

Evaluation policy of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

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Background

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The guidelines refer to the chain of cause and effect commonly used at the SDC:

"Inputs-Activities-Outputs-Outcomes-Impact".

Performance is defined as "inputs, activities and outputs".

Effects are defined as "outcomes and impact".

Results/development results are defined as "outputs", "outcomes" and "impact".

Purpose of the SDC's evaluation policy

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- § It clarifies the value placed on evaluation by the SDC and places the concept in wider overall context.
- § It demonstrates the key national and international trends in the area of evaluation.
- § It gives an overview of the SDC's evaluation architecture and provides a benchmark.
- § It provides a basis for stipulating minimum "quality assurance" evaluation standards (in the context of "managing for results").

The policy does not include an in-depth discussion of individual evaluation methods, as information in this regard can simply be consulted on the Internet. A list of the corresponding links is provided in the Annex.

This paper is intended for SDC employees and as a source of information both within and outside the Federal Administration.

The SDC's evaluation policy is not "set in stone", and will be amended where necessary in line with changing circumstances.

The challenges of international development cooperation and the resulting implications for evaluation

Growing agreement that there should be an increasingly shared global approach to international cooperation, culminating in the UN Millennium Development Goals and a large number of "global programmes" and key international efforts (e.g. the Doha Round), mean that the international development cooperation community is being called on for a greater division of labour and a better coordinated approach in the name of greater efficiency and effectiveness and in the interests of the highest possible multiplication effects. The international community has adopted the principle of "managing for development results" as its central management strategy. The management of development projects should be primarily geared towards planned and achieved "results", and whilst management based on activities and processes remains important, the focus on results must not be pushed to the background. The coexistence of global programmes and development projects that are more strongly focused on local realities is now generally recognised as a practical and relevant approach. At the level of global, regional and local programmes and projects, what is needed

¹ Translator's note: This paragraph in the German text deal with information that is relevant only to German-speaking readers; it has therefore not been translated.

is ongoing aligning of the intervention undertaken with the development plans of the partners concerned (in the public and private sectors). It is crucial that the players involved coordinate their efforts.

There is an emerging trend towards greater networking and a more systematic approach to overcoming current development cooperation challenges, not just in the international but also in the national context. There are therefore more consistent calls for a “whole of government” approach, which should lead to better coordination and a more sensible division of labour among the public-sector players in Switzerland. The intention behind this is also to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of development cooperation efforts.

What are the resulting implications for evaluation?

- § The number of direct and indirect players is visibly multiplying, and the evaluation process must take account of this fact.
- § The level of complexity of activities (programmes and projects) is generally on the rise, in turn also making evaluations more complex.
- § The shift of focus onto results-based management or management according to outcomes and impact is shifting the evaluation focus onto the specific results achieved in practice.
- § To a greater extent than in the past, the outcomes and impact of projects are now, being understood as a process of change resulting from the interaction of different players and factors. Evaluations are therefore encompassing a greater number of factors, and must also incorporate various perspectives.

Core statements

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The development and implementation priorities of the partners must be consistently incorporated into evaluation processes.2. “Joint evaluations”, i.e. evaluation processes involving various players, are growing in importance. International forums that plan this type of “joint evaluation” are becoming more important. Classic types of evaluation (where a donor evaluates “his” project) are still relevant. However, in the medium term, programmes will be implemented in a more coordinated manner and evaluated on a joint basis.3. The methodical requirements made of evaluations are rising due to the fact that the activities being evaluated (programmes and projects) are growing or have grown more complex. Additionally, there are now greater calls for consistent outcomes and impact analysis. The methodological knowledge required for this process is continually developing and must be available within the evaluation units of the agencies concerned. Global exchange among evaluation experts is required. |
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The fundamentals of evaluation at the SDC

The SDC has a long tradition of using evaluation as a tool. In the 1980s, the SDC introduced evaluation as a means of determining whether projects had achieved their aims and in order to promote learning processes. Today, SDC conducts some 100 reviews (project evaluations) every year. The focus lies on examining the aims achieved at the level of direct outputs and assessing the processes involved. Following one of the most recent peer reviews conducted by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), a system of "independent external" evaluations was introduced (over a period of approximately eight years). These focus on strategically important, overarching issues, and on country-specific and regional programmes. Over recent years, SDC has been much more active with regard to joint evaluations. A specific budget has been earmarked for this area since 2006.

