

EVALUATION DEPARTMENT

REPORT 1/2017



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The Quality of Reviews and Decentralised Evaluations in Norwegian Development Cooperation

ANNEXES 4-10

The Quality of Reviews and Decentralised Evaluations in Norwegian Development Cooperation

Annexes 4 - 10

Commissioned by the Evaluation Department

Carried out by Itad in association with Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI)

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Annex 4 Email survey analysis

In agreement with Norad, an email survey was conducted of all staff responsible for commissioning the reviews (grant managers) across the relevant agencies (MFA, Norad, Embassies). This data gathering tool had two purposes. First the survey sought to gather additional documentation that was not already available from the Mapping Study and Norad Evaluation Department data. Second, the survey was intended to help answer two evaluation questions:

- From the perspective of stakeholders, to what extent are reviews timely, and present relevant and realistic recommendations?
- To what extent have review findings, conclusions and recommendations been used by the unit responsible for managing the grant to the intervention that have undergone review?

The survey was intended to be a relatively light-touch exercise with a limited set of questions, so that busy aid officials will be willing to respond in a timely fashion. The email was issued on 22 June 2014 and sent to a list of 73 MFA, Norad and embassy staff and to their unit email addresses. The text is provided in Figure 1.

Satisfaction with the review/evaluation

From 60 grant managers emailed, replies relating to 31 projects were received. None reported that the review/evaluation did not meet expectations: 24 of the responses explicitly stated that review/ evaluation was satisfactory; five were unable to comment on whether the review/evaluation met expectations, mostly because the relevant people working on that review are no longer in that office.

Of the 24 who responded that the review/evaluation did meet expectations, four also reported reservations/issues with the initial review. These included: 'limited scope' of the review design and that the quality of analysis did not meet donors' expectations'. In the case of the Evaluation of a Cultural Centre final report, a number of issues were raised including: 'The evaluation did not give enough credit to the Cultural Centre and to its activities', and 'Weaknesses mentioned by evaluators could have been overcome and should not have affected the evaluation, such as time needed for evaluation'.

Analysis of the use of the review

Responses to the email survey generally reported that the reports were well acted upon and had been useful for future programmatic work. Across many of the projects, respondents indicate that the reports gave insights into areas such as general strengths and weaknesses, management and project strategy and provided clear recommendations that fed into the project or future stages of the projects.

A number of the responses however highlighted that a limitation to the use of the review/evaluation related to shifts in funding from Norad. In the case of the capacity development evaluation in Vietnam, the response notes that the 'grant management portfolio of the embassy has been reduced to only a few remaining development projects with final disbursement in 2016. So the utilisation of the lessons learned at this Embassy would be limited'.

In the case of a project in Sri Lanka, the respondent notes that though the review gave some valuable input for a new phase, the 'Embassy however is not part of the continuation of funding due to change in priorities.' Similarly, for a mid-term review in Malawi, the respondents noted that 'we should keep in mind that the embassy is currently reducing the number of agreements and as a result the planned phase II the programme will not be supported'.

Figure 1 Email survey text



Itad Ltd. has recently been commissioned by Norad's Evaluation Department to conduct an independent quality review of a sample of decentralised reviews and evaluations conducted in 2014.

According to Norad's records, you are the officer who was responsible for commissioning one of these, and accordingly your name and email appears in columns X and Y in the attached list.

We would like to ask you for some further information about the particular review or evaluation for which you were responsible in order to help in our work.

We are aware that in some cases you may no longer be the responsible officer due to personnel changes, but we would very much like you to answer as the person who commissioned the review or evaluation, perhaps in collaboration with the responsible unit, who can obtain additional documentation. In some cases you have been responsible for more than one review or decentralised evaluation, and in this case could you answer for each one separately?

Can you kindly provide us with:

1. Any relevant additional documentation on file (such as: the Terms of Reference/1, Inception report, and any substantive comments on the report or management response, (these could refer to agreement or disagreement on findings and any follow up vis a vis project/program implementation/documentation of use)
2. Your view as to whether the study met the requirement in the TORs and was completed to a satisfactory standard?
3. What was the intended use of the study and did it then fulfill that use?
4. The budget (and currency) of the evaluation or review and the total number of days allocated.
5. How many evaluators conducted the work: (total number and if possible broken down by number of internationals and number recruited from the country under study)
6. In order to understand variations in quality and use, we are planning to look in detail at five particular reviews/evaluations as case studies. Would this example in your view be a valuable case study? If so why (or why not)?

