

# PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT GUIDE

HIV AND HEPATITIS C COMMUNITY  
ACTION FUND

PROTECTING AND EMPOWERING CANADIANS TO IMPROVE THEIR HEALTH



Public Health  
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé  
publique du Canada

Canada

**TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT THE HEALTH OF CANADIANS THROUGH LEADERSHIP,  
PARTNERSHIP, INNOVATION AND ACTION IN PUBLIC HEALTH.**

—Public Health Agency of Canada

Également disponible en français sous le titre :  
Guide de rapport d'évaluation de projet - Fonds d'initiatives communautaires en matière de VIH  
et d'hépatite C

To obtain additional copies, please contact:

Centre for Communicable Diseases and Infection Control  
Public Health Agency of Canada  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9  
E-mail: [ccdic-clmti@phac-aspc.gc.ca](mailto:ccdic-clmti@phac-aspc.gc.ca)

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Publication date: May 2016

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# CONTEXT

The Public Health Agency of Canada's (PHAC) Centre for Communicable Diseases and Infection Control (CCDIC) is pleased to provide you with this Project Evaluation Report Guide (Guide) to clarify its expectations for funding recipients. Organizations funded under the HIV and Hepatitis C Community Action Fund (Community Action Fund) will be required to submit a final Project Evaluation Report on the outcomes of their project. As well, they will need to outline how these outcomes were shared with others working to address HIV, hepatitis C, and other sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections. The Guide explains how to organize the final report, what to include in the different sections, and provides tips and a checklist to assist in writing the report.

There are multiple reasons for conducting an evaluation and multiple users or audiences who benefit from it. An evaluation helps identify what worked, what didn't and why, as well as identifies areas for future improvement. Project results and other information gathered from project evaluations are important to community-based organizations, health professionals, and governments and allow them to learn from your experience, and discover promising practices and effective interventions. PHAC will use the project evaluations to assess the results achieved through the Community Action Fund, learn what types of interventions or activities work, identify promising practices, and ultimately report to Canadians on the results of the Community Action Fund.

## ***Who should use the Guide?***

The Guide is intended for funding recipients of the Community Action Fund. All funding recipients are strongly encouraged to hire an external evaluator if there is no or limited in-house evaluation capacity to conduct the project evaluation. Up to 10% of Contribution or Grant Agreements can be used to support evaluation activities. Funding recipients are urged to share and review the Guide with their evaluator to ensure the final report contains all of the required information and meets PHAC's expectations. The Guide can be used along with PHAC's Compendium of Evaluation Tools, which includes validated and adaptable evaluation tools to measure project activity outcomes.

## ***How to use the Guide***

Funding recipients are required to submit a Performance and Evaluation Plan with their application for funding and, if required, may adjust it shortly after the approval of the project. While the evaluation report is completed towards the end of the project, it is important to consider and plan evaluation activities from the start of the project's implementation. As you prepare your Performance and Evaluation Plan, you are encouraged to review the Guide to ensure that you are collecting the right data throughout the life span of your project, so that you will be in a position to use this information to evaluate your project outcomes later.

The Guide outlines the essential elements of the Final Project Evaluation Report. You may also choose to assess additional areas that serve the needs of your organization or that are more specific to the focus of your project.

During the project, funding recipients who have a Contribution Agreement will complete an annual “Performance Measurement Tool” (PMT) and financial reports that are aligned with PHAC’s risk-based monitoring strategy. Funding recipients who have a Grant Agreement may also be asked to complete the PMT. Information from these reports will also help you to prepare the Final Evaluation Report (as discussed later in the Guide).

A checklist and template for the Final Project Evaluation Report is provided at the end of the Guide. Use of the template is **not** mandatory. Other formats may be used, but **must** contain the essential elements described in this Guide. If you have questions regarding the evaluation of your project, you should discuss these as early as possible with your PHAC Program Consultant, who will support you in this important process.

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**Tip:** You can use this Table of Contents as the structure/outline of your Final Project Evaluation Report

# FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

The entire Final Project Evaluation Report should be between 10 and 25 pages in length, not including annexes.