As with the other federal agencies, the SDC is bound by the terms of Article 170 of the Federal Constitution, according to which:

"The Federal Assembly shall ensure that federal measures are evaluated with regard to their effectiveness."

This mission as defined in the Constitution is one that is taken seriously by the SDC. Compared to other federal agencies, the SDC has assumed a pioneering role in the field of evaluation over many years. SDC upper management decided in 2006, and confirmed in 2008, that it would allocate an annual amount of **0.6 to 0.8%** of its total budget to evaluations and reviews so as to demonstrate accountability for its activity in a professional manner. This is an average figure compared against similar agencies (in the case of bilateral donors, the budgets for evaluation range from 0.1 to 2.5% of total expenditure).

In terms of the "location" of the evaluation function, various systems are in place across the Federal Administration. From an international perspective, no uniform practice has yet been adopted. However, the DAC evaluation standards do set out some basic principles. The issue of the "independence/objectivity of the evaluation" is key. How can it be guaranteed that the evaluations adopt as neutral or as objective an outlook as possible, whilst at the same time generating an improvement in quality? The following principle applies:

The greater the independence of an evaluation team with regard to the object being evaluated, the more likely it is that the final report will be impartial.

The "objectivity" of an evaluation report influences credibility just as much as "independence". Methodically "robust" evaluations create scope for a high degree of objectivity. Generally, use is made of econometrics and the social sciences.

Evaluations should provide insights that can be used to optimise quality and manage institutions. "Learning from evaluation" is a central concept. The relatively high costs (of evaluations) can only be justified by the learning effect. In order to guarantee this learning on the part of the organisation, the process requires either consistent management from "above" and/or a certain proximity of the evaluation to those people in the organisation who, following the evaluation, will be responsible for implementing the measures to optimise quality (line). With regard to the related factors of independence, objectivity and proximity to those responsible for change, it is matter of finding the right balance in each case, depending on the object of the evaluation and the type of organisation. In terms of individual evaluations, the focus can be placed specifically on one dimension.

There are two organs in the Federal Administration which have a high level of independence with regard to implementing evaluations in the departments, agencies and offices:

- § National Council Audit Committee and Council of States Audit Committee. These two parliamentary audit committees mainly give mandates to the Parliamentary Control of the Administration Office (PCAO) to carry out evaluations of federal agency activities.
- § The Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO)

The evaluation units have different locations within the Federal Administration, but are generally found at the federal office level (in accordance with IDEKOVI 2005). In some cases they are designed in the form of separate departments in their own right, whilst in other cases they operate as line functions. As part of the SDC's REO process in 2008, it was decided to create an additional evaluation unit at the level of the general secretariat of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

Core statements

4. Reviewing effectiveness is a task imposed by the Constitution.
5. This constitutional task is carried out in the Federal Administration according to the relevant level but, in terms of organisation, in varying ways. The parliamentary audit committees and SFAO already exist and operate with a high level of independence.

Function of evaluation

Both at an international and national level, the function of evaluation is precisely defined. The SDC uses a binding framework based on DAC/OECD evaluation standards, humanitarian aid standards established by the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action for humanitarian aid (ALNAP) and standards established by the Swiss Evaluation Society (SEVAL).

The following definition applies at the SDC:

“Evaluations are systematic studies which provide empirical information so that it is possible to assess the **value** (relevance), **efficiency** and **effectiveness (degree to which goal was achieved at various levels of the chain of outcomes)**, the **impact** (intended and unintended positive and negative impact) and **sustainability** of the object of evaluation.”

These five dimensions may be given different levels of priority in individual evaluations.

Evaluations differ from audits and inspections to the extent that an evaluation represents a more comprehensive **analysis** of effectiveness and sustainability, and assesses the relevance of programmes and projects. Audits/inspections focus on reviewing implementation of the targets (compliance in the sense of surveillance) and on a cost/benefit analysis. Evaluations also take account of the influence of outcome and impact dimensions that are not within the direct “control” of a project. “Implementation monitoring” in the narrow sense can basically only be applied to the level of “input”, “activities” and “output”. At the levels of “outcomes” and “impact”, additional factors also come into play (including some that cannot be controlled). These must be described in context and risk analyses.