It would be very helpful if you could please send us your responses no later than 8th JULY 2016. We do apologise for the fact that given the impending holiday period it may be difficult for you to reply by this date. But if this is the case, could you advise when you might be able to reply?

Thank you for your time.

Regards,

Greg Gleed

Annex 5 Sample of 60 reviews and evaluations

Projects highlighted in yellow are the selected case studies

Num.	Report title	Country	Region	Sector	Commissioning unit	Implementing partner	Type of evaluation
9	Mid-Term Review: Capacity Building and Institutional Cooperation in the field of Hydrogeology for Faryab Province, Afghanistan between MRRD and Norad financed Partner	Afghanistan	South and Central Asia	Water and Sanitation	Norad	COWI AS Norway	Mid-term review
10	Evaluation of the National Area-based Development Programme (NABDP) in Afghanistan	Afghanistan	South and Central Asia	Community Development	Partners	UNDP	Evaluation
15	End Review of SAF-08/006 Climate Effect on Biodiversity, Abundance and Distribution of Marine Organisms (NansClim)	Africa South of Sahara Regional	Africa South of Sahara	Environment	Norad	IMR Bergen	End review
16	End Review of SAF 2866 SAF-12/006 Benguela Current Commission (BCC) Science Programme, Institutional Assessment of BCC and Appraisal of New Application	Africa South of Sahara Regional	Africa South of Sahara	Environment	Norad	BCC Secretariat	End review
18	Mid-term Review and Appraisal of Plans for Future Work Norwegian-Supported Conservation Farming Unit Programmes	Africa South of Sahara Regional	Africa South of Sahara	Agriculture	MFA	Conservation Farming Unit	Mid-term review
21	Review Institute for Security Studies (ISS) RAF 11/0126 Core Funding Agreement 2012-15	Africa South of Sahara Regional	Africa South of Sahara	Conflict Prevention	Norad	Institute for Security Studies	Mid-term review
26	"With Human Rights, everything has changed in our village!": Project Review Tostan, Senegal and Mali	Africa South of Sahara Regional	Africa South of Sahara	Population and reproductive health	Norad	Tostan	End review
30	Mid-Term Review of Norwegian and Swedish Support to the Southern African Power Pool Phase III	Africa South of Sahara Regional	Africa South of Sahara	Energy	Norad	South African Power Coordination Committee	Mid-term review
41	Mid-Term Review of Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous and Industrial Wastes in Cement Kilns in China – Phase II (CHN-2150; 09/059)	China	Far East Asia	Environment	Norad	FECO, CRAES, SINTEF	Mid-term review
43	Mid Term Review of CHN-10/0027 Urban Atmospheric Multi-Pollutant Prevention and Control in China	China	Far East Asia	Environment	Norad	CAEP, NEA	Mid-term review

48	Mid-Term External Assessment: "Lessons Learned and Capacity Building to Implement REDD+ Initiatives: The Experience of Costa Rica" (CAM-0025-CRI-13/0001)	Costa Rica	America	Environment	Embassy	National Biodiversity Institute	Mid-term review
51	End review of institutional cooperation between the Hawassa and Mekele Universities and the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Phase III (2009-2014)	Africa South of Sahara Regional	Ethiopia	Agriculture	Norad	Hawassa and Mekele Universities	
75	Review of Norwegian democracy support via political parties	Global	Global	Government and Civil Society	Norad	Norwegian Political Parties	Mid-term review
92	Review of Support to the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership, REEEP	Global	Global	Energy	Norad	Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership	Review
94	In a position to tell: Evaluation of Sørfond - the Norwegian South Film Fund	Global	Global	Culture	MFA	Norwegian Film Institute	Evaluation
104	Review of the Seagull School of Publishing	India	South and Central Asia	Education	Embassy	Seagull School of Publishing	Review
106	KHOJ International Artist's Association 2011-2014	India	South and Central Asia	Culture	Embassy	Khoj International Arts Association	Review
107	Impact Evaluation of TECHNO – MANAGERIAL Support	India	South and Central Asia	Health	Embassy	Norway-India Partnership	Evaluation
108	Evaluation of Yashoda Intervention	India	South and Central Asia	Health	Embassy	Norway-India Partnership	Evaluation
111	Review of Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) Indonesia Program	Indonesia	Far East Asia	Environment	Norad	GGGI	Review
115	"Today I can laugh and talk again". Review of the Independent Medico-Legal Unit	Kenya	Africa South of Sahara	Human Rights	Embassy	Independent Medico-Legal Unit	Review
119	Mid-Term Review of Lovasoa Cross-Cultural Competence Centre, Madagascar	Madagascar	Africa South of Sahara	Culture	Norad	LOVASOA Cross-cultural Competence Center	Mid-term review
122	Project review of ProVert Integrated Green Education Programme Madagascar	Madagascar	Africa South of Sahara	Education	Norad	Malagasay Lutheran Church	Review
123	Rapport d'évaluation de l'Alliance Voahary Gasy – Madagascar pour la période 2011-2013	Madagascar	Africa South of Sahara	Environment	Embassy	Alliance Voahary Gasy - Madagascar	Review
124	Mid-Term Review for Lake Chilwa Basin Climate Change Adaptation Programme	Malawi	Africa South of Sahara	Environment	Embassy	Leadership for Environment and development in Southern and Eastern Africa	Mid-term review
125	Mid-Term Review Statistics for the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy	Malawi	Africa South of Sahara	Statistics	Embassy	National Statistics Office, Malawi	Mid-term review
130	Review of Health Sector Discrete Funds at CHs and DHOs	Malawi	Africa South of Sahara	Health	Embassy	District Health Office, Malaei	Review