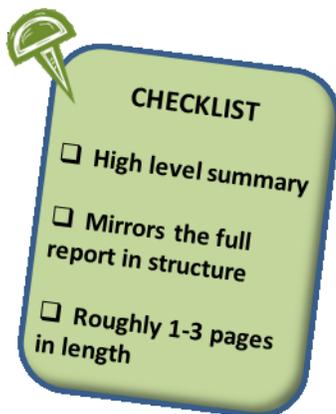
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An executive summary is a condensed or shorter version of the whole report – ***the report in miniature***. The executive summary contains the most critical and key information ‘in brief’ from the evaluation. As the title suggests, it is intended to be a summary or synopsis of the full report, and should be between one and three pages in length.

### Content:

The content of the executive summary should mirror the full evaluation report in structure, touching on each of the main sections of the evaluation report, as follows:

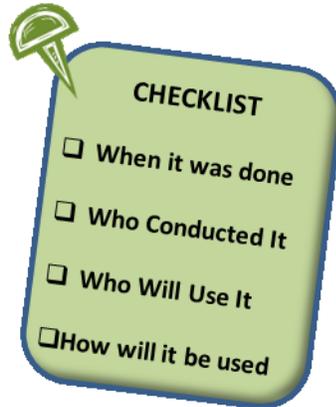
- Introduction: describe what is being evaluated, why, for whom, and who will use it;
- Project profile: provide a high level description of the project;
- Evaluation Questions and Methodology: describe the methods used to conduct your evaluation, including your evaluation questions and any constraints or limitations you encountered. This allows the reader to understand how findings were collected and from whom. One or two paragraphs are recommended;
- Findings and Analysis: summarize only the main findings from the evaluation, without going into too much detail—remember that the reader has the full report and all of the detailed analysis to refer to;
- Conclusions: provide the key results of the analysis – the most important issues; and
- Recommendations and lessons learned: duplicate these from the evaluation report, in full (and not summarized), as they are all important and of equal value.



**Tip:** Write the Executive Summary after the full report has been written.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The introduction should provide the reader with a high-level contextual explanation of the report's contents, in one to three paragraphs.



### Content:

Explain the purpose of the evaluation, including any specific objectives identified for the evaluation. Include information on who conducted the evaluation and when it was done.

**Tip:** Keep it simple; don't include a lot of detail.

## 2.0 PROJECT PROFILE

The project profile section is a description of the key elements of the project – **objectives, activities, target population and resources required to implement the project (physical, human and financial)**. It is designed to let the reader know what the project was about and what activities were being evaluated. The information in this section can be drawn from your project's Contribution or Grant Agreement and your application for funding. Interim reports (PMT and financial) will also be helpful in completing the project profile. This is not an analytical section of the evaluation report. It is descriptive and tells the reader what took place, with whom, how and why. This description should also include any **significant changes** that occurred during the project and the reason for these changes. This section should also identify whether the changes resulted from challenges encountered with the original project design or whether new information emerged during the course of the project - outline these challenges or information.

### Content:

#### 2.1 Objectives and Activities

Discuss the project objectives, as outlined in your approved work plan, to explain ***what your project is designed to achieve***.

Describe the activities that were undertaken in order to achieve the project objectives. These activities are reported in your PMT and can be summarized in this section by describing ***what actually took place during the project***. Highlight any significant changes that affected the way that the project was conducted (activities undertaken), which differ from what was proposed in your funding application, and why. For example, you may have applied for funding to train a certain audience, however during the project implementation, requirements for post-training support or coaching activities for participants were identified. While significant changes are not expected to occur in the project activities, you may have found the need to *fine-tune* or make minor modifications, where applicable. If so, explain these modifications and why they were made.

## 2.2 Priority Population/Target Audience

Identify the priority population or target audience, that is, ***who the project was designed to reach, include or involve.***

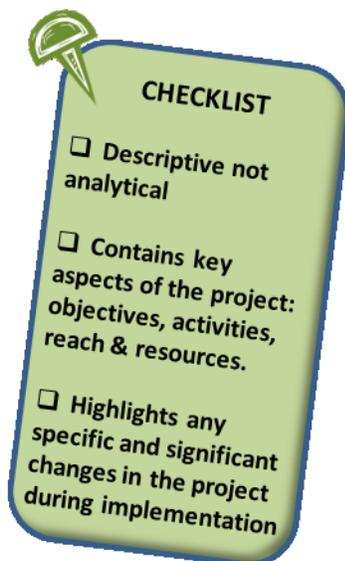
Your funding request form answered the questions: Why is the project important? and What is the need? In the form, you also described your project's priority population. This information can be used in this section. Add information that would have been reported to PHAC through the PMT, so the reader understands how many individuals overall were reached by your project over its full life span. For example, consider using the chart in section 5 of the PMT - add the data from all reports and insert a table that describes the target population. This data can be presented in a tabular format, as illustrated in the example below:

