Understanding Evaluation
What parliamentarians need to know

As a parliamentarian proposing and overseeing policies, bills and legislation, evaluation can help you to most effectively achieve your desired outcomes.

Evaluation can provide the evidence to help you to:

- Justify the introduction of, or amendments to, policy and legislation
- Get support from diverse and influential stakeholders, including government ministries, funding bodies, technical experts or representatives of beneficiary groups
- Ensure projects, policies, and programmes are delivered on time, to budget and with results, because they were based on prior evidence
- Communicate the impact your policies and programmes are having, with hard facts and evidence
- Report on the systematic progress of your policies and programmes over time
- Establish good governance practices in your national parliament and government
- Achieve your national development goals most efficiently and effectively

What is evaluation?
Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of the design, implementation and results of projects, policies and programmes. It analyses what the intervention has achieved against expected and unexpected results.

Evaluative practice goes beyond common sense analysis or subjective reviews of data. It relies on tested scientific methods and systematic process, to provide objective evidence.

An evaluation should provide credible, useful, evidence-based information that allows parliamentarians to apply findings, recommendations and lessons to decision-making processes on national policy and legislation.

“We have come to an understanding that monitoring and evaluation is a key factor in any country’s development, especially if you are to see results for the people you represent.”
– Hon. Raphael Chegeni, Parliament of Tanzania

Why evaluate policies and programmes?
In its most fundamental form, policy and programme evaluation improves design and implementation, and helps demonstrate impact.

Evaluation is widely used as a tool for effective governance and is increasingly becoming respected and implemented in national governmental and parliamentary contexts. It should be part of an ongoing cycle of policy or programmatic planning and improvement, ensuring that future planning is based on more robust evidence.

![Evaluation Process Diagram](image)

CONSIDER EVIDENCE
(from related activities or own policies, programmes and projects)

DETERMINE
(focus and priorities)

IMPLEMENT
(policies, programmes, projects)

EVALUATE
(the expected and unexpected results)

PLAN
(policies, programmes, projects)
Before getting started

Before proposing a policy, bill or programme to parliament, you want to know that it is going to be effective in meeting national interests. Evaluation can help you do this. ‘Formative evaluations’ are conducted in the early stages of policy or programme development, and early implementation. They give direction on how to best achieve the intended goals.

Evaluating existing policy and programmes

When a programme or policy is already well established a ‘summative evaluation’ can help demonstrate the extent to which it is meeting its intended outcomes. This type of evaluation can help measure the short-, mid- and long-term impacts on beneficiaries of the policy or programme, as well as any unintended consequences or impacts.

“I think it’s very important to have a system that give exactly the right metrics, the right measures and makes people know exactly what is going on” – Hon. Rachid Benmokhtar Benabdellah, Parliament of Morocco

Want to know more?

The Global Parliamentarians Forum for Evaluation can connect you with relevant experts to support your unique needs and advance evaluative practice in your parliament.

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