133	"A Prison Cell has no Specific Capacity". An Evaluation of the Project: "Improving Living Conditions and Access to Justice for Women, Young Offenders and Vulnerable Men In Prisons and Police Establishments in the Centra. Eastern, Southern and Part of the Northern Region of Malawi.	Malawi	Africa South of Sahara	Human Rights	Embassy	Centre for Legal Assistance (CELA) and the Centre for Human Rights Education, Assistance and Advice (CHREAA)	Review
135	2014 Review of Norlam	Moldova	Europe	Government and Civil Society	Norad	Norwegian Mission of Rule of Law Advisers to Moldova (NORLAM)	Review
147	End review of FDC's project to strengthen the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) in the Zambézia province, Mozambique	Mozambique	Africa South of Sahara	Health	Embassy	Fundação para o Desenvolvimento	End review
155	Mid-Term Review National Rural and Renewable Energy Programme (NRREP), Nepal Final Review Aide Memoire	Nepal	South and Central Asia	Energy	Norad	National Rural Renewable Energy	Mid-term review
157	Evaluation: Monitoring Nepal's Peace Process and Constitution Drafting USAID Cooperative Agreement 367-A-09-00002	Nepal	South and Central Asia	Conflict Prevention	Partners	Carter Center	Evaluation
160	Review of Sankalpa – Women's Alliance for Peace, Justice and Democracy & Mid-Term Review of SANKALPA Project: Rights-based Advocacy to Empower Women for Political and Social Justice	Nepal	South and Central Asia	Gender	Embassy	Sankalpa	Mid-term review
172	Evaluation External Final Projecto: "Fortalecimiento de las Capacidades Institucionales Para la Gestión Ambiental y el Ordenamiento Territorial de los Municipios Ubicados en la Sub Cuenca III de la Cuenca sur del Lago de Managua Amusclam	Nicaragua	America	Environment	Embassy	Mauricio Reyes Reyes	End review
184	End of Project Evaluation: Norway Pakistan Partnership Initiative - NPPI	Pakistan	South and Central Asia	Health	Partners	UNICEF	End review
188	Complementary Mission for the External Review of PCBS Program 2012-2014 and PCBS Strategy 2014-2018	Palestine	Middle East Asia	Statistics	Embassy	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics	Review
196	Review of the Loan Guarantee Facility (LGF) of the Middle East Investment Initiative (MEII)	Palestine	Middle East Asia	Business	MFA	Loan Guarantee Facility, Middle East Investment Initiative	Review
199	External Evaluation of the Palestinian Negotiations Support Project	Palestine	Middle East Asia	Conflict Prevention	Embassy	Palestinian Negotiations Support Programme (PSNP)	Review
204	Review of two Assessments Reports About the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)	Palestine	Middle East Asia	Statistics	Embassy	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics	Review

