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Glossary of Evaluation Terms

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Glossary of Evaluation Terms" (JIU/REP/78/5).

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\* A/34/50.

GLOSSARY OF EVALUATION TERMS

Prepared

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- A. Evaluation
- B. Evaluation-Related Functions
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## SUMMARY

This Report presents a glossary of twenty-four basic terms used in evaluation activities within the United Nations system. It is recognized that complete agreement on the meaning of each term is not possible and that further understandings will gradually evolve as experience is gained. Nevertheless, this glossary, which builds on past and present definitional attempts, is intended to encourage such movement toward common understandings of the nature, meaning, and usefulness of evaluation in the United Nations system.

Section I provides a brief review of the long-standing efforts and problems of moving toward common evaluation terminology.

Section II states the purposes of this glossary effort and presents an informal overview of the evaluation terms.

Section III gives a specific definition of each of the twenty-four terms, together with concrete examples of their meaning and use.

The Annex provides a partial compilation of various definitions which have been developed and used by United Nations organizations, inter-agency groups, and working groups during the past decade.

Recommendations for the adoption of this glossary as the general framework for United Nations evaluation terms and for its future revision are made in Section IV.

## I. BACKGROUND

1. Attempts to define evaluation and evaluation-related concepts in the United Nations system are not new. Before presenting the evaluation terms contained in this glossary, it is useful to place them briefly in perspective against the efforts of the past.

2. As far back as the early 1950s, evaluation was viewed as a useful management tool and learning process to:

- (a) improve existing United Nations programmes and activities;
- (b) draw lessons from existing projects to reshape them and improve the selection and operation of future projects;
- (c) measure the success of projects in terms of tangible or intangible accomplishments; and
- (d) assess the impact of programmes on overall economic and social progress of the recipient countries<sup>1/</sup>.

Although the various United Nations organizations used differing methods of evaluation, there was a growing awareness of the need to develop a common approach to the problems of evaluation within the diversity of methods being followed. A variety of efforts were begun to develop common concepts, processes, techniques, and methods which would be useful in carrying out evaluations in the United Nations system.

3. Enthusiasm for evaluation subsequently dwindled in the late 1950s, but the rapid growth of evaluation activities at both agency and inter-agency levels during the mid-1960s again highlighted the need for co-ordination and clarification of evaluation concepts and activities. The Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) and other bodies emphasized the importance of common definitions of evaluation and its various processes, not in order to suggest a single process for all organizations, but to facilitate exchanges of experience and ideas, and co-ordination<sup>2/</sup>.

4. In response to a request by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Secretary-General made an assessment in 1969 of the main policy issues and practical problems of evaluation, in order to develop a more coherent programme for the evaluation of technical co-operation projects and programmes within the United Nations system. The assessment included a first glossary of terms for the evaluation of projects, discussion of evaluation

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<sup>1/</sup> Technical Assistance Board, "Report on Techniques of Evaluation of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance", document TAB/R.255 of 29 May 1954.

<sup>2/</sup> For example, ECOSOC document, Thirty-Fifth Report of the ACC, E/4668/Add.1/Annex IV of 16 May 1969, paragraph 5.

procedures, and an analysis<sup>3/</sup> of the basic phases of a project in which elements of evaluation occur<sup>3/</sup>.

5. The ACC's Inter-Agency Study Group on Evaluation, which became a focal point for consideration of evaluation activities in the United Nations system during the 1966-1972 period, agreed that each agency and programme should develop its own evaluation techniques and procedures for assessing its programmes and projects. But in 1969 it also urged the need for a variety of co-ordination and inter-agency functions, including the need to develop further the new glossary of evaluation terms and to elaborate a common framework of reference<sup>4/</sup>. In the early 1970s, however, there was again a slowing of evaluation activity within the United Nations system.

6. The mid-1970s have been marked by a strongly renewed interest in evaluation of the quality, timeliness and impact of United Nations system activities, particularly because of the widespread adoption of programme budgeting and medium-term planning and a tightening of available resources. Not only the United Nations system, but member countries as well, have sought improved managerial and evaluation techniques. In accordance with these trends, governing bodies, Member Governments, functional and regional commissions, intergovernmental bodies, standing committees, and expert groups have been reviewing United Nations system programmes and making recommendations for changes in them, including a stress on better and more systematic evaluation<sup>5/</sup>.

7. At present, new evaluations of projects and programmes are being made or planned throughout the United Nations system, both on a broader scale and with much more comprehensive coverage than in the past. United Nations organizations are reviewing, restructuring, or creating internal evaluation systems. And new responsibilities for evaluation have been

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<sup>3/</sup> ECOSOC document, Secretary-General's Note and UNITAR Report, "Criteria and Methods of Evaluation; Problems and Approaches", E/4649 of 2 May 1969;  
ECOSOC document, Report of the Secretary-General, Evaluation of Programmes of Technical Cooperation, E/4669 of 13 May 1969.

<sup>4/</sup> ACC document, Notes on the Inter-Agency Study Group on Evaluation, Co-ordination/R.765/Add.4 of 4 October 1969, pp.6-7.  
ACC document, Report on the Sixth Session of the Inter-Agency Study Group on Evaluation, Co-ordination/R.925 of 29 February 1972.

<sup>5/</sup> For example, General Assembly document, Report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery, A/10117 of 17 June 1975.  
FAO document, "Regular Programme Evaluation", CL 70/29 of September 1976.  
ECOSOC document, Secretary-General's Report "Programme Evaluation for the Biennium 1974-1975", E/AC.51/80 of 12 April 1977.  
UNESCO document, "Preliminary Report of the Director-General on Studies Carried Out Concerning Evaluation of Programme Activities, 103 EX/10 of 11 August 1977 and ECOSOC document E/1978/111 of 3 July 1978, Annex III.  
WHO document, "Development of Health Programme Evaluation", Report by the Director-General, A31/10 of 29 March 1978.

given to inter-governmental bodies, working parties, and to the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU).

8. Despite this revival of interest in evaluation and evaluation systems among the United Nations organizations, the problem of achieving commonly-accepted understandings of evaluation concepts and techniques continues, as discussed in the 1977 JIU "Report on Evaluation in the United Nations System"<sup>6/</sup>. There is still a distinct tendency to label any judgement effort or review applied to projects and programmes as "evaluation". Such terms as "appraisal", "reporting", "monitoring", "auditing" and "inspection" are grouped together as "evaluation", without consideration of an acceptable common definition or common principles as to what constitutes the term. Most of these activities would not qualify as evaluation under a more precise definition focusing on those activities which systematically and objectively compare the results and impacts of an activity against its initial objectives as a basis for improving activities still in progress or to be planned in the future.

9. Since the JIU issued its report on the status of evaluation activities, however, a number of United Nations agencies have been making a substantial effort to better design, clarify and elaborate the nature of their internal evaluation systems. Generally, these efforts have been compatible with the past efforts at developing common evaluation concepts of the 1950s and 1960s, even though most of the activity has concentrated on the development of concepts relating to the internal organizational needs and processes of the various agencies. These present and past design and definitional efforts prove a useful foundation for a renewed attempt to work toward common definitions of evaluation and its key elements on a system-wide basis.

10. In its 1977 report, the JIU concluded that despite the increasing interest in evaluation there was no accepted definition of the term which could be used throughout the United Nations system. The report recommended that the United Nations organizations and the JIU should attempt to develop a glossary of terms, including an agreed definition of evaluation for use by United Nations agencies.

11. The ACC, in its seventy-first session in 1977, endorsed the JIU's idea for the development of a glossary containing a few key evaluation terms. The ACC expressed the hope that such a document would take note of existing definitions of terms related to evaluation and would be designed as a practical guide, providing not only technical terms and concepts but also concrete examples illustrating the various stages of evaluation and its application to various types of activities<sup>7/</sup>.

