A beneficiary feedback approach to evaluation: Checklist for evaluators

(Extract from "*Beneficiary Feedback in Evaluation*," a Department for International Development Working Paper written by Leslie Groves, Independent Consultant)

Evaluation Stage	Questions to consider
Design	Are you **sufficiently clear about who the beneficiaries are and their relationship** with the programme to be evaluated? Have they previously been involved and how? Is design based on **sufficient understanding of country context** and local political economy to identify suitable feedback approaches and implementation arrangements? Are there **existing beneficiary feedback mechanisms that you can build on**? Are there community leaders that could be engaged, including outside of traditional structures? Is there **existing beneficiary feedback data** that you can use in the evaluation? If there have been prior evaluations, is it possible to identify different beneficiary groups i.e. in other regions or involved in a different aspect of the programme to **reduce beneficiary burden**? Have you thought about the **different methods** for enabling beneficiary feedback in the different stages of the evaluation process. Consider: • What information is the feedback soliciting? • Who is most qualified to provide that information? What incentives do those people have to provide the information? What are the costs ? • How will people provide the information? Will the information be confidential? • Do you have appropriate sampling strategies for ensuring both breadth and representation of different social groups? **Feedback in design**: Are you able to cross check evaluation questions and approach with a beneficiary representative or group? Do **evaluation questions** allow for beneficiaries to feedback on their experiences of the programme? How will you ensure that you are able to process all the information that you may gather? Have you **justified choices made** and put an ethical protocol for feedback in place? **Your team**: Have you got the most appropriate team engaging in the most appropriate methods? Do you have quality assurance mechanisms in place to ensure that your team has the skills to facilitate feedback processes appropriately? Are **commissioning agents** committed to the levels of beneficiary feedback they are requiring? If not, a discussion will be needed to match expectations.
Evidence gathering	Are **beneficiaries sufficiently informed and prepared** to be able to feedback in a meaningful, ethical way? Do they know what will be done with the information they provide? Are your methods enabling beneficiary feedback, as intended? If not, will you **adapt** your design? Are you building on existing data to avoid increasing beneficiary burden and participation fatigue? Are you able to **maintain the commitments** made in design? If not, why not? If feedback drops off the agenda, has this been negotiated, justified and clarified to all involved to date?
Data analysis, validation and report writing.	If your design factored in **joint analysis and/or validation** is this being conducted appropriately? Are expectations clear about what may or may not be included in the final report?
Dissemination and communication	If your design factored in **dissemination and communication of findings and management response to beneficiaries**/ beneficiary participants, is this being conducted appropriately? Is careful consideration being given to **what feedback is relevant to which beneficiaries?** Are **commissioning agents or implementing staff clear about their responsibility** for dissemination? Does this go all the way down the chain, including beneficiary representatives who might have responsibility for feeding findings back to their communities?