



EVALUATION POLICY

2014

(Second Draft)

Gross National Happiness Commission
Royal Government of Bhutan

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1.

GLOSSARY

Academic Research	<i>Research carried out by academic institutions</i>
Development Evaluation	<i>Development Evaluation is a systematic and objective assessment of a development program, project or policy to determine the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability or timeliness.</i>
Evaluation Management	<i>Agency/officials responsible for over coordination, facilitation, administration and management of evaluation</i>
Evaluation Team	<i>Agency/evaluating firm/evaluating individual carrying out the actual evaluation assignment.</i>
Financial Year	<i>Royal Government of Bhutan financial year from 1st July to 30th June</i>
GNH Values	<i>Values as enshrined in GNH index</i>
Medical Research	<i>Research carried out by medical institutions for health and medicinal development</i>
Policy	<i>Policy of Royal Government of Bhutan</i>
Programme	<i>Development programme implemented by Royal Government of Bhutan</i>
Project	<i>Development project implemented by Royal Government of Bhutan</i>
Social Research	<i>Research carried out by research centers on social issues</i>

1. INTRODUCTION

Recognizing the need to institutionalize monitoring and evaluation system in Bhutan, the erstwhile Planning Commission, now renamed as the Gross National Happiness Commission established the National Monitoring and Evaluation System (NMES) in 2006 to serve as a standard system of monitoring and evaluating developmental plans.

Since then, reasonable progress has been achieved in the monitoring area especially during the 10th five-year plan (2008-2013) while very little progress has been made in the area of evaluation. Only a few donor-led evaluations of programmes and projects have been carried out with varying processes and standards. Lack of understanding on the benefits of evaluation coupled with lack of technical knowledge on evaluation concepts and practices have undermined the importance of evaluation. Most importantly, the absence of clear institutionalized evaluation procedures has been a key impediment for the development of evaluation culture in Bhutan.

Against this backdrop, the Research and Evaluation Division under GNH Commission spearheaded the development of Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines to provide focus and impetus to evaluation. It is a step towards institutionalizing the evaluation system in Bhutan.

With the formal launch of the Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines, it is expected that evaluation activities will gain ground and eventually contribute towards improved accountability, efficiency and effectiveness of limited resources available in the country for socio-economic development.

While the Evaluation Policy provides overall framework for evaluation, the detailed step by step requirement and process are provided in the Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines.

2. OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the evaluation policy are as below.

- 2.1. To provide overall framework for evaluation.
- 2.2. To streamline evaluation initiatives.
- 2.3. To standardize the evaluation process and products.
- 2.4. To promote quality and credibility of evaluation.
- 2.5. To promote use of evaluation findings.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The evaluation of a programme, project or policy should be guided by the following evaluation principles.

3.1. Independence

3.1.1. The evaluation function should be carried out by an independent entity, which is separate from designing or implementation of a programme, project or policy. The independence of evaluation will reduce the potential for conflict of interests and provide legitimacy and credibility to the findings.

3.2. Impartiality and Fairness

3.2.1. The findings of the evaluation should not be influenced by personal preferences of the evaluator and it must be true and capture balanced views.

3.3. Objectivity

3.3.1. The evaluation findings must be based on verifiable or objective evidence.

3.4. Transparency

3.4.1. Transparency of the evaluation process is the key to credibility of evaluation findings. The relevant stakeholders must be kept abreast of the evaluation process and must have access to information concerning any part of the evaluation process.

3.5. Feasibility

3.5.1. The feasibility of carrying out an evaluation in terms of practicability of methodology and availability of resources must be considered.

3.6. Propriety

3.6.1. The evaluation of a programme, project or policy must not harm individuals or communities.

3.7. Cost-efficiency

3.7.1. The evaluation of a programme, project or policy must be carried out at the least cost without compromising the quality of the evaluation.

3.8. Accuracy

3.8.1. The collection of data should maintain the highest level of accuracy and precision by using the most relevant measures and methodologies.