205	Final Report for the Evaluation of Yabous Cultural Centre 2012-2013	Palestine	Middle East Asia	Culture	Embassy	Yabous Cultural Centre	Review
207	MIP III Status Review Report	Serbia	Europe	Government and Civil Society	Embassy	Serbian Ministry of Interior	Review
209	Review: Oslo Center Joint Kenya & Somalia Programs Report	Somalia	Africa South of Sahara	Conflict Prevention	Embassy	Oslo Centre	Review
215	Formative Mid-Term Review of the Rainforest Foundation Norway (RFN) Program in the Amazon	South America Regional	America	Environment	MFA	Rainforest Foundation, Norway	Mid-term review
218	Learning from Phase One: Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia	South and Central Asia regional	South and Central Asia	Gender	Embassy	UN Women	End review
222	Evaluation Report of the Norway – Sri Lanka Music Cooperation Programme 2009-2014	Sri Lanka	South and Central Asia	Culture	Embassy	Norway-Sri Lanka Music Cooperation	Review
223	Project for Rehabilitation through Education and Training Opportunities for Training in Needed Skills in Sri Lanka PRET OPTIONS. Project Number A-034376-001-PR1	Sri Lanka	South and Central Asia	Education	Norad	Project for Rehabilitation through Education and Training (PRET)	End review
228	Review of the Eastern Arc Mountains Conservation Endowment Fund	Tanzania	Africa South of Sahara	Environment	Norad	Eastern Arc Mountains Conservation	Review
236	Program (SEAP) implemented by Engineers Registration Board (ERB)	Tanzania	Africa South of Sahara	Government and Civil Society	Embassy	Engineers Registration Board	End review
238	Final Project Report: Pilot Project on Community-Based REDD+ Mechanisms for Sustainable Forest Management in Semi-Arid Areas (Case of Ngtilis in Shinyanga Region)	Tanzania	Africa South of Sahara	Environment	Embassy	TaTEDO and DASS	End review
244	End Review: Assistance in Management of Petroleum Resources, Phase II – 2008-2013	Timor-Leste	Far East Asia	Oil	MFA	Government of Timor-Leste's (GoTL)/NPAP	End review
245	Mid-Term Review of Cooperation Between The National University of Timor-Leste (UNTL), and The University of Nordland (UiN), Norway	Timor-Leste	Far East Asia	Education	MFA	National University of Timor-Leste	Mid-term review
248	Review of the Democratic Governance Facility. Annual cum Mid-term Review	Uganda	Africa South of Sahara	Democratization	Partners	Democratic Development Faculty	Mid-term review
251	Oil for Development Uganda 2009-2014: Review of Norway's Support to the Petroleum Sector in Uganda	Uganda	Africa South of Sahara	Oil	Embassy	Ministry of Energy and Minerals	End Review
252	Midterm Review: The Second Financial Management and Accountability Programme (FINMAP II)	Uganda	Africa South of Sahara	Government and Civil Society	Partners	FINMAP	Mid-term review
254	Mid-Term Review of the Construction of Six Rural Distribution Lines	Uganda	Africa South of Sahara	Energy	MFA	Rural Electrification Agency	Mid-term review

256	End Review and Appraisal of Application for Further Support to Institutional Cooperatin Between UTGA and NORSKOG	Uganda	Africa South of Sahara	Business	MFA	UTGA and NORSKOG	End review
259	End Review of the Project: "Enhancing Capacity to Control and Manage Biosafety and Biosecurity in Vietnam SRV- 09/024 (Saksnr. 1400936)	Vietnam	Far East Asia	Environment	Norad	Det Norske Veritas and the National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology	End review
265	Mid-Term Review Report: Empowering Women in Senanga and Gwembe Districts through Agricultural Support (E-WAS) Project	Zambia	Africa South of Sahara	Gender	Embassy	Programme against malnutrition	Mid-term review
273	Mid-term Review: Health Transition Fund in Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	Africa South of Sahara	Health	Partners	Health Transition Fund (HTF)	Mid-term review
274	Final Report: Joint Donor Review of the Zimbabwe Multi-Donor Trust Fund	Zimbabwe	Africa South of Sahara	Energy	Partners	Zimbabwe Multi-donor Trust	Mid-term review

Annex 6 Quality review supplementary analysis

1 Introduction

The Mapping Study produced a set of 74 reviews and decentralised evaluations that were conducted in 2014. From these organisational studies and thematic evaluations were excluded leaving a pool of 70. Based on resources available to conduct the work, the meta-evaluation then chose a sample of 60 from this 70. This done using a systematic random selection procedure, with the list sorted by region to ensure a balanced geographical representation.

Based on the inception report, five areas of analysis were undertaken. These were: how representative the 2014 sample was of the reviews recorded by the Mapping Study from 2012-15, the strengths and weaknesses of the terms of reference (TORs) and reviews by quality area, cross-tabulations to explore possible associations between quality and a set of independent characteristics (such as region, commissioner sector), analysis of quality against project and evaluation costs, and comparison of TOR and review ratings.