12. This Report provides the glossary of evaluation terms recommended in the JIU and ACC reports. It is based on consultations and discussions with United Nations organizations during both 1977 and 1978, as well as on the substantial amount of definitional work that has been done in the United Nations system in the past (as presented in the Annex).

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<sup>6/</sup> ECOSOC document E/6003, (JIU/REP/77/1, March 1977).

<sup>7/</sup> ECOSOC document, Comments of the ACC, E/1978/12 of 21 January 1978, paragraph 16.

## II. GLOSSARY PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

13. The efforts of the past 25 years to move toward agreement on the meaning of the key evaluation terms within the United Nations system illustrate again how difficult the achievement of "common understandings" can be. In this context, the JIU noted in its 1977 report the beliefs that:

(a) evaluation must be viewed as a constructive and a participatory process;

(b) varying organizational needs, sizes and resources dictate a relatively flexible set of common concepts and processes of evaluation;

(c) present limitations of information, reporting systems, well-defined techniques and procedures (such as formulation and use of objectives, indicators and criteria), and qualified staff suggest that a gradual approach will be necessary for the introduction and effective operation of evaluation systems in United Nations organizations.

14. This glossary does not seek to create rigid new definitions of evaluation terminology. Instead, as illustrated by the Annex, which is a partial compilation of representative definitions of evaluation terms developed by various United Nations organizations, interagency groups, and study groups over the past decade, the intent is to identify current and past definitions which have achieved some degree of consensus at various levels within the United Nations system, and to work toward further consensus as to common system-wide meanings.

15. It is clear that it will not be possible to obtain total agreement on each and every term in such a glossary, and that further common understandings will probably evolve over time through continued practical application. Therefore, this Report seeks to encourage such movement toward better understandings of the meaning and usefulness of evaluation in the United Nations system and to help attain the following purposes:

(a) to facilitate communication on basic evaluation concepts and varying evaluation approaches among the organizations of the United Nations system, and between member governments and the organizations;

(b) to better clarify and delineate the field of endeavour known as evaluation, in order to diminish confusion, disagreements, overlaps, and gaps in the United Nations system;

(c) to improve the co-ordination of evaluation with other review and appraisal efforts throughout the United Nations system through an increased understanding of their basic characteristics.

16. With these purposes and considerations in mind, the remainder of this Report provides a glossary of twenty-four basic evaluation terms in three steps:

First, in the following three paragraphs (17-19), a brief narrative which informally summarizes the glossary terms and their relationships.

Second, in Section III, separate specific definitions of the terms which are CAPITALIZED in the narrative text, together with concrete examples of their meaning.

Third, in the Annex, a partial compilation of definitions and explanations of these evaluation terms, as used by various United Nations organizations.

**NOTE:** In the remainder of this report, the word "activity" is used as a broad term which encompasses all types of organizational undertakings. The term is used in this general way to avoid enumerating "project, process, and programme" throughout the definitions. It is recognized, however, that some organizations also use the term "activity" to refer to a specific task or job which is carried out within a project, as part of the process of transforming project inputs into outputs.

17. EVALUATION is a learning and action-oriented management tool and process for determining as systematically and objectively as possible the relevance, effectiveness and impact of activities in the light of their objectives, in order to improve both current activities and future planning, programming, and decision-making.

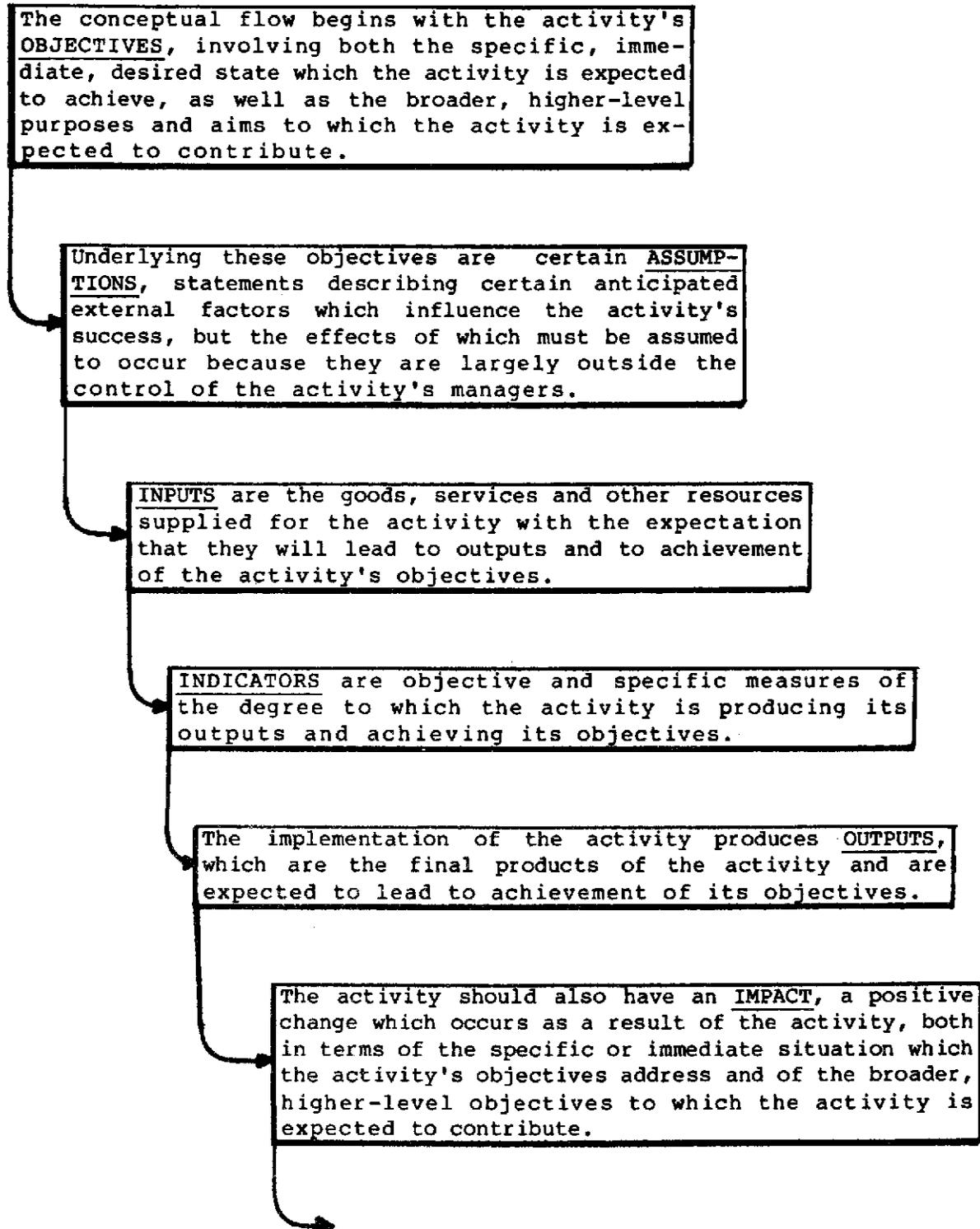
- Although characteristics of evaluation occur throughout all the stages in the life of an activity, most evaluations are either ON-GOING EVALUATION, which occurs during the implementation stages of an activity, or EX-POST EVALUATION, which is performed after an activity is completed.
- Two other major divisions of the evaluation field are important. INTERNAL EVALUATION is conducted by members of the Secretariat of the organization which conducts the activity, while EXTERNAL EVALUATION is conducted by bodies outside the Secretariat of the organization.

- In addition, evaluation may also be classified by the type of activity evaluated. Most often, evaluations are made of a PROJECT, which is an activity designed to achieve certain objectives within a given budget and within a specified period of time. Although not often done, evaluation may also be made of a PROCESS, which is a continuing, supportive organizational operation. Finally, more complex efforts are required for evaluation of a PROGRAMME, which is an organized set of projects or undertakings seeking to attain specific objectives.