3.9. Credibility

3.9.1. The evaluation of a programme, project or policy must consider all other core principles such as independence, impartiality, transparency, objectivity, accuracy, and fairness to ensure credibility of the evaluation findings.

3.10. Usefulness

3.10.1. The evaluation findings must be useful to implementers, decision makers, policy makers, development partners, politicians and other stakeholders.

3.11. Evaluation ethics

3.11.1. The evaluation process should observe the evaluation ethics, which include integrity and honesty; gender sensitivity, respect for culture, beliefs, and etiquettes; protection of the rights and welfare of participants; and protection of the confidentiality of participants.

4. THE EVALUATION REFERENCE OFFICE

4.1. GNH Commission being the overall coordinating body for monitoring and evaluation of development programmes, projects and policies, Research and Evaluation Division, under GNH Commission, shall act as the evaluation reference office. All issues related to evaluation shall be directed to Research and Evaluation Division, under GNH Commission, for clarification or guidance.

5. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

Any form of development evaluation carried out within the geographic area of Bhutan, whether by government or non-government entity, shall follow the Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines, which shall be periodically revised with the changing context and needs.

However, researches such as academic research, medical research and social research shall be outside the scope of this policy.

6. PROTOCOL FOR EVALUATION

6.1 Scoping evaluation

6.1.1 The agency shall first consider the scope of evaluation as provided in chapter 3 of the Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines to assess the jurisdiction of the evaluation areas.

6.2 Identifying evaluation areas

6.2.1 The agency shall identify the area/s of evaluation such as a programme, project, policy or thematic area that is within the agency's scope of evaluation using criteria provided in chapter 4 of the Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines. In addition to standard evaluation criteria, GNH values, gender and environment shall be used as the additional specific criteria in identifying evaluation areas. This is to ensure that the policies and programmes that impact GNH values, gender and environment are closely monitored and evaluated.

6.3 Preparing evaluation proposal

6.3.1 The agency shall prepare evaluation proposal as per outline provided in chapter 5 of the Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines.

6.4 Reviewing evaluation proposal

6.4.1 The agency shall submit the evaluation proposal to Research and Evaluation Division, Gross National Happiness Commission for endorsement as provided in chapter 6 of the Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines.

6.5 Preparing evaluation programme and budget

6.5.1 The agency shall prepare the evaluation programme and budget for the next financial year as detailed in chapter 7 of the Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines.

6.6 Managing and assigning an evaluation

6.6.1 The agency shall institute evaluation management and evaluation team as detailed in chapter 8 of the Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines.

6.7 Implementing evaluation

6.7.1 The evaluation team shall collect data and information using approved methodology and analyze data and information as detailed in chapter 9 of the Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines.

6.8 Reporting evaluation findings

6.8.1 The evaluation team shall prepare report on evaluation findings as per format provided in chapter 10 of the Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines.

6.9 Following-up, disseminating and utilizing evaluation reports

6.9.1 The evaluation management shall prepare Follow-up Note, publish evaluation report and ensure utilization of evaluation findings as provided in chapter 11 of the Evaluation Protocol and Guidelines.

7. PROMOTION OF EVALUATION

While concerted efforts from various actors in both government and private sectors are important to promote evaluation in the country, the following measures shall be pursued.

7.1 Capacity Development

The evaluation culture remains weak in Bhutan partly because of lack of capacity in evaluation area. GNH Commission shall coordinate and organize workshops and training programmes for the relevant government officials on evaluation areas.

7.2 Creating Awareness and Demand

GNH Commission in partnership with government and international agencies shall periodically organize meetings and workshops on the importance and benefits of the development evaluation. Media shall also be used to disseminate and promote evaluation.

7.3 Incentivizing Evaluation

The government agencies shall be encouraged to use findings and recommendations from the evaluation in development of policies, programmes and projects.

8. MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

8.1 Gross National Happiness Commission, as the Guardian of the Evaluation Policy, shall monitor the implementation of the policy. The policy shall be subject to periodic review and shall be revised according to the changing needs and systems. Gross National Happiness Commission shall initiate the revision of policy, if need arises.

9. REFERENCES

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