Given that evaluations have a more analytical and systematic focus than audits/inspections, they are of central importance to institutional learning, controlling and accountability of organisations. They demonstrate the (positive and negative) outcomes and impact that programmes and projects can have in a complex and constantly changing environment.

Generally, SDC evaluations (including “reviews” as defined below) are carried out by external evaluators or by specialised institutions. This guarantees the independent nature of the assessment. “In-house consultants”, i.e. consultants with substantial business interests with the SDC and/or those who are involved in the planning or implementation of programmes and projects may not be commissioned to carry out evaluations.

Those responsible for evaluation at the SDC are themselves repeatedly deployed as evaluators so that they remain up to date with the latest methods and are familiar with operations “from the inside”. This is achieved in particular through their active participation in international “joint evaluations”.

The assessments made by the evaluation team are not influenced in any way. The SDC issues a management response to the assessments (any self-evaluations are excluded). The line is responsible for implementing those recommendations that are accepted in the management response.

The SDC publishes evaluations (and strategically relevant reviews) on the Internet. This means that the general public and the Swiss parliament have easy access to external examinations of the SDC’s activities. A full list of the planned and implemented evaluations and reviews is compiled annually. This “SDC evaluation programme” is published electronically. Ensuring that evaluations are transparent is a key priority for the SDC. With regard to publications, special care is taken to ensure that the texts are generally comprehensible.

Core statements

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">6. The SDC evaluations are based on internationally and nationally agreed standards.7. Evaluations are not “controls” in the strict sense of the word. Verifying compliance with rules falls within the sphere of audits and inspections. Basically, evaluations involve analysis of outcomes and impact. They ensure accountability and are a useful learning tool.8. The SDC uses various means to ensure that its evaluations are independent/objective: implementation by external, professional teams of consultants or specialised institutions, high methodological quality, transparency when publishing findings. Evaluations must be based on sound monitoring information and baselines, and under no circumstances should they replace systematic monitoring. |
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Evaluation categories

From an international perspective, evaluations can be grouped according to various aspects. With regard to the Swiss Evaluation Society standards, the same categories more or less apply. The SDC works primarily with the categories "**Reviews**" and "**Implementation, and Impact Analysis Controlling**" (IIAC).

Categorisation based on the criterion of purpose of evaluation:

As a general rule, a distinction is drawn between "**formative**" and "**summative**" evaluations.

"Formative evaluations" are intended to improve performance. They uncover aspects during programme/project implementation that are conducive for achieving the intended goal and those aspects that are not. At the SDC, "formative evaluations" are carried out by the operational line that is directly affected and are labelled as "**reviews**". These reviews are subject to SDC evaluation standards and general evaluation principles. Optimisation of the specific programme/project is the main priority during reviews, with institutional learning in the relevant line being of central importance.

An evaluation is described as "summative" if the evaluation dimensions (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact) are comprehensively analysed following the completion of a phase or entire programme/project (a certain degree of prioritising is permitted). Ex-post evaluations/outcome evaluations (in general) fall into this category. Summative evaluations provide findings in relation to the questions "what was appropriate/effective, what wasn't and why?". The SDC's Controlling Section carries out "**Implementation and Impact Analysis Controlling (IIAC)**". These are summative in character. In future, the focus of such evaluations will be placed much more strongly on outcomes and impact (see chain of cause and effect).

Categorisation based on the degree of independence of the evaluation:

"**Internal evaluations**" is the term generally used to describe evaluations where *those directly or indirectly responsible for planning or monitoring a project are involved in the implementation of the evaluation*. Internal evaluations offer the advantage that individuals with good knowledge of the programme are involved in the process. At the SDC, internal evaluations have very much proved their worth in the sense of quality optimisation and are exceptionally useful as a complement to a systematic monitoring process. SDC "reviews" are generally implemented by external parties yet coordinated by the person responsible for the programme, who also influences the overall direction. SDC reviews are therefore "formative/internal" to use the currently applicable terminology.

"**External evaluations**" is the term generally used for those *that are commissioned and/or implemented outside the line responsible for planning and implementation*. They therefore involve a higher level of independence and objectivity. Such evaluations are carried out at the SDC by external consultants or specialised institutions. They are referred to as IIACs (see above) and to use the current terminology are "summative/external". Responsibility for implementation lies with the responsible Corporate Controlling Section in the Office of the Director General. The Evaluation unit in the General Secretariat of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs also carries out external evaluations. The evaluations carried out by the two parliamentary audit committees and the Swiss Federal Audit Office are also external. Care is taken when selecting consultants/specialised institutions to ensure that they can work in an impartial manner. Sound knowledge of the relevant methods guarantees objectivity.