The templates used for the quality assessment of reviews and their TORs are in Appendix 1. A table comparing the OECD-DAC evaluation standards against the quality areas covered in the templates is in Appendix 2.

2 Sample representivity

A comparison of the 2014 sample drawn for the quality review was undertaken against the overall pool of projects and evaluations within the period 2012–15 from the Mapping Study to analyse how representative the sample is.

Table 1 Comparison of the 2014 quality review sample with the Mapping Study for reviews/evaluations in per cent

Region/branch	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total	Meta-Eval Sample 2014
Africa South of Sahara	37	41	39	57	42	47
America	11	4	13	14	10	5
Europe	0	0	2	2	1	3
Far East Asia	13	9	9	4	9	10
Global	10	14	11	8	11	5
Middle East Asia	3	11	7	4	7	8
South and Central Asia	26	22	18	12	20	22
	100	100	100	100	100	100

Commissioner	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total	Meta-eval sample 2014
Embassy	35	34	39	47	38	43
MFA	3	8	11	4	7	13
Norad	45	47	36	29	40	32
Partners	16	11	14	20	15	12
	100	100	100	100	100	100

Type	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total	Meta-eval sample 2014
End review	23	32	17	27	24	25
Evaluation	5	4	9	4	6	8
Mid-term review	32	27	31	20	28	35
Organisational review	6	8	11	10	9	Not included
Review	26	23	28	35	27	32
Thematic review	8	5	3	4	5	Not included
	100	100	100	100	100	100

Observation: Reasonably close match between the 2014 sample of 60 and other years in Mapping Study. Slightly higher percentage from Africa region compared to 2014 Mapping Study data, and a lower percentage from America and Global regions.

Descriptive tables looking at the nature of the TOR and reviews against the main characteristics

Some 60 review reports from 2014 were assessed and 51 TORs (9 reviews had no TOR available).

Table 2 Sample of TORs and reviews/ evaluations by commissioner

Commissioner	TORs	Reviews/evaluation reports
Embassy	20	26
MFA	8	8
Norad	19	19
Partners	4	7
Total	51	60

Embassies and Norad are the main commissioners.

Table 3 Sample of TORs and reviews by type

Type	TORs	Reviews/evaluation reports
End review	14	15
Evaluation	2	5
Mid-term review	18	21
Review	17	19
Total	51	60

Equal split between 'mid-term', 'reviews' and 'end reviews'. Only a small proportion of reports titled 'Evaluations'. This categorisation was based on the Mapping Study data.

Table 4 Sample of TORs and reviews by region

Region	TORs	Reviews/evaluation report
Africa South of Sahara	25	28
America	2	3
Europe	1	2
Far East Asia	6	6
Global	3	3
Middle East Asia	5	5
South and Central Asia	9	13
Total	51	60

Reviews from Africa make up nearly half of the sample.

Table 5 Sample of reviews by region and country

Region/country	Count
Africa South of Sahara	28
Africa South of Sahara Regional	6
Uganda	5
Malawi	4
Madagascar	3
Tanzania	3
Zimbabwe	2
Ethiopia	1
Kenya	1
Mozambique	1
Somalia	1
Zambia	1
America	3
Costa Rica	1
Nicaragua	1
South America Regional	1
Europe	2
Moldova	1
Serbia	1
Far East Asia	6
China	2
Timor-Leste	2
Indonesia	1
Vietnam	1

Global	3
Global	3
Middle East Asia	5
Palestine	5
South and Central Asia	13
India	4
Nepal	3
Afghanistan	2
Sri Lanka	2
Pakistan	1
South and Central Asia regional	1
Total	60

3 Analysis of the Quality Review data to explain variation in quality

This section explores what independent factors collected in the quality review might influence quality. The analysis was done in three areas. First, the overall ratings for TORs and reviews/evaluations were analysed by commissioner, region, type of review and sector. Second, further analysis explored the influence of project budget, evaluation budget and evaluation days. The results were statistically tested¹ to assess whether apparent differences in quality from the sample are likely to be true for the population as a whole in 2014, and given the similarity observed with the pool of reviews/evaluations over the period 2012-15 in Section 1, whether the sample results are likely to be true over the whole period. Such statistical testing was also important given the small sample size of 60 (reviews) and 51 (TORs), and the very low frequency counts for some categories.

