Evaluating the overall impact of interventions: a ten-point framework

Rationale

Table 1 below outlines steps each initiative should apply at planning stage to ensure robust evaluation of impact. Key questions to address are in the left hand-column with suggested (non-compulsory) sub-theme prompts for covering further detail, as deemed appropriate to notional scale and context.

Table 1. Ten-point framework for planning an evaluation of proposed activity or intervention	
Key question	**Suggested sub-themes**
1. *Describe the subject of the initiative*	- What is its aim? - What are the main features? - What is its context and likely future?
2. *State the purpose of the evaluation*	- What is the purpose? (For example, to assess how funding has been spent, or to inform future strategies or actions?) - How will the purpose of the evaluation influence the focus and questions that are asked?
3. *Explain the focus of the evaluation*	- What is the evaluation trying to find out or show? - Why is this important, and to whom? (Identify key stakeholders.) - What are the big questions, or hypothesis/ses, that the evaluation will try to answer?
4. *Define the scope of the intended evaluation*	- What type of things will the evaluation include within its focus? - What is feasible to cover? - Are there any specific inclusion criteria?
5. *State any exclusions*	- What will the evaluation not include and why? - What is beyond the scope of the present evaluation? - Are there any specific exclusion criteria?
6. *Describe the evaluation criteria*	- What outcomes are being captured to examine and report impact? - What indicators or measures are being employed to judge impact? - How will any unintended outcomes be treated?
7. *Define the evaluation questions*	- If the evaluation uses interviews or surveys to collect data, what questions will be asked? - Are the right questions being asked in the right format? (How do you know?)

	• Could you refine these questions or ask them in a different way?
8. *Explain the evaluation methods*	• What type of evaluation is being carried out? (For example, cost/benefit evaluation, Social Return on Investment, Realistic Evaluation, Appreciative Inquiry, user-led evaluation, other approaches?) • What are the main components, processes, or stages of the evaluation approach? • Will any baseline data be captured to indicate a starting point for impact? • What are the specific methods used to gather data? (For example, analysis of quantitative data, interviews, focus groups, survey methods, mixed, something else?) • Who will design the methods and who will undertake them? • What is the envisaged role of researchers and other stakeholders in the process? • How will findings be reported?
9. *Outline the required resources*	• What costs, time, knowledge, skills, or other resources are needed? • How much resource are you prepared to put into the evaluation? • Where will you stop? • What is the justification for use of these resources?
10. *Anticipate potential consequences*	Ethical issues: • How will data be stored in accordance with GDPR guidance? • Will informed consent be obtained from those involved in the evaluation? • How will you ensure harm minimisation and appropriate confidentiality? • Are there any possible intellectual property issues? Organisational issues: • Who might be excluded or lose out because of the evaluation and / or findings? • How will any unintended organisational consequences be detected and treated? • What might be the wider institutional and / or sector response to the results?