“Reviews” and “Implementation, Outcome and Impact Analysis Controlling” are the most frequently used evaluation tools at the SDC. “Self-evaluation” is the term used for processes where the directly involved players in a project assess the outcome, impact and progress themselves. This may happen at the level of the SDC or the level of the partners. Self-evaluations are generally formative and internal in character. The number of self-evaluations carried out is not systematically recorded. A wide variety of self-evaluation methods and processes form an integral part of the SDC culture (e.g. SWOT analysis, etc.). Self-evaluations can be combined with other types of evaluation.

“**Meta evaluations**” are based on a number of evaluations (including reviews) that have already been carried out. The reports aggregate the findings from a series of evaluations analysed in terms of a stipulated aspect. This type of evaluation is well suited for institutional learning and for reviewing the implementation of strategically important issues.

Peer reviews are processes during which persons/institutions with the same or similar functions/mandates evaluate each other as part of a mutual process.

“**Ex-post evaluations**” reveal the outcome and impact that programmes and projects were able to achieve (e.g. 2 years later, 4 years later, etc.).

Core statements

9. The following evaluation categories are used at the SDC: internal evaluations (self-evaluations, reviews) and external evaluations (ex-post evaluations, Implementation and Impact Analysis Controlling).

Guiding principles with regard to SDC evaluations (including reviews)

The following principles reflect the fundamental values of the SDC’s evaluation activities. They form the overarching binding framework for all employees (all areas, departments, sections, etc.) of the SDC.

1. Independence of evaluation teams

The assessment made by the evaluators in their reports must be respected. They must not be placed under any pressure to modify their assessments. The SDC issues a statement in the form of a management response detailing the points that it agrees or disagrees with. Consultants who have been involved in planning and implementing the programme or project may not carry out the evaluation of the program or project.

2. Impartiality

Evaluators must provide a full picture of the strengths and weaknesses of a project. Differing views of the object being evaluated must be documented in the evaluation reports.

3. Objectivity and credibility

An evaluation is based on a methodically sound data basis. A clear distinction must be drawn between personal views and facts. Every evaluation includes a detailed discussion of the methods used. The selected methods comply with the standards recognised in expert circles. SDC IIACs place a strong focus on outcome and impact. They also used the latest outcome evaluation methods. Reviews consider the inputs, activities and outputs, outcomes and relevance and explicitly detail any limits in the outcome and impact analysis. Generally, the SDC places great importance on statements concerning results (rather than processes). In terms of humanitarian aid, “Good Humanitarian Donorship” and ALNAP standards are applied.

4. Transparency

Terms of Reference, methodological approaches, evaluation reports and management responses must be accessible and available for all SDC evaluations (including reviews). The reports relating to the external evaluations carried out by the SDC are published on the Internet with the related management responses.

5. Partnership

The principles of the Paris Agenda and “Good Humanitarian Donorship” apply to implementation of SDC evaluations. Wherever possible, evaluations should be carried out together with the players in the partner countries and/or other development players.

6. Feasibility

SDC provides the evaluation team with the necessary resources and information to carry out an evaluation ensuring that the evaluation principles can be adhered to. The line responsible for the object of the evaluation provides the material on which the evaluation is based. It should be ensured that the object of the evaluation is sufficiently demarcated and that long lists of evaluation questions are not stipulated in the Terms of Reference. The principle of having “few, well-focused evaluation questions coupled with an in-depth robust outcome and impact analysis” applies to all SDC evaluation categories.

7. Usefulness

The purpose of SDC evaluations is always clear, as are the reasons why they are being held at a certain time and the particular target group concerned.

8. Complementarity, subsidiarity

Particularly with regard to contributions to international organisations, the SDC operates in accordance with the principle of subsidiary with regard to evaluation. It refrains from carrying out its own evaluations into the “effectiveness” of basic funding (exceptions must be justified). With its political influence, the SDC ensures that these organisations have access to a reliable “managing for development results” system. If this is the case, the SDC can refer to the evaluations carried out by these organisations. Generally, the SDC systematically implements the requirements of the Paris Declaration with regard to evaluation, which means that it is involved in international “joint evaluations” and attempts wherever possible to coordinate its evaluations with other players. Additionally, the SDC coordinates its evaluations with the strategically important processes in the partner countries.