Target population(s)	Total # reached
Indigenous women living with HIV/AIDS (supported)	85
Indigenous Youth (male and female) at risk (trained)	150

## 2.3 Project Resources

Identify the resources provided and used for your project.

Project resources describe what was 'invested' in the project, in terms of money, time, equipment or facilities, etc. The investment includes physical resources, financial resources and human resources used/applied to the project. It is recommended that you differentiate PHAC-funded resources from those you provided and those provided by other sources, as follows:



- a) **PHAC Resources:** provide the planned and actual budget expenditures from the project. These figures can be taken from your financial reports submitted to PHAC. If there is a variance between the planned expenditures from your Contribution Agreement/Grant Agreement budget and actual expenditures, add a brief explanation on why these amounts differ.
- c) **Volunteer Resources:** If you had volunteers working on the project, summarize the overall number of hours they contributed to the project and the role of these volunteers in implementing your project.
- e) **Partnerships:** identify any partners who assisted you in delivering this project, as well as the nature and level of their participation.
- g) **Other Resources:** if the project benefited from other resources, identify them – what was contributed and by whom. This was reported in the 'Income from all Sources' form during your project.

**Tip:** Find a balance between excessive detail and enough information. *Ask yourself:* “If you were unfamiliar with this project, would the project profile section give you an understanding of what took place, how and why?”

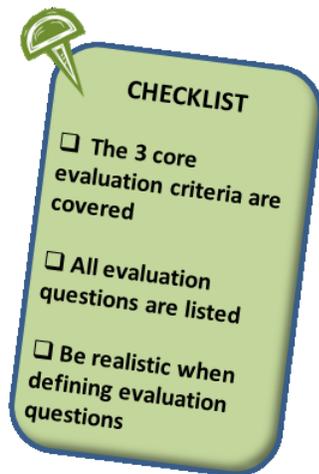
### 3.0 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The Evaluation Questions section outlines the key questions that were addressed by the evaluation. The evaluation questions represent the areas of greatest interest for the intended audience of the evaluation. These evaluation questions were the ones you developed before the evaluation took place and provide the focus and scope for the actual evaluation.

#### Content:

Identify all of the evaluation questions that were generated for this evaluation. If relevant, include a brief note on who was involved in the development of the questions and or how the questions were developed. For example, were the evaluation questions developed in collaboration with project and/or partner management, project beneficiaries, or funders.

Evaluations generally include **three** sets of core questions. One set relates to **the relevance** of your project to the overall funding goals (Community Action Fund Priorities) and to the needs of the target population. Another set relates to the overall **effectiveness** of your project in realizing its planned outcomes. A third set relates to the **efficiency** of your project, or how well the resources were used to undertake project activities. These three core types of questions are sometimes referred to as “evaluation criteria<sup>a</sup>.” An evaluation generally explores 3-5 questions related to each of these evaluation criterions.



In addition, evaluations frequently include other questions related to **what has been learned** from what worked and what didn't (i.e., what are the reasons for our success?) and **what can be done differently next time** (i.e., how could we improve?).

Finally, the Project Team may choose to include some additional evaluation questions to address other areas of particular interest to the Project Team.

An average evaluation may have up to (but generally not more than) 15 evaluation questions in total.

**Tips:** Organize the evaluation questions into categories, such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency or other logical groupings. Be realistic when defining evaluation questions: it should be possible to answer them with the evaluation resources available.

<sup>a</sup> These evaluation criteria and related terms are defined in the Glossary found at the end of this document.