18. ● Evaluation is not a decision-making process, but rather serves as an input to provide decision-makers with a full knowledge of problems, circumstances and opportunities. Therefore, it is decision-oriented.
- Evaluation is not basically concerned with routine administrative or financial aspects or operational problems of an activity, but rather goes beyond these areas to a concern with critically assessing the objectives, design and results of the activity.
  - Evaluation should not be concerned with justifying past activities or merely identifying their inadequacies, but rather with serving as a decision-oriented participative learning process to assist in the positive improvement of present and future activities.
  - Evaluation efforts should also not be excessively ambitious or elaborate, but rather be as rigorous, systematic and objective as is possible under existing constraints, in keeping with the basic evaluation purpose of providing useful analytical information to decision-makers.
  - Evaluation also differs from other forms of organizational review. There are many types of such reviews. They may vary considerably in purpose and level of analysis, and may overlap to some extent. It is important, however, to differentiate evaluation from the following major specific types of reviews.
    - APPRAISAL is concerned with a critical assessment of the potential value of an activity before a decision is made to undertake it, rather than with evaluation during activity implementation or after its completion.
    - MONITORING is the continuous oversight of an activity during its implementation to ensure that operations are proceeding correctly, rather than an evaluation of the activity's overall objectives, design, and results.
    - An INSPECTION is a special on-the-spot investigation of an activity which seeks to resolve particular problems, rather than a systematic overall evaluation.

-- An AUDIT is an examination or review of a financial or management activity's conformity to pre-determined standards or criteria, which reports on the extent of conformity.

19. Every evaluation requires the selection of a METHODOLOGY, which is a set of analytical methods and techniques appropriate for evaluation of the particular activity. In designing and performing the evaluation, the relationship of certain basic concepts is very important.



- In addition to the assessment of impact, the evaluation process is centrally concerned with assessment of the RELEVANCE of an activity--whether the objectives and rationale of the activity are or remain valid or significant in relation to long-range objectives and priority needs and concerns--as well as the activity's EFFECTIVENESS, a measure of the relative degree to which it is successful in achieving its objectives, and its EFFICIENCY, the extent to which implementation of the activity produces the greatest product at a given cost or a specified level of production at the lowest cost.
  
- Finally, and although they are primarily planning tools for comparing alternative courses of action, an evaluation of an activity should consider the difficult task of applying the basic analytical concepts of a COST-EFFECTIVENESS analysis--assessing the extent to which the activity provides maximum benefits at minimal cost and whether other forms of activity could provide similar benefits at lower cost--or a COST-BENEFIT analysis, an even more difficult and specialized analysis which converts all costs and benefits to common monetary terms and then assesses the activity's ratio of benefits to costs against other alternatives or against some established criteria of cost-benefit performance.

### III. GLOSSARY AND EXAMPLES

#### A. EVALUATION

20. EVALUATION is a process which attempts to determine as systematically and objectively as possible the relevance, effectiveness and impact of activities in the light of their objectives.

(It is a learning and action-oriented management tool and organizational process for improving activities still in progress and future planning, programming and decision-making.)

Example:

- \* Evaluation of a forestry management programme. The analysis would question all aspects of the programme's design, measure progress made toward stated objectives, and assess overall relevance, effectiveness and impact. The findings would serve as a basis for suggesting changes in programme implementation and design, the design of future programmes, or to provide other action-oriented information for decision-makers.

21. ON-GOING EVALUATION is the analysis during the implementation phase of an activity of its continuing relevance and present and likely outputs, effectiveness and impact.

(As either an interim or a continuing activity, on-going evaluation can assist decision-makers by providing information for any needed adjustment of objectives, policies, implementation strategies, or other elements of the activity, as well as for future planning.)

EX-POST EVALUATION is the analysis after completion of an activity of its relevance, effectiveness and impact.

(It can assist decision-makers by assessing the results of the activity and summarizing lessons learned as input for future planning.)

Examples:

- \* On-going evaluation of a rural health clinic project. The analysis would seek to determine whether progress to date suggests that the original objectives, targets and impact will be achieved; whether key circumstances or policies have changed and require action; and whether alternative or additional actions are necessary and feasible to help achieve

the activity's objectives. Such findings would be considered by decision-makers and those who implement the project as a basis for re-planning, re-programming, or other adjustments to better achieve the results desired.

- \* Ex-post evaluation of a series of completed management training courses. The analysis would consider their relevance, impact, and effectiveness; unanticipated changes or results which occurred; the costs relative to the benefits achieved; and the quality of the courses' design as implemented. Such findings would be reported to decision-makers and activity designers as lessons learned for use in planning and programme design efforts for similar activities in the future.

22. INTERNAL EVALUATION is performed by members of the Secretariat of the organization which conducts the activity being evaluated.

(It is thus a direct or indirect form of self-evaluation by those familiar with the activity. If the evaluation is conducted by those directly responsible for the activity, the exercise is a "self-evaluation". If the evaluation is made by people from elsewhere in the organization, it has relatively more of an "independent" character.)

EXTERNAL EVALUATION is performed by bodies outside the Secretariat of the organization which conducts the activity.

Examples:

Internal evaluation performed by:

- \* The team implementing the activity (self-evaluation in terms of the team's pre-determined objectives).
- \* Chief of the unit of the organization responsible for the activity.
- \* Planning and programming staff.
- \* Staff from other parts of the organization.
- \* A central internal evaluation unit.
- \* Staff members of the organization in collaboration with representatives of the countries involved.

External evaluation performed by:

- \* Legislative or governing bodies.
- \* Individual Governments.
- \* The Joint Inspection Unit.

Combinations of these various groups as evaluation teams, including both internal and external evaluators, are of course possible. Consultants and experts might also be used to assist many of the above groups.

23. A PROJECT is an undertaking which is designed to achieve certain specific objectives within a given budget and within a specified period of time.

(Projects are generally part of a sub-programme or programme. They are also referred to as "programme elements".)

Examples:

- \* Establishment of a technical training institute.
- \* Technical advisory services for poultry raising.
- \* Conducting a seminar.
- \* Expanding a water and sewer system.
- \* A survey of forestry resources.
- \* Preparing a manual on safety in the utilization of chain saws.
- \* Designing a new inventory system.

24. A PROCESS, in evaluation terms, is an organizational operation of a continuous and supporting nature.

(A process cannot really be viewed as a "project" or a "programme" because its objectives may be more generalized and less clear, and its completion dates more indeterminate or non-existent. However, a process might include specific projects if it is large enough.)

Examples:

- \* A personnel operation.
- \* A conference function.
- \* Administrative support for technical co-operation projects.
- \* A distribution process.
- \* A management systems function.
- \* Recruitment and placement of experts for technical co-operation projects.
- \* Library services.

25. A PROGRAMME is an organized set of activities, projects, processes, or services which is directed toward the attainment of specific objectives.

(A programme may be concerned with a geographical region, a function, or an area of activity. United Nations organizations consider programmes in a four-level hierarchy - major programme, programme, sub-programme, and programme element (usually a project).)

Examples:

- \* The Health Services Development programme of WHO.
- \* The Occupational Safety and Health programme of ILO.
- \* The Ocean Economics and Technology programme of the United Nations.
- \* The Fishery Resources and Production programme of FAO.
- \* The Industrial Development programme of the Economic Commission for Africa.

B. EVALUATION-RELATED FUNCTIONS

(Evaluation is only one of many types of organizational reviews. Such reviews may vary considerably in their purpose, nature, and level of analytical sophistication, and may overlap with each other to some extent. It is important, however, to differentiate evaluation from the following major specific types of reviews.)