1.1 Review rating by Commissioner, Region and Type of Review

Table 6 Review and TOR rating by Review Commissioner

Commissioner	Average of Overall rating of the TORs	Count of TORs	Average of overall ratings of Reviews	Count Of Reviews
Embassy	2.3	20	2.5	26
MFA	2.4	8	2.8	8
Norad	2.3	19	2.5	19
Partners	2.7	4	2.8	7
Total	2.3	51	2.6	60

Those TORs commissioned by Partners had a slightly higher overall rating, though the sample was small. A test of variance showed there was no statistically significant difference between the four types of commissioner in terms of the quality of their TORs (F score was 1.37 against critical F value of 2.8). Reviews

¹ A confidence level of p=0.05 was used in all cases.

commissioned by MFA and Partners also appeared to show higher quality average ratings. But again this was not found statistically significant (with an F value of 1.87 against a critical value of 2.77).

Table 7 Review and TOR rating by Region

Region	Average of Overall rating of the TORs	Count of TORs	Average of overall ratings of Reviews	Count Of Reviews
Europe	2.3	1	2.7	2
Far East Asia	2.2	6	2.7	6
South and Central Asia	2.4	9	2.7	13
Africa South of Sahara	2.3	25	2.5	28
Middle East Asia	2.2	5	2.5	5
America	2.6	2	2.4	3
Global	2.1	3	2.3	3
Total	2.3	51	2.6	60.0

There was some indication that reviews from Africa, Europe and Asia had higher quality. However the small sample sizes for most regions means that any differences in quality score were not found to be statistically significant (reviews had an F score of 0.38 against a critical value of 2.27). TORs equally showed no significant difference in quality score.

Table 8 Review and TOR rating by Type of Review

Type	Average of Overall rating of the TORs	Count of TORs	Average of overall ratings of Reviews	Count Of Reviews
End review	2.6	14	2.7	15
Evaluation	2.1	2	2.5	5
Mid-term review	2.3	18	2.6	21
Review	2.2	15	2.5	19
Total	2.3	49	2.6	60

TORs show modest variation in quality, and there is no statistically significant difference between the four types. When End reviews ratings were compared with Mid-term and Review ratings, and the two Evaluation ratings were excluded, then the End reviews did have a statistically significant higher quality (F score 3.94 against a critical value of 3.2), implying that **End reviews might receive greater attention and care in their drafting**. The quality areas where end reviews show higher quality are the review process, deliverables and quality assurance, and also scope and criteria.

Review average ratings for overall quality are very similar across the four types of review and an analysis of variance showed that there was no statistically significant difference (the F value was 0.53 against a critical F value of 2.77).

Table 9 Review and TOR rating by Target Area (Sector)

Target Area	Average of Overall rating of the review/evaluation report	Count rating of the evaluation report
Education	2.4	4
Health and Social Services	2.4	16
Environment and Energy	2.5	18
Government and Civil Society	2.7	14
Economic development and trade	2.9	7
Women's equality organisations and institutions	3.1	1
Total	2.6	60

Review quality appears to show some variation between Sector (based on 'Target Area', a simplified categorisation provided by Norad for this exercise). But when tested for significance, there is a low probability that these differences are not due to chance (F value is 1.65 against a critical value of 2.54).