## 4.0 METHODOLOGY

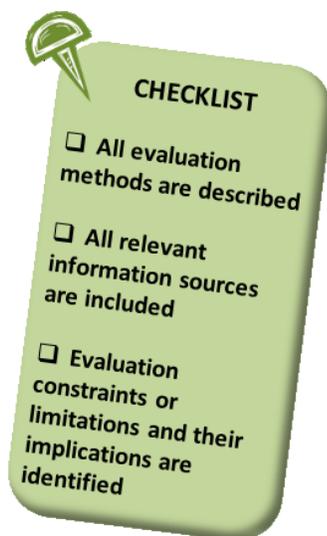
This section provides a description of each of the **evaluation methods used** (e.g., a review of background documents, observations, a literature review, benchmarking or comparing the project to another similar initiative, field visits, interviews, focus sessions, other group work/workshops or surveys) to collect information or data. The description includes **who was contacted** or reached with each method and any details on **how the method was applied**. The section should explain how the evaluation ensured information was collected in a manner that met standards for evaluation practice (rigorous, independent, provides multiple lines of evidence or different perspectives) and was conducted in a culturally/contextually sensitive manner. This section of the evaluation report is designed to tell the reader how the evaluation was conducted and provide enough information to assure readers that the report findings are the result of a rigorous evaluation.

### Content:

#### 4.1 Methods

Describe the methods used, such as *in person interviews using a standard interview guide*, and indicate how many individuals and which ‘type’ were reached with this method. If methods were used before and after an intervention, you should describe this. Where methods were used with a sample<sup>b</sup> of the target population or audience, indicate how and why the sample was determined/selected and, if possible, how the sample relates to the full target audience.

Information on methods, where there is a lot of **detail or data, can be provided in an annex** to the evaluation report, allowing for a more comprehensive description and better understanding of the method. For example, you may list all of the background documents reviewed or all key Informants contacted through interviews and focus sessions in an annex (but be sure NOT to list names, only organizations and/or type of contacts). You may also describe your sampling calculations or decisions in an annex, where you are providing significant detail to help explain how these methods were conducted. Annexes should also include copies of the data collection instruments used, such as the interview guide, survey, or focus session protocol.



#### 4.2 Limitations or Constraints

Briefly describe any limitations or constraints you experienced in conducting the evaluation, and include information on the **implications of the limitations** and the **actions taken in the evaluation to mitigate or minimize the effect of the limitations**.

All evaluations have some limitations or constraints – most frequently involving the time and money available to conduct them. In addition to time and resources available for an evaluation, other constraints may include the availability (or lack of availability) of key contacts, access to information, a lack of data or information on the progress of the project during its implementation. In each case, the mitigating actions taken, where these were possible, should be described.

<sup>b</sup> A sample is a subset of a population, where the population is the TOTAL involved, reached or targeted in the project. For example, 100 people received training, but the survey was sent to a sample of 10% or 10 people.

**Tip:** After reading the Methodology Section, ask yourself if the reader would understand where the evaluation information came from. Are you confident that all relevant sources (in sufficient numbers) have been included?

## 5.0 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The Evaluation Findings and Analysis section is a critical section of the report. Some evaluations may choose to separate these two aspects of the evaluation – a section on findings and another section on analysis. **Findings are the data and information collected** from different sources in the evaluation. Findings refer to what was said in interviews, found in project documentation or reported in surveys – a collection of all of the relevant information. It is sometimes thought of as the ‘fact base’ or concrete information and data about the project. **Analysis is the work of the evaluator to integrate and synthesize all of the information and data.** This analysis includes a description of what the information and data reveal about the evaluation questions.

### Content:

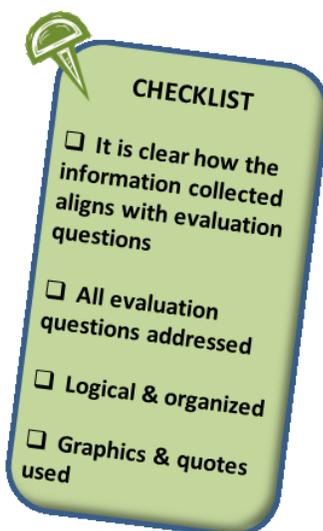
Organize the findings and analysis into sub-sections and align them with the sets of evaluation questions discussed above in section 3. Typically, these will include **sub-sections** related to the core evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency) and other categories defined at the beginning of the evaluation. Record the evaluation questions in the appropriate sub-section and report what information, from any and all sources, had to say about that question or issue.