26. APPRAISAL is the critical assessment of the relevance, feasibility and potential effectiveness of an activity before a decision is made to undertake that activity, or to approve assistance for it.

(It may lead to the preparation and implementation of a project, programme, or process.)

Example:

- \* The critical assessment of a rural water supply project proposal at the developmental stage before assistance for it is approved, to determine if it is "worth doing" and, as designed, provides a reasonable assurance of its effectiveness. The assessment considers such factors as the significance and priority of the problem addressed, the clarity of stated objectives, the potential impact of the project, the adequacy of inputs to be provided to produce desired outputs, the feasibility and logic of the overall project design and implementation strategy, the relationship with other activities, comparison with other alternative projects in terms of costs and benefits, whether assumptions made are reasonable, and whether alternative actions have been or should be considered.

27. MONITORING is the continuous oversight of the implementation of an activity which seeks to ensure that input deliveries, work schedules, targeted outputs, and other required actions are proceeding according to plan.

Example:

- \* Overseeing a programme for preservation of the environmental quality of coastal marshlands during implementation to ensure that the procurement, delivery, and installation of inputs is proceeding as planned, that required standards and procedures are being observed, that overall work schedules are being met, and that progress is being made toward production of outputs and utilization of results as planned. If implementation is not proceeding according to plan, appropriate corrective actions may be proposed.

28. An INSPECTION is a special on-the-spot investigation, either scheduled or unexpected, made of an activity and directed toward the resolution of problems which may or may not have been previously identified.

Examples:

- \* A study of the way in which field offices utilize equipment made available to them, such as motor vehicles.
- \* A study of United Nations system health insurance schemes.
- \* A study on aspects of the strike at the United Nations Office at Geneva in 1976.
- \* A study of the effectiveness of operational management of public information offices.

29. An AUDIT is an examination or review which establishes to what extent a condition, process or output (performance) conforms to pre-determined standards or criteria and reports on the extent of conformity.

(An audit may be made by an independent auditor appointed by a legislative body (external audit) or by members of the Secretariat of an organization (internal audit).)

Examples:

- \* A financial audit reports whether the financial statements present fairly the results of operations and the financial position in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles appropriate for the organization.
- \* A management audit reports whether the management process conforms to generally accepted management practices, the minimum criteria being those practices which a reasonable person would expect management to follow in particular circumstances.

C. KEY EVALUATION TERMS

30. METHODOLOGY is the particular set of selected analytical methods and techniques used to perform the evaluation of an activity.

Examples of various analytical methods, which might be chosen and combined to form a methodology for a particular evaluation or type of evaluation include the following, in a rough progression from less to more complex and elaborate methods:

- \* Content analysis of documents and reports.
- \* Comparative analysis of:
  - planned results (objectives) with actual results
  - standards or criteria with actual results
  - "baseline" data (the original situation) with actual results
  - the activity with similar activities
  - legislative guidance with actual operations.
- \* Physical inspections.
- \* Inventory taking.
- \* Questionnaires.
- \* Interviews.
- \* Synthesis of other relevant evaluations and reports.
- \* Cost analysis.
- \* Productivity analysis.
- \* Selection and/or application of progress indicators.
- \* Statistical sampling and inference.
- \* Operations research techniques.
- \* Economic or econometric analysis.
- \* Cost-effectiveness or cost-benefit analysis.
- \* Modelling and simulation.
- \* Control group/treatment group comparisons.

31. OBJECTIVES are the purposes and aims of an activity, representing the desired state which the activity is expected to achieve.

(Objectives are usually conceived of in terms of hierarchical levels: achievement of the specific or immediate objectives of an activity (labelled as Level I below) should contribute to the fulfilment of broader, long-range objectives at a higher level which are beyond the range which the activity could achieve by itself (Level II below). Clearly-stated objectives can greatly facilitate evaluation, while vague or non-operational objectives make evaluation difficult.)

Examples:

- \* Level I: Train farmers in new agricultural techniques.  
Level II: Expand agricultural exports and foreign exchange earnings.

- \* Level I: Reduce levels of chemical pollutants in a river.  
Level II: (several objectives at the same level).  
Expand and improve health, fishery, and recreational and tourism conditions and opportunities in a river basin.
- \* Level I: Reduce deaths, additional complications and disability of people with acute injuries by providing emergency medical care.  
Level II: Improve the quality of urban life.
- \* Level I: Prepare occupational employment surveys.  
Level II: Increase employment opportunities in a country.
- \* Level I: Design and implement a programme budgeting structure throughout an organization.  
Level II: Design and apply an integrated planning, programming, budgeting and evaluation system to achieve more coherent and orderly programme decision-making.

32. ASSUMPTIONS are statements describing certain anticipated external considerations, events, or factors which influence the success of an activity, but the effects of which must be assumed to exist or to occur because they are largely outside the control of those responsible for the activity.

Examples:

- \* For an agricultural project, price, market and weather conditions will remain relatively stable.
- \* A family planning programme will be socially and culturally acceptable in the area in which it is to be implemented.
- \* Where more than one currency is to be utilized for an activity, or where multi-country procurements are involved, there will be no sharp or drastic changes in foreign exchange rates which would affect the overall resources required.
- \* Key project or programme personnel will be available with no major disruptions in work schedules, such as might be caused by major illness, accidents, or other incapacity.

33. INPUTS are the goods, services, personnel and other resources provided for an activity with the expectation of producing outputs and achieving the activity's objectives.

Examples:

- \* Building materials.
- \* Technical advisor services.
- \* New varieties of seeds.
- \* Textbooks.
- \* Credit.
- \* Feasibility studies.
- \* Machinery.
- \* Research or training fellowships.
- \* Raw statistical and economic data.
- \* Budgeted funds.
- \* Expert consultant services.
- \* The subject matter and preliminary agenda for a conference.

34. INDICATORS are objective and specific measures of changes or results expected from an activity.

(They are designed to provide a scale against which to measure and show the activity's progress toward producing its outputs and achieving its objectives. A given activity might well use several carefully chosen indicators, or indirect "proxy" indicators where direct measurement is not feasible. The indicators can also be stated as specific targets to be achieved at specific points in time during the implementation of the activity, or categorized by type--such as output indicators or impact indicators.)

Examples:

- \* Percentage of children in a target group receiving supplied food.
- \* Number of hectares surveyed.
- \* The number of loan applications received (or processed, or approved).
- \* Number of persons employed after completing a specialized skills training course.
- \* Unemployment rates.
- \* Sales of a publication series.
- \* Utilization rate of a computer centre.

35. OUTPUTS are the specific products which an activity is expected to produce from its inputs in order to achieve its objectives.

(Since activities may appear in sequence or in stages or at different levels, it is important to note that one activity's output may serve as another activity's input, i.e., a training manual produced as an output of project A may be an input to project B. An activity might also have intermediate outputs and inputs.)

Examples:

- \* Trained manpower.
- \* A laboratory.
- \* A classification of accounts.
- \* Training manuals.
- \* A research work programme.
- \* Producer marketing co-operatives.
- \* An irrigation network.
- \* Library services.
- \* A report.
- \* A meeting.
- \* An information system.

36. IMPACT is an expression of the changes produced in a situation as the result of an activity which has been undertaken.

(This impact should be identifiable at the level of the specific or immediate objectives to which the activity is directed (labelled as Level I below), as well as at the higher level of broader, long-range objectives to which the activity is expected to contribute (Level II below).)