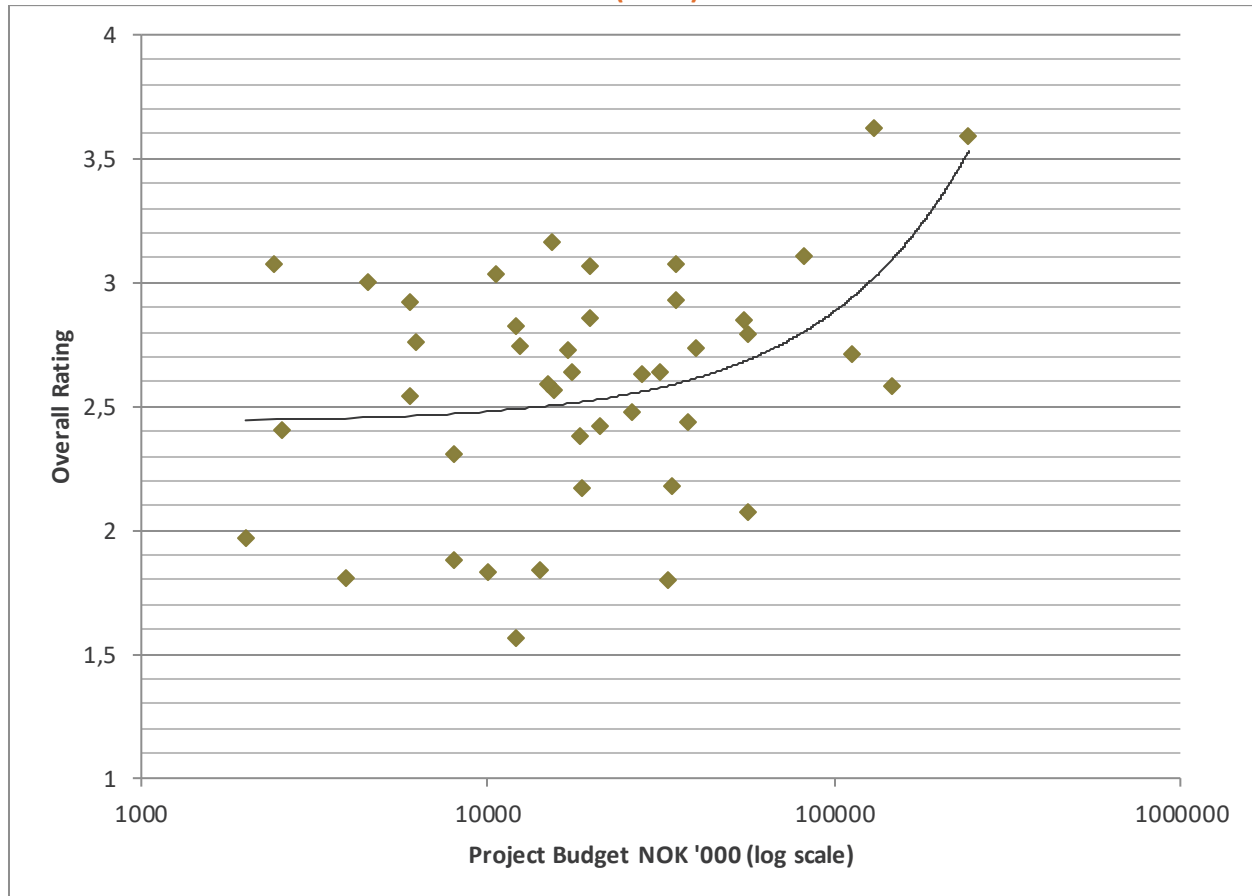
1.2 Review and TOR rating by Agreement Budget

A comparison of *TOR* and *review* quality ratings against the *agreement budget* showed a positive but very low degree of correlation ($r^2=0.12$) between each of these two ratings and the budget allocated to the project. However when ratings were analysed against the *project budget* as extracted from the review documents (TOR or Review/Evaluation report), the relationship was stronger with a correlation of 0.44 for reviews and 0.24 for TORs. The difference arises from the fact that agreement budgets refer to the whole period of an intervention while the project budget reported in the review or TOR may in some cases refer just to the particular phase that is under review.

Figure 2 illustrates this. The analysis using a 't' test of paired values gave a significant result (with a 't' value of 4.87 against a critical value of 2.02), therefore suggesting that this relationship observed in the sample is likely to be true in the wider population and that projects that cost more are likely to have TORs and reviews of higher quality.

Figure 2 Comparison of Review Quality Rating against Project Budget

(n=43)