**Use graphs, graphics, tables, text boxes and whatever you feel appropriate to highlight the key messages for the reader.** Use plain language as much as possible. Findings should be objective and balanced, allowing the reader to develop conclusions and feel confident that the evidence is comprehensive.

Findings and analysis need to be done for each and every evaluation question. This is the evidence upon which evaluation questions are answered. There will be a significant volume of information and data collected in the evaluation and it needs to be reported in a focused and concise manner. Information sources may have had differing opinions on a given issue and the report should reflect these differences. Findings are generally recorded as summary of what was learned from an evaluation method. For

example, 80% of survey respondents increased their knowledge about HIV transmission risks and 20% of respondents’ knowledge remained the same before and after educational sessions. However, it is also helpful to highlight specific illustrations, through anonymous quotes or a specific example of a success.

As the findings and analysis address different aspects of the project, this section should also draw from the information reported during the project in the PMT or in the financial reports. In this section, it is important to discuss the findings with reference to the intent of the project. Did the project achieve what it sought to achieve? To what extent was the need addressed or fulfilled by the implementation of the project? Findings need to be reported within the context of the project - what was the project intended to address and did it meet its objectives (pre- and post-information).



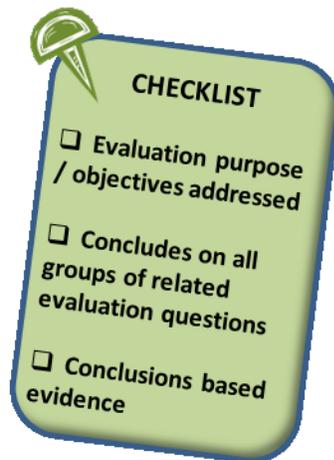
**Detailed information from any line of inquiry or method may be provided as an annex.** This annex is frequently used, for example, to report the results of a survey, to

summarize the information collected from all interviews, or to provide the detailed content analysis of background documents reviewed. The annex allows the evaluation to report selectively in the findings section (from various lines of inquiry/methods), yet still provide the full body of evidence.

**Tips:** Analyze what is being said about each evaluation question from all sources to derive one or two key statements/findings about each evaluation criteria, and then organize what and how to report the information. Closely review the findings section once the report is finished – does it contain sufficient evidence to support your conclusions and recommendations?

## 6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The Conclusions section is a summary of the judgement, interpretation and expertise of the evaluator on what the evidence means for this project and, specifically, for the evaluation criteria and questions.



The conclusions are generally overarching in nature and speak to the relative successes and areas of improvement identified for the project overall.

### Content:

Provide summary conclusions relative to each of the groups of related evaluation questions.

The conclusions should refer the reader back to the objective or purpose for the evaluation and provide a summary of what the project was able to accomplish. Conclusions should wrap up or finish the evaluation and provide an overview of the evaluation objectives and questions, drawing from evidence and the analysis of evidence.

**Tip:** Provide no more than one to three paragraphs for each evaluation criterion, which summarizes what the evaluator concludes from the evidence.

## 7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Evaluations should provide direction for the reader and assist the intended user in making good use of the evaluation information. While all evaluations should provide recommendations, not all evaluations result in lessons learned. Recommendations from the evaluator are simply proposed or suggested actions that the Project Team, partners, or others undertaking similar projects can implement in the future. Lessons learned are directed to a broader audience and address considerations for others in the field who may initiate related community interventions. They talk about what was learned more generally, from this project, that can be applied in future, similar initiatives.

### Content:

#### 7.1 Recommendations

Provide any recommendations coming out of the evaluation.

Recommendations can include using aspects of the project that were successful and which contributed to the project's effectiveness or success, as well as identifying areas requiring improvement and how these can be addressed. Recommendations are directive and specify what action is needed and by

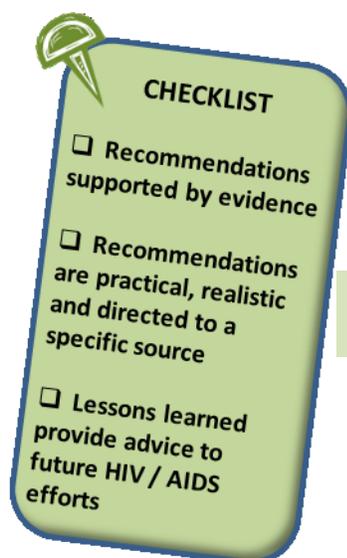
whom. They are based on the evidence provided in the evaluation and are derived from answering the evaluation questions. Recommendations should be practical and realistic in the context of the project being evaluated.