Examples:

- \* Level I: Interest shown in and use made of an action-oriented report on air pollution following a research study or conference.  
Level II: Passage and successful implementation of a new law to eliminate certain air pollutants as part of a broad-scale environmental protection programme.
- \* Level I: Institution of new tax collection procedures and utilization of new training course knowledge by tax collectors.  
Level II: A substantial increase in governmental tax revenues from these and other activities designed to increase revenue flows.
- \* Level I: Successful utilization of wind-powered energy techniques from a rural water-supply project.  
Level II: Adoption of similar applications of alternative technology in a rural development programme.
- \* Level I: Successful and productive utilization of new office word-processing equipment.  
Level II: Ability to respond much more rapidly and efficiently to requests for information and a reduction in staff increases.

- \* Level I: Diversification of exports of primary and manufactured products.  
Level II: Stabilization of export income as a result of the diversification programme in combination with other fiscal, currency, and trade agreement efforts.

- \* Negative impacts can also occur, as in:

Level I: A successful timber harvesting programme which raises employment and incomes, but also creates

Level II: Serious land erosion and river sedimentation problems.

- \* And impacts may also be unexpected, as in:

Level I: A flood control project which sharply reduces flooding and thereby contributes to

Level II: Improved agricultural production in a rural area (but also provides the unanticipated positive impacts of creating a new recreation area, which in turn creates new tourism opportunities, which in turn revitalizes small-scale handicrafts activities and provides new sources of income for a previously-isolated rural population).

37. RELEVANCE concerns the degree to which the rationale, objectives, and expected impact of an activity are, or remain, pertinent, valid, and significant with regard to long-range objectives or other identified priority needs and concerns.

(An activity might be both effective and efficient, in that it was both successful in achieving its objectives and well-managed (see definitions below), but still not be relevant because it makes little or no contribution to meeting long-range objectives and priority needs. An activity might even have substantial impact but not be particularly relevant, if the changes produced do not relate to priority concerns.)

Examples:

- \* A project to convert waste materials into an energy source may have lost its relevance if a newer conversion technology has been discovered elsewhere and found to be highly effective.
- \* A major industrial management training programme may have lost its relevance if the host Government has revised its developmental priorities to concentrate on rural development as the essential priority.

- \* A project may lose relevance even though it was successfully executed, if its results prove to be so unique that it cannot be applied or used anywhere else.
- \* A project to improve information and reporting systems through the purchase of sophisticated communications equipment may have lost its relevance if the organization is confronted with a new era of budgetary austerity.
- \* An activity may be determined to have been irrelevant in its basic conception, if its results and impact have no noticeable effect on the priority problems it sought to address.

38. EFFECTIVENESS is a measure of the extent to which an activity achieves its objectives.

Examples:

- \* If the objective of both projects is to increase industrial employment, a training project that placed 90 per cent of its graduates in jobs may be considered more effective than a comparable one that places only 40 per cent of its graduates.
- \* If the objective of both programmes is to increase fertile land and thereby agricultural production, an irrigation programme providing a stable water supply may be considered more effective than a comparable one providing an erratic water supply.
- \* If the objective of both administrative processes is to resolve medical claims, a group which correctly processes claims 95 per cent of the time may be more effective than one that has an 80 per cent correct processing rate, even though the second group processes a greater number of claims overall.

39. EFFICIENCY is the productivity of an activity's implementation process - how well inputs were converted into outputs. Efficiency analysis usually compares alternative ways of conducting an activity to find that alternative which requires minimum inputs to achieve some fixed goal or produces maximum outputs from a fixed quantity of inputs.

(Thus, while effectiveness is concerned with the broader question of whether an activity has achieved its objectives, efficiency is more narrowly concerned with aspects of managerial performance and productivity. An activity might be effective but not efficient, if it achieves its objectives even though it was not well-implemented. Conversely, the activity might be efficient but not effective, if it was highly productive but still failed to achieve its objectives.)

Examples:

- \* A project producing 200 trained workers for \$1,000 apiece is much more efficient than a comparable project producing 100 trained workers for \$1,800 apiece.
- \* A programme costing \$5 million is more efficient than a comparable one costing \$8 million, if the result of each project is 3,000 hectares of newly-irrigated land.
- \* An administrative group which processes 25,000 medical claims a year is more efficient than a comparable group which processes 16,000 medical claims a year, if each group has an annual budget of \$100,000.

40. (Two other terms which often are referred to in connection with evaluation are "cost-effectiveness" and "cost-benefit" analysis. These analyses are usually applied before an activity is undertaken, in order to help choose among alternative possible courses of action. However, the basic concepts of costs relative to effectiveness, and costs versus benefits, may also be useful (if often quite difficult to apply) in evaluating an on-going or completed activity.)

41. COST-EFFECTIVENESS analysis seeks to determine the costs and the effectiveness of an activity, or to compare similar alternative activities to determine the relative degree to which they will obtain the desired objectives. The preferred action or alternative is that which requires the least cost to produce a given level of effectiveness or provides the greatest effectiveness for a given level of cost.

(Thus, cost-effectiveness analysis combines both efficiency and effectiveness considerations, attempting to assess both the quality and expense of the activity's implementation and its success in achieving its objectives.)

Examples:

- \* The choice between two or more alternative projects to improve reading performance based on either: (a) the alternative which requires the least cost to produce a given level of performance on a standard reading test; or (b) the alternative which produces the highest level of performance on a standard reading test at a given cost.
- \* The determination that a programme is "highly cost-effective", "cost-effective", or "not very cost-effective" when measured against some specified and appropriate criterion of effectiveness.

42. COST-BENEFIT analysis is a more specialized form of cost-effectiveness analysis which allows the comparison of widely differing activities through the expression of all costs and benefits in common monetary terms.

(In theory, it is a far more powerful analytical tool than cost-effectiveness. In practice, however, such analysis is very difficult to perform satisfactorily.)

Examples:

- \* The choice between a project to build a dam for flood control and irrigation purposes or a project to reduce the incidence of a disease. If the flood control project is expected to produce \$20 million in benefits at a cost of \$10 million, while the disease prevention project is expected to produce \$16 million in benefits at a cost of \$4 million, then the disease prevention project is considered more "cost-beneficial". This is because its benefit-cost ratio is 4:1, while that of the flood control project is only 2:1.
- \* The determination that a programme is cost-beneficial in that the ratio of benefits to costs is relatively high in terms of a commonly-understood "acceptable" cost-benefit ratio. If a teacher-training programme is expected to provide \$3 million in benefits at a cost of \$2 million, it probably should not be undertaken as initially planned if comparable programmes in the past have had a benefit-cost ratio of 3:1.
- \* If a new administrative process is expected to produce \$1 million in benefits at a cost of \$1.3 million, it probably should not be undertaken because the cost-benefit ratio is negative.

#### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

43. It is recommended that the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination review the foregoing glossary and that it be adopted as the general framework for evaluation-related terms for use by the United Nations system.

44. JIU, with the collaboration of the organizations of the United Nations system, should conduct a periodic review of this glossary with the expectation that changes and additions will be made in the light of evaluation experience in the United Nations system.

## ANNEX

### PARTIAL COMPILATION OF DEFINITIONS USED WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

#### A. Evaluation

"Evaluation is the critical examination of an ongoing or completed project's design, experience, results and actual or potential effectiveness."

---UNDP/PPM, 3470, 1 December 1975, Section 1.0.

"Evaluation may be broadly defined as a systematic examination of the objectives, design, implementation and results of a programme, project or process in order to provide a basis for improving the planning and implementation of policy and of current and future activities."

---UNIDO, ID/B/C.3/48/Add.2, 6 April 1976, paragraph 6.

"Evaluation: The analysis of project/programme results against objectives in order to assess the extent to which the latter have been, or are being realized as well as to explain any discrepancy between results and objectives."

---ILO, PROG/MAB.77/M.1/1, 10 March 1977, Appendix.

"Evaluation is a systematic way of learning from experience and using the lessons learned to improve current activities and promote better planning by careful selection of alternatives for future action. This involves an analysis of different phases of a programme: its relevance, its formulation, its efficiency and effectiveness and its acceptance by all parties involved."

