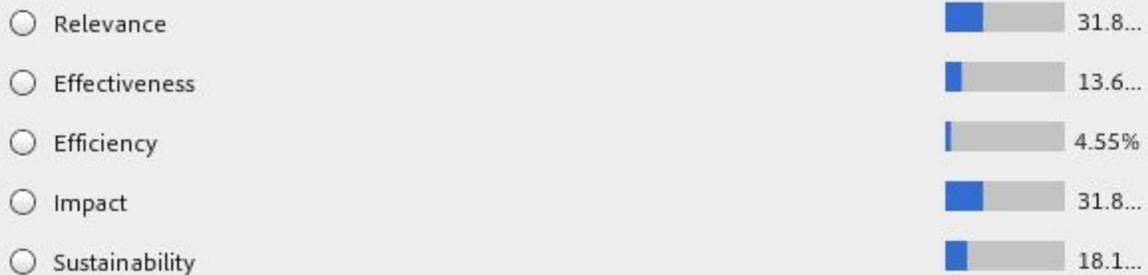
- Paula Carretero Zafra, Webinar Coordinator (FAO)
- Luca Furio, Communication Assistant (FAO) Luca.Furio@fao.org
- Renata Mirulla, Facilitator of EvalForward Renata.Mirulla@fao.org

AGENDA

Welcome	Renata Mirulla,
Introduction to the OECD DAC Criteria, their use and the current A2030 context Poll n.1	Rachel Sauvinet Bedouin
Better Criteria for Better Evaluation of food security, agriculture and rural development	Megan Kennedy- Chouane
The coherence criterion Poll n.2	Rachel Sauvinet Bedouin
Q&A session	
Closing and feedback	Renata Mirulla

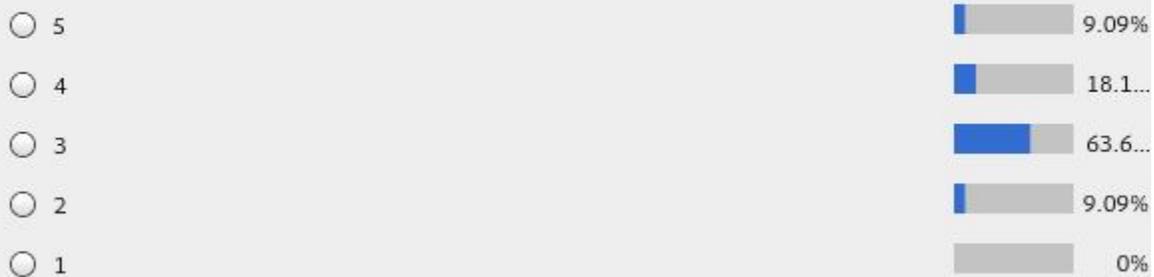
Poll 1

If you have to choose only one of the following criteria, which one would it be?



Poll 2

How much do you think the new OECD DAC criteria and guidance will improve evaluation practice? from 1 (irrelevant) to 5 (great improvement)



Q&A Session

- 1) **To what extent do these criteria apply to humanitarian interventions? Why “benefit from development interventions? What if the conflict was not an issue at the time the programme was designed?**

Yes, the OECD DAC criteria can and should be used for humanitarian interventions.

The question of how the criteria may be interpreted in humanitarian sector is often raised but given the broad contextual nature of the criteria they do apply.

ALNAP has done a recent review of the extent to which the ALNAP criteria have been applied in humanitarian evaluations. These are the 5 core OECD DAC criteria + the 3 additional ones developed by ALNAP specifically for humanitarian interventions. They found that the 5 original DAC criteria were by far the most frequently evaluated.

The focus on international norms and standards in the relevance criterion provides an entry point to look at humanitarian law and if the intervention complies with it.

Ex sustainability : the question whether saving lives and the benefits will maintain is important to ask and look at how the benefits should remain.

If the conflict was not an issue at the design stage of the intervention, once the conflict did arise during implementation, implementation needs to be adapted including the option of stopping the intervention. People are reluctant to change intervention once it is underway even if the context has changed, but this is exactly what evaluation should be flagging.

2) We need more specific examples on how the criteria can be applied

We are preparing some guidelines with real world examples. These will evolve over time as people start applying and gaining experiences from the application of the new definitions.

3) Transformational change is a very complex topic, I hope the guide will provide some additional thoughts!

The criteria are meant for evaluation of interventions and not for carrying out a comprehensive analysis of complex change processes for which there are other types of tools.

The criteria are just a starting point for looking at broader transformational changes of a particular intervention and acknowledging that not all interventions are necessarily seeking to have transformational effects but still could be impactful. For example: a large scale intervention to treat severe malnutrition in children may be really impactful but not necessarily transformational if it is not addressing the underlying causes of malnutrition.

Transformational change is one element of the impact definition but not the only one.

4) Where do financial management and transparency fit in the criteria?

Efficiency will address financial management and some aspects of financial management have to do with effectiveness as well.

Transparency related to financial management would fall in the practice principles more than in the criteria as well as in ethical guidance on how to conduct evaluation.

5) Should we not give greater emphasis to the question of linkages?

Linkages are critical and this is an area in which evaluations have not done a great job of looking across different intervention and across silos and sectors within institutions

Another important issue related to the climate crises and sustainable development goals in general is the issue of tradeoffs and evaluations so far have not been able to provide great insights. This will be

an interesting area to see how evaluations can innovate and provide better evidence on issues of tradeoffs especially under the coherence criteria

- 6) **I think there is a need to tighten the definition of relevance. Given the broad nature of SDG and Government, Donor Policies, it is challenging to find interventions that are not relevant, especially when it relates to food security interventions.**

If you set your objectives as broad as the SDGs many things will be relevant but what is important is to evaluate the relevance of the impact pathways and the approach to reach the specific objectives of the intervention under the SDG. As with all criteria, it is important to define our evaluation scope in a meaningful way.

USEFUL LINKS

- Better Criteria for Better Evaluation: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>
- Information on the global consultation on adapting the evaluation criteria: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/eval-criteria-global-consultation.htm>