

QUALITY GRID
CLE Malawi
Final Report, Oct 2011

Concerning these criteria, the evaluation report is:	Unacceptable	Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent
1. Meeting needs: Does the evaluation adequately address the information needs of the commissioning body and fit the terms of reference?			X		
2. Relevant scope: Is the rationale of the policy and its set of outputs, results and outcomes/impacts examined fully, including both intended and unexpected policy interactions and consequences?			X		
3. Defensible design: Is the evaluation design appropriate and adequate to ensure that the full set of findings, along with methodological limitations, is made accessible for answering the main evaluation questions?			X		
4. Reliable data: Are the primary and secondary data selected adequate? Are they sufficiently reliable for their intended use?			X		
5. Sound analysis: Is quantitative and qualitative information appropriately and systematically analysed according to the state of the art so that evaluation questions are answered in a valid way?			X		
6. Credible findings: Do findings follow logically from, and are they justified by, the data analysis and interpretations based on carefully described assumptions and rationale?			X		
7. Validity of the conclusions: Does the report provide clear conclusions? Are conclusions based on credible findings?			X		
8. Usefulness of the recommendations: Are recommendations fair, unbiased by personal or stakeholders' views, and sufficiently detailed to be operationally applicable?			X		
9. Clearly reported: Does the report clearly describe the policy being evaluated, including its context and purpose, together with the procedures and findings of the evaluation, so that information provided can easily be understood?			X		
Taking into account the contextual constraints on the evaluation, the overall quality rating of the report is considered			X		

Taking into account the contextual constraints on the evaluation, the overall quality rating of the report is considered good.

This assessment is supported by the following elements:

- Meeting needs;
- The soundness of the methodological tools used and the reliability of the data collected;
- The usefulness of conclusions and recommendations;
- The detailed and in depth analysis;
- The effort made by the consultants to respond to the requests made in the terms of reference

Meeting needs: GOOD

The evaluation addresses the information needs of the commissioning body and fits the Terms of References. The evaluation questions are answered in a satisfactory way and provide the reader with a complete overview of the Commission's co-operation strategies and their implementation during the evaluation period.

The policies of the Government of Malawi are also analysed.

Relevant scope: GOOD

The report addresses the entire scope defined in the ToRs in its temporal, geographic and regulatory dimensions. Other donor's policies and support are looked at even beyond their intersections with the EU policies.

Unintended or unexpected effects could have been identified, analysed and mentioned more extensively.

Defensible design: GOOD

The team shows a good knowledge of and capacity to use the EC evaluation methodology and tools. The evaluation is structured in different phases and makes good use of evaluation questions, judgement criteria and indicators. The evaluation methodology is very clearly and thoroughly explained both in the main report and in Annex 4. The tools employed include: document reviews, interviews, focus groups, field visits, analysis of previous existing evaluations/monitoring reports.

Limitations inherent in the evaluation method, scope, processes and tools have been clearly specified and analysed; the choices made have been thoroughly explained (pp. 9-11 of the main report, pp. 290-294 of the Annexes).

The structure chosen for interviews and focus groups is presented in detail in the annexes.

Reliable data: GOOD

All data used for the evaluation are reliable and were extrapolated from trustworthy sources as: EC strategy and programming documents, documents by other international organizations, previous evaluations, result-oriented monitoring reports (ROMs), interviews etc.

Information has been cross checked and verified through different primary (interviews, focus groups) and secondary (studies, monitoring and evaluation reports) information sources and employing several tools that are independent of one another (surveys, case study, interviews, briefings with EC Delegation and stakeholders in the field, document and data analyses).

The types of documents and data used are listed clearly and include trustworthy sources as EC strategy and programming documents, documents by other donors, ROMs, etc.

Sound analysis: GOOD

Volume 2 Annexes shows in detail that analysis is carried out through precise and relevant logical steps and is of great support to further the understanding of the evaluation and its findings. The cause and effect links between intervention and consequences are clearly explained and limitations are highlighted.

The report systematically refers to the annexes which further develop the basis for the analysis and show that the statements made in the report are well supported.

Credible findings: GOOD

Findings are the logical result of data analysis and interpretation. They are balanced and clearly presented. The combination of evidence provided by the different data collection tools is well managed and balanced. Maybe a bit more emphasis could have been given to the data collected through interviews.

Validity of the conclusions: GOOD

Conclusions are clear, logical consequences of findings and easily linkable with the facts and data recorded in the evaluation. Concepts are well summarized and the organization of complementary conclusions in clusters makes them even more straightforward. Unfortunately, though, limitations of conclusions are not sufficiently discussed.

Usefulness of the recommendations: GOOD

Recommendations are clearly linked to conclusions, are substantiated by findings and presented in a very clear and structured way (organized in seven separate clusters). They also are prioritized. Recommendations are operational in that they provide practical options and steps to be taken to address the challenges highlighted through the evaluation. They could nevertheless have been even more operational if responsibilities to act had been even more clearly assigned together with a timeline for implementation.

Clearly reported: GOOD

The report is clear and well structured; it offers complete and exhaustive information on the scope of the evaluation, the design and its results. The report is relatively easy to read and rich of details that will be of great use for a more technical audience. The summary is clear and presents the main conclusions and recommendations in a balanced and unbiased way. Annexes are useful and provide a very thorough back up to the report, which remains, nevertheless, self standing. References to annexes are complete and accurate.