---WHO, A31/10, Annex 3, 29 March 1978, Section 2.1.1.

"In the abstract, programme evaluation consists of passing an informed judgement on:

- (a) The quality and timeliness of the outputs delivered;
- (b) The impact of these outputs, especially the extent to which the stated objectives have been attained."

---UN, Secretary-General, A/10035/Add. 1, 4 November 1975, page 5.

"Evaluation in the context of this note refers to a simultaneous assessment of all aspects (social, economic, technical, institutional and managerial) of an on-going or completed technical assistance project or programme. It is the process by which at any point of time the direct

and indirect results of a project or programme are determined and critically reviewed to assess the rate of progress towards attaining the immediate project objectives and the development action which the project is expected to assist."

---FAO, DDDE:INF/74/1, February 1974, paragraph 6.

"Evaluation aims at measuring, whenever possible in quantitative terms, and according to well-defined criteria, the major direct and indirect effects of a certain activity, taking into account its objectives as established before its inception."

---UNESCO, Manual, Item 560, 1 September 1966, Section B.2.

"...the evaluation function consists in the continuous measuring, monitoring and reporting of programmes and activities on a selective basis to determine the degree of effectiveness, efficiency and economy achieved in relation to established goals and objectives. This evaluation process, serving as "feed-back", provides a basis for the next cycle of planning and programming."

---Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budgetary Machinery, A/10117, 17 June 1975, paragraph 67.

"Evaluation is the analysis of project results against project objectives in order to assess the extent to which the latter are being, or have been, realised by the project as well as to explain any discrepancy between project results and the objectives. Both the development and re-assessment of objectives may also be part of evaluation."

---World Bank, Workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation of Rural Development Projects and Programmes, December 1976.

"The ACC considers that the concept of evaluation would be more clearly understood if it were related to four distinct phases in development assistance activities, in each of which elements of evaluation entered to a greater or lesser extent. These phases were: identification of needs, appraisal of requests, operational control, and evaluation of results. The evaluation of results, if perhaps the most important in this context, was only one phase in the process."

---ACC, E/4486/Add.1, 19 April 1968, paragraph 4.

"evaluation... should not be used to justify past actions or merely identify their inadequacies. It is essential to perceive evaluation as a decision-oriented tool, and to link the evaluation process closely with decision-making, whether at the operational or the policy level. The very process of carrying out evaluation can be just as important as the conclusions drawn, since involvement in the process itself often induces

a better understanding of the activities being evaluated, and a more constructive approach to their implementation and future action required."

---WHO, A31/10, 29 March 1978, Annex 3, Section 2.1.1.

"Nature of Evaluation: It is necessary to avoid too ambitious or elaborate objectives and methodology of evaluation. The approach in FAO should therefore be pragmatic and flexible. In the process of formulation, implementation and built-in evaluation, there should be emphasis as far as feasible and reasonable on quantification and the use of at least objectively verifiable intermediate indicators or, failing that, on the measurement of actual inputs compared to estimated requirements. The programme management system should, as envisaged, intensify efforts to: define objectives more clearly and concretely, produce more specific workplans, monitor resources planned and consumed and activities planned and accomplished, and correct deviations at the earliest possible stage."

---FAO, CL70/29, September 1976, paragraphs 12 and 17.

#### ON-GOING VERSUS EX-POST EVALUATION

"On-going Evaluation is the continual analysis during project implementation of project outputs, effects and developmental impact.

Ex-post Evaluation is an analysis after completion of a project (or of a distinct phase of it) of its effects and impact."

---World Bank, Workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation of Rural Development Projects and Programmes, December 1976, page 2.

"... it should be possible to conduct:

(i) On-going evaluations, the analysis during implementation of project outputs, likely effects and impact in order to provide management and decision-makers on a regular basis with any analytical support that might be necessary to enable them to assess, and if necessary adjust, policies, objectives, institutional arrangements and resources affecting the activity during implementation. On-going evaluation studies may also feed into the preparation of projects in other areas;

(ii) ex-post evaluations, an analysis after completion of the activity's effect and likely impact on the immediate and higher level objectives, in order to provide decision-makers and planners with information for future planning."

---ILO, PROG/MAB.77/M.1/1, 10 March 1977, page 2.

"The work of ex post facto evaluation should concern itself basically with results planned and achieved. It should be directed not only to the value of the programme per se, but also to providing a useful feedback to programme managers to assist them in defining future objectives, analyzing

alternative ways of achieving them, making the preferred selection among the alternatives, choosing quantifying factors and intermediate indicators, and assessing results. This feedback is indeed a most important benefit of ex post facto evaluation, since lessons can be learned only for future, not past activities."

---FAO, CL70/29, September 1976, paragraph 18.

## PROJECT, PROGRAMME, AND PROCESS

### Project

"Project: An undertaking intended to achieve certain specific objectives with specified resources, usually within an overall programme and within a specified period of time."

---CCAQ/SEC/119(FB)/Rev.1, May 1977, page 13.

"A project assisted by UNDP is a set of inter-related activities amenable to unified management which are aimed at achieving specific objectives within a given budget and a given period."

---UNDP/PPM, 3410, 1 December 1975, Section, 1.0.

"Project: A planned undertaking, a unit of management that clearly specifies what is to be accomplished, over what estimated period of time, and at what estimated cost."

---ILO, PROG/MAB.77/M.1/1, 10 March 1977, Appendix.

"Development Project: An aggregate of activities that have a definite time limitation and a pre-determined amount of resources and that are directed towards the attainment of precisely defined quantified objectives."

---(WHO) CCAQ/SEC/372(FB), 22 March 1976, Annex.

### Programme

#### "Programme:

(i) A set of activities directed towards the attainment of one or more defined objectives.

(ii) In the programme structure, the next lower sub-division of a major programme contributing to the objective or objectives of that major program."

---CCAQ/SEC/199(FB)/Rev.1, May 1977, page 12.

"(a) Level I: a major programme consists of all activities in a sector in both headquarters and the regional commissions. For example, all work on natural resources in the United Nations.

(b) Level 2 : a programme consists of the activities in a sector under the responsibility of an office head or division director. For example, work on natural resources in the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

(c) Level 3 : a subprogramme consists of all activities that are aimed at accomplishing one medium-term objective. For example, work directed towards the appraisal of the availability and use of water resources in the ESCAP region.

(d) Level 4 : a programme element is the smallest programme unit, a project or its equivalent. In most instances the output of work at the level of the programme element is a meeting, a publication or a field action. For example, a meeting on the development of deltaic areas in the ESCAP region."

---United Nations, General Assembly (Medium-Term Plan, 1978-1981, Vol.I), Official Records: Thirty-First Session, Supp. No. 6A(A/31/6/Add.1, paragraph 113.

"Programme: An organized aggregate of services, activities and development projects directed towards the attainment of defined objectives. A programme should ideally include the precise objectives, targets, methods, manpower, physical facilities, financial resources, time and their inter-relationships required for the implementation of each service, activity and development project and for the aggregate of these services, activities and projects of which the programme is constituted, as well as output indicators for the evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness. For example, programmes for maternal and child health, the promotion of mental health and cancer control."

---(WHO) CCAQ/SEC/372(FB), 22 March 1976, Annex.

"Programme: A cluster of projects which are similar in nature or cover a well-defined arrangement and have related objectives, such as projects in the same field of activity (but in different countries), projects having the same basic function such as institution-building, projects in a particular area or country, etc."

---ILO, PROG/MAB.77/M.1/1, 10 March 1977, Appendix.

### Process

"Process Evaluation: Process evaluation is the evaluation of one or more aspects of a process. In the case of UNIDO, it could be the process of technical co-operation, or that concerned with its supporting activities or with its organization and management. The specific purpose of process evaluation is to provide guidance for improving, or for helping to overcome problems with respect to, process aspects that have been identified as needing improvement on the basis of preliminary data."