## 7.2 Lessons Learned

Identify any lessons learned that have resulted from your experiences with your project.

Do the efforts undertaken in this project tell us something that is important for others' future work to:

- Increase knowledge and effectiveness of HIV, hepatitis C and/or related STBBI interventions and prevention evidence;
- Increase access to health and social services for priority populations;
- Strengthen capacity (skills, competencies and abilities) of priority populations and target audiences to prevent infection and improve health outcomes;
- Enhance application of knowledge in community-based interventions; and
- Increase uptake of personal behaviours that prevent the transmission of HIV, hepatitis C and/or related STBBI.



The lessons learned may identify something that was done well in this project and should be done in future or they may identify something that should be avoided in future, similar initiatives. They may speak to how the overall approach in this project has or has not been successful in achieving its objectives. Consider lessons learned as the *'best advice'* going forward from this project to other stakeholders working in the field of HIV, hepatitis C and related STBBI.

**Tip:** Lessons learned are the best advice, based on your experience with this particular

## 8.0 ANNEXES

There are a number of additional pieces of information that should be annexed to the final evaluation report. There are several examples of possible annexes in the preceding pages.

### Content:

Annexes usually include:

- The Terms of Reference that you developed to guide the evaluation, or Statement of Work, if you contracted an external consultant to carry out the evaluation;
- A detailed description of information collected through a specific method, such as a summary of survey results;
- A list of information sources, type of participant /organizations and documents reviewed or consulted. Do NOT provide specific names as ethical considerations protect the privacy of individuals; and
- Copies of data collection instruments (interview guides, surveys, focus session protocols, etc.).

**Tip:** Use the annexes to keep your evaluation report concise and allow you to keep the complete body of evidence.

## FINAL EVALUATION REPORT CHECKLIST

**Executive Summary**

- High level summary
- Mirrors the full report in structure
- Roughly 1-3 pages in length

**Introduction**

- When it was done
- Who conducted it
- Who will use it
- How it will be used

**Project Profile**

- Descriptive, not analytical
- Contains key aspects of the project: objectives, activities, reach & resources
- Highlights any specific and significant changes in the project during implementation

**Evaluation Questions**

- The 3 core evaluation criteria are covered
- All evaluation questions are listed
- Be realistic when defining evaluation questions

**Methodology**

- All evaluation methods are described
- All relevant information sources are included
- Evaluation constraints or limitations and their implications are identified

**Findings and Analysis**

- It is clear how the information collected aligns with evaluation questions
- All evaluation questions addressed
- Logical & organized
- Graphics & quotes used

**Conclusions**

- Evaluation purpose/objectives addressed
- Concludes on all groups of related evaluation questions
- Conclusions based on evidence

**Recommendations and Lessons learned**

- Recommendations supported by evidence
- Recommendations are practical, realistic and directed to a specific source
- Lessons learned provide advice to future HIV/AIDS efforts

## FINAL EVALUATION REPORT TEMPLATE (Essential Elements)

### **Executive Summary**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

#### **2.0 Project Profile**

2.1 Objectives and Activities

2.2 Priority Population/Target Audience

2.3 Project Resources

#### **3.0 Evaluation Questions**

#### **4.0 Methodology**

4.1 Methods

4.2 Limitations or Constraints

#### **5.0 Findings and Analysis**

#### **6.0 Conclusions**

#### **7.0 Recommendations and Lessons Learned**

7.1 Recommendations

7.2 Lessons Learned

#### **8.0 Annexes**

## GLOSSARY

**Effectiveness:** The extent to which a project achieves expected outcomes.

**Efficiency:** A measure of how economically resources/inputs (such as funds, expertise, time) are converted to results.

**Impacts:** Positive and negative, primary and secondary; long-term effects produced by a project intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

**Input:** The financial, human and material resources used for the project.

**Outcome:** The likely or achieved short-term and medium term effects of a project's outputs.

**Output:** The products, goods, services which results from a project intervention; may include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.

**Results:** The output, outcome or impact (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a project intervention.