9. Relevance to management

Results of evaluations and reviews form an important basis for evidence-based, strategic management of the SDC. In addition to the evaluation report and management response, a data sheet is completed for each evaluation and review, and forwarded to the SDC's Controlling Section. This data sheet can be used – for the purposes of overarching management needs – to aggregate the relevant strategic information gathered from evaluations.

10. Protection of anonymity

SDC evaluations do not include any names of the individuals concerned.

Core statements

10. The ten evaluation principles apply to all SDC evaluations. These are rooted in the organisation's core values.

Roles and responsibilities

Controlling Section, Quality Assurance Section and operational line

The Controlling Section is responsible for conducting IIACs within the SDC. It operates on behalf of SDC upper management. SDC upper management stipulates what is to be evaluated in a multi-year programme. The areas covered are generally overarching themes, regions or countries. The subjects to be tackled in the strategic evaluation are determined every few years in a multi-year programme. On behalf of the SDC, the Controlling Section takes part in international “joint” evaluations and represents the SDC in the key national and international evaluation networks.

The IIACs are generally carried out by external consultants/institutions. In this regard the Controlling Section attaches great importance to the “independence” and “objectivity” of the evaluation team.

The IIACs are normally “summative”, which means that they have a strong focus on outcomes and impact and a close link to the SDC’s outcome reporting (managing for results and accountability). In the case of specific questions, the management may commission the Controlling Section to carry out formative IIACs, in particular if there is a need for specific optimisation of the organisation.

The Controlling Section works independently in terms of implementing external evaluations. It works on the basis of an earmarked evaluation budget that it can allocate to the planned evaluations.

The individual evaluation process is linked to a small learning group of people with direct involvement. Each evaluation is concluded with the management response (or responses from individual managers), the completion of the data sheet and publication on the Internet. The management response is a tool for evidence-based management. The planned follow-up activities are systematically monitored by the Controlling Section.

The outcome and impact evaluations of the Controlling Section are incorporated directly or indirectly into the SDC's Effectiveness Report. A reference is created for the rendering of account to the Parliament on the implementation of the Federal Dispatches.

The Controlling Section coordinates its work with the evaluation unit at the level of the General Secretariat of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs GS/FDFA.

By actively distributing the evaluation results in the public domain (universities, parliamentary committees, etc.), the Controlling Section makes an active contribution to legitimising state development cooperation activities.

For the purposes of implementing the Paris principles, the Controlling Section, by supporting selected initiatives, helps to ensure that knowledge on the use of evaluation as a tool is deepened in the partner countries.

The Controlling Section’s mission also encompasses knowledge management. It helps to ensure that findings from its own evaluations as well as from evaluations carried out by other SDC donors are used for the benefit of evidence-based management.

With regard to evaluations, the **Quality Assurance Section (QS)** focuses on the quality of SDC reviews, and provides methodological and practical support in relation to self-evaluations. In this way the QS Section covers the majority of SDC evaluations. It ensures that the concepts of managing for results and evidence-based management are reinforced.

QS helps to ensure that reviews and self-evaluations have an even stronger link to planning (Logframe). The Controlling Section supports Quality Assurance in setting the necessary standards, also with regard to training and continuing education in the area of evaluation. The QS Section remains in overall charge of this area.

QS tackles the overarching management requirements and translates these into appropriate planning, monitoring and evaluation tools. The Controlling Section provides support when requested to do so. The “evaluation data sheet” is prepared and managed with QS.

Responsibilities for regional programmes, global programmes, cooperation with Eastern Europe and humanitarian aid operational lines

In terms of evaluation, the operational line has the following responsibilities:

- § Designing and coordinating reviews. This involves ensuring that the evaluations carried out comply with international and national evaluation standards and with the principles listed here. Quality control is the responsibility of the department concerned. The quality is also reviewed on the basis of sample testing. Each review is subject to a management response and is filed in the SDC’s DMS. The line is also responsible for implementing the recommendations and for forwarding the completed data sheet to Controlling.
- § Providing assistance to the Controlling Section’s IIACs and providing the information required for the evaluation (documentation, etc.).
- § Ensuring that projects are planned in such a way that outcome and impact evaluations can actually be carried out at a later point (baselines, outcome hypotheses, monitoring information, etc.).
- § Contributing to knowledge management: If there are findings in the reviews with a particular relevance over and above the specific project in question, the line is responsible for ensuring that these findings are shared with others.