---UNIDO, ID/B/C.3/48/Add.2, 6 April 1976,  
page 5.

B. Evaluation-Related Functions

"Evaluation is not to be confused with routine monitoring, audit or inspection activities which are concerned largely with administrative or financial matters or operational problems that might arise periodically in the lifetime of a project.

....It is in this examination of the development assumptions that evaluation goes beyond monitoring, inspection or audit."

---FAO, DDDE:INF/74/1, February 1974, paragraphs 6, 15.

"Evaluation is different from monitoring - and this cannot be emphasized too strongly. It is undertaken separately and is distinct in nature and scope from monitoring. While monitoring is the review of the progress of a project in the light of parameters established in the Project Document, evaluation requires that a project be examined de novo by persons not closely associated with its formulation and implementation (including monitoring). It calls for a fresh and independent assessment of the project's design, implementation, results and effectiveness, aimed not only at determining the progress made and identifying the causative factors, but also verifying whether the project was properly conceived and designed in the first place and whether it is so at the time of the evaluation.

Evaluation is also different from appraisal essentially in its timing. While the appraisal of a project is undertaken prior to approval by UNDP of the assistance requested for it, evaluation is undertaken after the approval, at any time during the project's implementation or after its completion."

---UNDP/PPM, 3470, 1 December 1975, Section 1.0.

APPRAISAL

"Appraisal...is being increasingly used to refer to the process of assessment of requests for technical assistance prior to their endorsement or approval by the donors."

---FAO, DDDE:INF/74/1, February 1974, Part I, footnote, page 1.

"Appraisal: The processes the result of which provides a basis for decisions on requests for assistance in the light of established criteria, such as: relevance to the development objectives to be attained; propriety in terms of legislative and other requirements of the international system of development assistance; operational feasibility; and cost-benefit studies."

---Inter-Agency Study Group on Evaluation, as cited in ECOSOC, (UNITAR), E/4649, 2 May 1969, page 14.

"Appraisal: The scrutiny to which a project is subjected prior to making a decision whether to approve it. "

---ILO, PROG/MAB.77/M.1/1, 10 March 1977, Appendix.

"Appraisal is the critical examination of the design and potential effectiveness of a project for which UNDP assistance is requested, based on the prescribed documentation and other available information and undertaken by UNDP at the designated levels... The purpose of appraisal is to determine whether a project for which UNDP assistance is requested, provides - as designed - a reasonable assurance of its effectiveness."

---UNDP,PPM, 3441, 1 December 1975, Sections 1.0 and 2.0.

### MONITORING

"Monitoring: Overseeing the physical implementation process to ensure that actions and decisions are as actually agreed upon, inputs are made available on time and are properly utilized and actions are occurring within the planned time-frame."

---ILO, PROG/MAB.77/M.1/1, 10 March 1977, Appendix.

"Monitoring is overseeing the progress of a project to ensure that the project is being implemented as set forth in the Project Document. The purpose of monitoring is to identify and bring about those actions necessary to utilize opportunities for improving, or to correct problems relating to, the implementation of a project and the effective utilization of its results."

---UNDP,PPM, 3466, 1 December 1975, Sections 1.0 and 2.0.

"Monitoring is the continuous gathering of information on project inputs and objectives, and on conditions and complementary activities that are critical to the success of the project."

---World Bank, Workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation of Rural Development Projects and Programmes, December 1976, page 2.

### INSPECTION

"Inspection: An extraordinary outside intervention taking place in the course of the life of a project in order to check on particular aspects or problems that ordinary procedures may be unable to discern or correct. Inspection is likely to involve making recommendations for the resolution of any problems which may have been detected."

---ILO, PROG/MAB.77/M.1/1, 10 March 1977, Appendix.

"Inspection is the examination of the execution of field activities with a view to improving and strengthening the action undertaken by the Secretariat at the request of, and in co-operation with, Member States, in particular through checking the extent to which projects are fulfilling their stated objectives, providing advice and orientation for staff away from headquarters and detecting shortcomings in the management of an activity by headquarters or field staff."

---UNESCO, Manual, Item 560, 1 September 1966,  
Section B.

#### AUDIT

"Audit, External: An examination and review aimed at verification and certification of an organization's accounts by an independent auditor appointed and given terms of reference by the appropriate authority of the organization (hence "External Auditor")."

"Audit, Internal: An audit made by persons on the staff of the organization whose accounts are being audited, primarily for the purpose of internal control (hence "Internal Auditor")."

---CCAQ/SEC/119(PB)/Rev.1, May 1977, page 4.

C. Key Evaluation Terms

METHODOLOGY

"Methodology may be defined as the application of a concept through the use of appropriate methods and techniques. As regards evaluation, the basic concept remains essentially the same, but the methods and techniques vary according to the characteristics and requirements of each case. It is clear therefore that no one standard methodology will apply to all evaluations."

---UNIDO, ID/B/C.3/48/Add.2, 6 April 1976, paragraph 26.

OBJECTIVES

"Objective: A desired state to be reached or maintained through one or more activities."

---CCAQ/SEC/119(FB)/Rev.1, May 1977, page 12.

"Immediate Objective: The developmental change which is to be created or accomplished with a view toward influencing the solution of a country or sector problem.

Development Objectives: The term characterising a programming level beyond the immediate objective; it provides the reason for the project or programme and articulates a desired end towards which the project efforts of the specialized agency, the financing agency and the beneficiary country or countries are directed."

---ILO, PROG/MAB.77/M.1/1, 10 March 1977, Appendix.

"Objectives: The objectives of the United Nations in each economic and social sector are to do such things as:

- (a) Assist Member States
  - in the formulation of policies...
  - in the creation or strengthening of institutions...
  - in the training of cadres...
- (b) Promote regional or international co-operation in...
- (c) Create an awareness of..."

---United Nations, General Assembly, (Medium-Term Plan, 1978-1981, Vol.I), Official Records: Thirty-First Session, Supp. No. 6A(A/31/6/Add.1), paragraph 117.

"Objective: A desired aim or end, for example "the improvement of child health."

Detailed Objectives: The breakdown of an objective into subsidiary objectives: for example, for the objective "improvement of child health" some detailed objectives might be the reduction of perinatal mortality, the reduction of infant mortality, the improvement of child

growth and development, the prevention of childhood infections and the prevention of accidents among children."

---(WHO) CCAQ/SEC/372(FB), 22 March 1976, Annex.

"Immediate objective: The immediate objective of a project is defined as what the project itself is expected to achieve. A project could have more than one immediate objective.

Development objective: In the context of a UNDP-assisted project, the development objective is the broader sectoral or multi-sectoral development objective which the project is expected to help attain through the achievement of its immediate objective. It is usually beyond the range of the project to achieve by itself. A project could have more than one development objective."

---UNDP, PPM, 3411, 1 December 1975, Sections 4.1 and 4.2.

"Project objectives: The stated purposes and aims of a particular project; to be distinguished from broadly defined development objectives."

---ECOSOC (UNITAR), E/4649, 2 May 1969, page 26.

#### ASSUMPTIONS

"Assumptions reflect those conditions (or linkages) which must be satisfied if the hypotheses of /the project/ are to be met. Many of these conditions (policy inputs, coordination between government or outside agencies, natural factors, assured supply of material or financial inputs for follow-up, etc.) have a very close bearing on the effectiveness of the technical assistance project but are not within its direct purview."

---FAO, DDDE:INF/74/1, February 1974, paragraph 14.

"Prerequisite (assumptions): An event or action which must take place, or a condition which must exist, if a project is to succeed, but over which the project team has little or no control."

---ILO, PROG/MAB.77/M.1/1, 10 March 1977, Appendix.

