



From Recommendations to Actions: The Role of Management Responses in Promoting Evaluation Use

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Overview

As part of the series of webinars on good practices for evaluation use, the **UNEG Working Group on Evaluation Use** organized a webinar on the role of management responses (MRs) in promoting evaluation use. UNITAR shared the results of a review on the quality of MRs to independent evaluations (N=26), as well as good practices for formulating high-quality MRs. UNDP discussed the results of a study on their MRs and follow-up system (N=125), which included a review of the quality of MRs to centralized and decentralized evaluations. UNDP called for a paradigm shift to move beyond the notion of “our report, their actions,” emphasizing the need to place utility, influencing, and storytelling at the centre to drive evaluation use.

Speakers

- **Anna Guerraggio**, Chief, Engagement and Communication (UNDP)
- **Katinka Koke**, Specialist (UNITAR)
- **Rebeca Lara**, Trainee (UNITAR)
- **Roxana Gomez Valle**, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Consultant (UNITAR)



INSIGHTS FOR ENHANCING MANAGEMENT RESPONSES TO PROMOTE EVALUATION USE

Common challenges to management response quality

- Actions specified in MRs are often **unclear or vague**, making it difficult to assess progress and ensure accountability for their implementation.
- MRs typically do not outline the **necessary resources** (budget, expertise, staff, etc.), even if planned actions can be implemented without additional resources.
- When recommendations are rejected, **justifications often lack detail**, undermining transparency.
- **Decentralized evaluations** tend to receive lower-quality MRs compared to centralized ones, partly due to fewer incentives for detailed responses on non-core funded interventions that are likely to be discontinued.

Good practices to improve management response quality

- **Regularly assess** MRs to both centralized and decentralized evaluations to identify areas for improvement and track progress in the quality of MRs.
- Develop MRs with specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (**SMART**) **actions** that directly address recommendations, assigning clear responsibilities and timeframes to ensure accountability.
- Create a **model MR or quality assurance checklist** to guide the development of clear, concrete, and comprehensive action plans.
- Promote a **collaborative approach** to developing MRs, involving all relevant stakeholders (management, programme staff, operations staff, partners, etc.) to foster ownership.
- **Tailor evaluation recommendations** to similar interventions, contexts, or scenarios, particularly in final evaluations of programmes with uncertain futures.

Follow-up mechanisms to monitor management response implementation

- Establish **follow-up processes** to monitor implementation of MRs, including periodic review meetings, tracking tools or dashboards to visualize progress.
- Foster a **culture of continuous learning** by encouraging dialogue about evaluation results and adapting strategies based on lessons learned.

The webinar concluded with a [Q&A session](#) discussing MRs quality assurance practices, alignment of MRs templates with UNEG Standard 1.4, and factors influencing MRs quality, such as recommendation clarity and organizational culture. Insights were also shared on the use of digital tools to track MRs and monitor implementation of action plans. Overall, the session emphasized the importance of ongoing dialogue between evaluation functions and intended users before, during, and after evaluation processes to create a conducive environment for evaluation use.