As has been the case to date, reviews are financed from the projects’ own budgets and accompanied by the line.

Core statement

11. SDC roles and responsibilities differ with regard to implementation of evaluations
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Key features of an evaluation process

1. *Early involvement of all those involved:* All relevant players should be involved in the evaluation from as early a stage as possible. Discussions are held with partner countries to determine when an evaluation is appropriate and whether this can be done jointly.
2. *Focused Terms of Reference (ToRs):* Aim of the evaluation, subject being reviewed, methodology to be used and schedule are obligatory components of the Terms of Reference. The evaluation questions centre around relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, impact and sustainability, with some minor deviations in the area of humanitarian aid.
3. *Selection of the evaluation team:* If the evaluation costs less than CHF 50,000, a team of consultants/an institution can be selected without the need for a tender procedure. A formal call for tenders is required for amounts between CHF 50,000 and CHF 249,000. More expensive evaluations are put out to tender in accordance with WTO. Appropriate criteria for the selection of the team are: professional competence, experience in the area covered by the evaluation, independence (no conflicts of interest), quality of proposal, value for money and a balanced team in terms of gender. Wherever possible, the consultants/institutions should also come from the partner countries themselves.
4. *Implementation:* Evaluations are conducted in three phases: Preparatory phase (adoption of Terms of Reference, selection of consultants, definition of methodology, document analysis, etc.). This preparatory phase is generally documented in an inception report (not necessary for reviews). The second phase is devoted to taking the information to a further level, i.e. interviews are held, data is analysed and triangulations carried out, with additional studies and field analysis also being implemented where applicable. During the third phase, a draft report is produced, any factual errors are recorded, and the final report is compiled. The evaluation team has final responsibility for the text. The responsible managers write a statement on the recommendations (management response), which forms an integral part of the final publication.
5. *Publication:* The evaluation is released for publication after completion. Reviews are filed in the Document Management System (DMS) and the link sent to the Controlling office. External evaluations are made accessible on the Internet and at DAC. A data sheet is also completed for each evaluation/review, which is forwarded to the Controlling Section after completion of the evaluation.
6. *Implementation monitoring of the recommendations in accordance with management response:* Those responsible for each evaluation decide how the implementation monitoring is to be defined. Whatever the decision, this is always documented in writing, however.

Core statements

12. SDC evaluations (with the exception of self-evaluations) undergo the same phases and meet the requirements of this policy. In terms of design they differ according to type of evaluation. The quality standards applicable to reviews are further detailed by the "Quality Assurance" network.

Overview of Evaluations, Audits and FDFA inspections

Evaluation	Audit	FDFA inspection
<p>“Evaluations” are systematic studies which provide empirical information so that it is possible to assess the value (relevance), efficiency and effectiveness (degree to which goal was achieved at various levels of the chain of outcomes), the impact (intended and unintended positive and negative impact) and sustainability of the object of evaluation.” (in accordance with DAC and SEVAL standards).</p> <p>Evaluations always pursue two aims: learning (what was successful, what was not and why?) and accountability (have the aims been achieved?).</p> <p>Internationally, in terms of terminology, the terms “formative” and “summative” have become established. During the implementation phase, formative evaluations are those that reveal what worked and what did not (often also described as reviews). Summative evaluations are those carried out after implementation to review the outcome and impact and sustainability of a project.</p>	<p>The aim of an audit is to check/control whether/to what extent the rules governing the responsible players are known and/or complied with in practice (e.g. implementation of Federal Budget Act, SR 611.0). Auditors approach the establishment or organisational unit to be audited and review whether it is complying with the relevant financial, organisational or other regulations (compliance). Audits differ from evaluations in that they check whether funding has been used in accordance with the rules and whether the inputs, activities and outputs comply with the stipulated regulations. Audits are therefore a form of review and control. They are planned and decided outside the SDC.</p>	<p>An inspection is generally a check in the form of a control carried out by an inspector. The aim is to determine whether the object, matter or establishment being reviewed is being handled properly.</p> <p>The FDFA inspection is intended to clarify whether a diplomatic/consular mission complies with its diplomatic role in the host country or is able to do so on the basis of available funding and resources.</p> <p>The clarifications generally relate to the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Organisation, management and allocation of responsibilities § Personnel allocation and structure and utilisation of staff § Activities of inspected unit § Contributions to living costs § Diplomatic/consular missions § Business trips § Consular services § Financial matters § Safety and security § Communication § IT § Filing and archives