#### INPUTS

"Inputs: Inputs are the resources required for carrying out the project's activities, producing its outputs and achieving its immediate objective. While they may be provided either by the Government or the UNDP, they should, in the first instance, be conceived in terms of the totality of resources needed for the project, before the sources of supply of particular inputs are decided on."

---UNDP, PPM, 3411, 1 December 1975, Section 4.5.

"Inputs are whatever the donors or the host country provide - whether it be commodities, equipment, buildings, personnel, services, fellowships, etc."

---FAO, DDDE:INF/74/1, February 1974, paragraph 14.

"Inputs: Actions taken or goods and services (personnel, commodities, training, etc.) provided by donors or beneficiary with the expectation of producing certain definable outputs."

---ILO, PROG/MAB.77/M.1/1, 10 March 1977, Appendix.

### INDICATORS

"Indicator: An explicit and objectively verifiable measure--either direct or indirect (proxy)--of results expected."

---ILO, PROG/MAB.77/M.1/1, 10 March 1977, Appendix.

"Output Indicator: Variable for estimating the outcomes of programme or project activities. For example, the percentage of births attended by physicians, nurses, midwives or auxiliary nurse midwives as an indicator of the outcome of a programme for improving obstetric care. Ideally, relevant base line information should exist or be created at the beginning of the determined period in order to measure differences at the end of the period. However, the measurement of indicators requires an effort in itself and is often costly; therefore the cost/benefit of the measurement has to be considered. Wherever possible at a reasonable cost, ways of arriving at the indicators should form an integral part of the programme.

"Impact Indicator: Variable for estimating the change in health or socio-economic situation brought about by the programme or project activities. For example, the maternal and perinatal mortality rates as indicators of the effectiveness of a scheme for improving obstetric care or the diminution of absenteeism rate as the consequence of a programme of occupational health."

---WHO, CCAQ/SEC/372(FB), 22 March 1976, Annex.

"Indicators and criteria are used as aids throughout the evaluation process ... Indicators are variables which help to measure changes. Criteria are standards against which actions can be compared."

---WHO, A31/10, 29 March 1978, Annex 3, Section 2.2.3.

## OUTPUT

"The output of an activity is its final product - a report in the case of research activities, a meeting in the case of its preparatory activities, and so on."

---United Nations General Assembly, (Medium-Term Plan, 1978-1981, Vol.1), Official Records: Thirty-First Session, Supp. No. 6A(A/31/6/Add.1), paragraph 124.

"Outputs: Outputs are what the project itself should produce in order to achieve its immediate objective. They are the products of the activities of the project. Taken together, and combined as appropriate, they reflect the degree and quality of achievement of the project's immediate objective."

---UNDP, PPM, 3411, 1 December 1975, Section 4.3.

"Project Outputs: These are the outcome of project activities. Examples of outputs of a rural development project are: acreages irrigated, farmers trained, co-operatives established, credit provided, kilometers of road constructed, health facilities constructed, schools constructed, and so on."

---World Bank, Workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation of Rural Development Projects and Programmes, December 1976, page 1.

"Outputs are the expressly intended and objectively verifiable results directly expected from providing the inputs."

---FAO, DDDE:INF/74/1, February 1974, paragraph 14.

## IMPACT

"Project Impact: This is the change in the standard of living and the increased capacity for self-sustained development of a group of beneficiaries or communities, resulting from project effects. These changes can be measured by increased income and consumption, improved diets, reduced incidence of diseases, increased literacy, increased local participation in planning and decision-making, and so on."

---World Bank, Workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation of Rural Development Projects and Programmes, December 1976, page 1.

"Expected impact: The expected impact must be some change in Member States or in relationships between them, not the mere completion of the planned activities."

---United Nations, General Assembly, (Medium-Term Plan, 1978-1981, Vol.I), Official Records: Thirty-First Session, Supp. No. 6A(A/31/6/Add.1), paragraph 125.

"Impact is an expression of the positive effect of a programme, service or institution on overall health development and on related social and economic development. While a programme may be effective in that it has attained its objectives, the attainment of these objectives may, in fact, make little or no contribution to overall health and related socio-economic development. The assessment of impact is thus aimed at identifying any necessary change in the direction of health programmes so as to increase their contribution to overall health and socio-economic development."

---WHO, A31/10, 29 March 1978, Annex 3, Section 2.2.5.

#### RELEVANCE, EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

"Relevance relates to the rationale for having programmes, or activities, or services and institutions, in terms of their response to essential human needs and social and health policies and priorities..."

Efficiency is an expression of the relationships between the results obtained from a health programme or activity and the efforts expended in terms of human, financial and other resources, health processes and technologies, and time. The assessment of efficiency is aimed at improving implementation, and adds to the review of progress by taking account of the results..."

Effectiveness is an expression of the desired effect of a programme, service or institution in reducing a health problem or improving an unsatisfactory health situation. Thus, effectiveness measures the degree of attainment of the predetermined objectives and targets of the programme, service or institution. The assessment of effectiveness is aimed at improving programme formulation or the functions and structure of health services and institutions through analysis of the extent of attainment of their objectives... The evaluation of effectiveness should also include an assessment of the satisfaction or otherwise expressed by the community concerned with the effects of the programme, service or institution."

---WHO, A31/10, 29 March 1978, Annex 3, Section 2.2.5.

"In order to elicit the information necessary to make meaningful evaluations, it is necessary to seek the answer to three basic questions which should be asked of all kinds of activities at all levels.

Effectiveness: (a) Are the objectives being achieved? and (b) what are the reasons for success or failure?

Efficiency: (a) At what cost are the effects being achieved? Do the benefits justify the cost? Are there less expensive means of achieving the same objectives? (b) In the event benefits no longer justify the cost, what changes have transpired since the preparation of the original design to bring this about?

/...

Significance: Will the achievement of the targets contribute to the economic development or other higher level objectives beyond the immediate objective? Has there been a change of circumstances which causes the activity to have greater or lesser significance (relevance)?"

---ILO, PROG/MAB.77/M.1/1, 10 March 1977,  
page 4.

"Evaluation of technical assistance consists essentially of two integral elements - effectiveness and efficiency - which must be studied together. Effectiveness of a technical assistance project is determined by the extent to which the project output is (or is likely to be) used for development follow-up. Effectiveness is thus concerned with an evaluation of the relevance, adequacy and timing of project objectives or output for a specified development follow-up irrespective of the means employed to achieve this output.

Efficiency, on the other hand, refers to the cost and speed of project operations and the quality of the work done. There is no evaluative element in efficiency analysis with regard to the nature or relevance of the stated project objectives or output (in relation to development follow-up). Efficiency in this sense is synonymous with cost-effectiveness inasmuch as it implies consideration of alternative approaches to the achievement of outputs or objectives already determined or assumed to be worth achieving.

While effectiveness is a value judgement on the usefulness of the outputs of technical assistance, efficiency is concerned with the utilization of inputs made available to achieve these outputs. A technical assistance project can thus be efficient without being effective or vice versa."

---FAO, DDDE:INF/74/1, February 1974, pages 1-2.

"... a project is considered effective when (a) it has achieved its immediate objective and (b) the results of that achievement are utilized appropriately as part of a wider programme of coordinated and inter-dependent efforts aimed at attaining the broader development objective."

---UNDP, PPM, 3411, 1 December 1975, Section 3.0.

#### COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

"Normally, cost-benefit analysis implies measuring both the cost and the benefits of an action in comparable terms, usually monetary, so as to determine whether the benefits exceed the costs or to assess which of several alternatives is likely to yield the best ratio of benefit to cost. Cost-effectiveness analysis assumes that the benefit is worthwhile and attempts to identify the least costly of two or more ways of attaining it."

---WHO, EB57/WP/2, 27 November 1975, Section 6.5.4.