<p>An internal evaluation is an evaluation that is coordinated or implemented by employees with direct responsibility for planning and implementing a project.</p> <p>An external evaluation is an evaluation that is coordinated or implemented by employees outside the responsible line. Generally, external evaluations are carried out by external consultants.</p> <p>Evaluations involve analysis of outcomes and impact. They also take account of factors that were not directly in the area of influence of a programme or project.</p> <p>The degree of independence of an evaluation is determined on the basis of the following criteria in accordance with DAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Independence from the operational line § Are the results of the evaluation made known to those responsible for overall management or even overarching instances? § Does the evaluation unit decide on content and budget? § Are the evaluation teams impartial and objective? <p>Are those responsible for the evaluation within or outside the rotation system (conflicts of interest)?</p>		<p>SDC cooperation offices</p> <p>If there is also an SDC cooperation office at the location being inspected, this is merely checked for safety and security aspects unless a further-reaching inspection has been commissioned by the SDC.</p>
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Auditing and controlling landscape in and around the SDC

Level	Audit tools
Parliamentary Control of the Administration Office (PCAO)	The Parliamentary Control of the Administration Office (PCAO) is the Federal Assembly's centre of excellence for evaluations . It supports parliamentary oversight through scientific assessments, and evaluates the design, implementation and impact of federal measures. The evaluation results are reflected in the audit reports.
The Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO)	The Swiss Federal Audit Office is the supreme supervisory body of the Confederation. It supports Parliament and the Federal Council, is independent and is bound only by the Constitution and the law. The scope of its mandate is clearly laid down in the Federal Auditing Act. The SFAO scrutinises the financial conduct of the Federal Administration and that of numerous semi-government bodies and international organisations. The criteria of performance and efficacy, as well as compliance with the rules and legal provisions are decisive in its audit activities. The SFAO conducts audits and evaluations in the narrow sense of the term.
FDFA Inspectorate, General	This provides information at home and abroad on Swiss foreign policy. It supervises the diplomatic and consular management of Swiss diplomatic/consular missions abroad and also supervises financial management.
FDFA Inspectorate, SDC audits	The FDFA General Secretariat's SDC audit department reviews organisational aspects of the SDC and controls SDC activities with regard to compliance and performance.
FDFA Inspectorate, Evaluations	Still to be definitively clarified; evaluations on the synergies of various political areas and in-depth outcome and impact analysis.
SDC Controlling Section	"Implementation and Impact Analysis Controlling (IIAC)" takes the form of summative evaluations on the outcomes achieved by SDC and formative evaluations used for the purposes of the further development of the organisation.
SDC operational line	Reviews: Progress reports for programmes and projects.
Programmes/projects	External auditors: Review of generally recognised audit standards (generally carried out by external audit companies).

List of key links to individual evaluation tools

European Commission – External Cooperation Programmes

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/evaluation/index_en.htm

OECD – DAC Evaluation Resource Centre DEReC

http://www.oecd.org/document/11/0,2340,en_35038640_35039563_35126667_1_1_1_1,00.html

Institute Evaluation Group (World Bank)

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/WBI/0,,contentMDK:20252876~menuPK:434966~pagePK:209023~piPK:335094~theSitePK:213799,00.html>

IFAD

<http://www.ifad.org/evaluation/index.htm>

AusAID

<http://www.ausaid.gov.au/ode/default.cfm>

Methods in Impact Evaluation

<http://www.3ieimpact.org/userfiles/1226133413.pdf>

Educational Evaluation Resources

<http://ericae.net>

Resources for Methods in Evaluation and Social Research

<http://gsociology.icaap.org/methods>

Evaluation Resource Library

<http://oerl.sri.com>

IPDET Modules

www.worldbank.org/oed/ipdet/modules.html

Evaluation Center of Western Michigan University

<http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/>