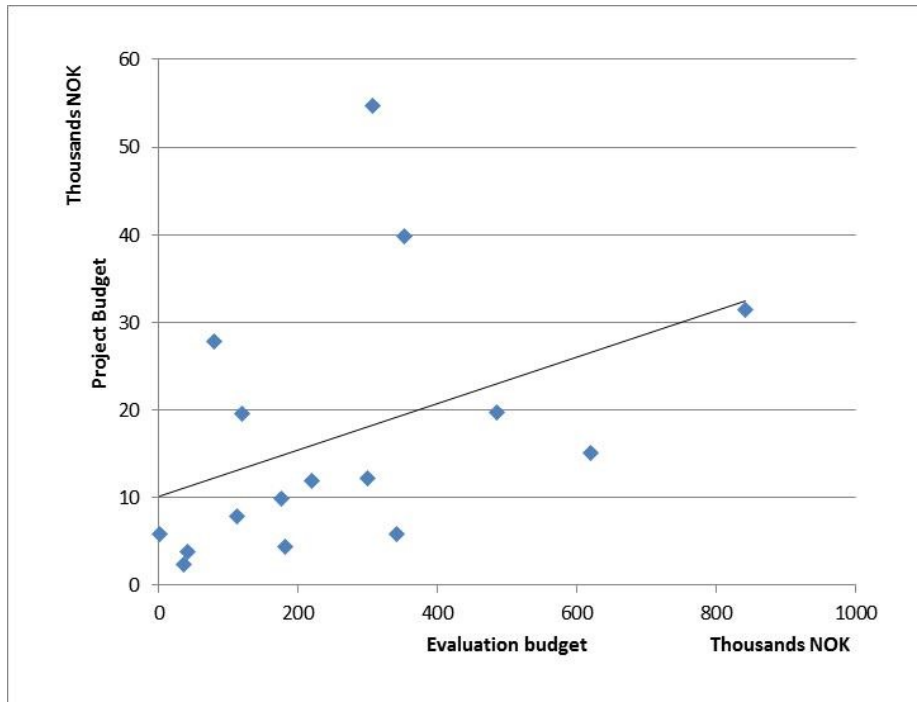


1.3 Project costs against evaluation cost and total resource days/level of effort

From just 16 available observations where data were available, there was nevertheless a significant and positive statistical relationship between the project budget and evaluation budget in the 2014 sample (Figure 3). The correlation coefficient was 0.41, and thus it seems that larger projects have higher evaluation funds.² The 't' statistic was 4.49 against a critical value of 2.13.

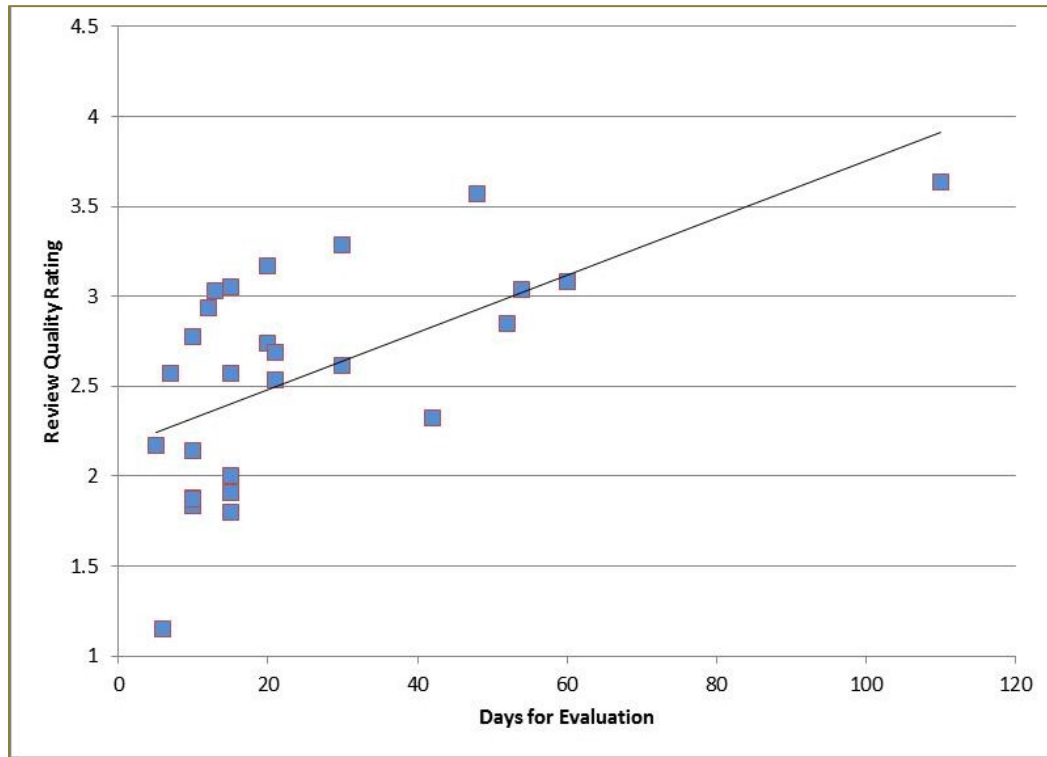
² This was also tested against the agreement budget, which had a larger 'n' of 20 cases, and an r^2 of 0.74.

Figure 3 Plot of Project Budget against Evaluation Budget (n=16)



A comparison of the level of effort (in terms of the number of days provided for a review) and the overall quality rating found a significant and strong positive relationship (with a correlation coefficient of 0.52) (Figure 4). Although the sample was small (27 cases), a 't' test indicated that this relationship was likely to be reflected in the wider universe of reviews. A 't' value of 4.4 was calculated against a critical 't' value of 1.73.

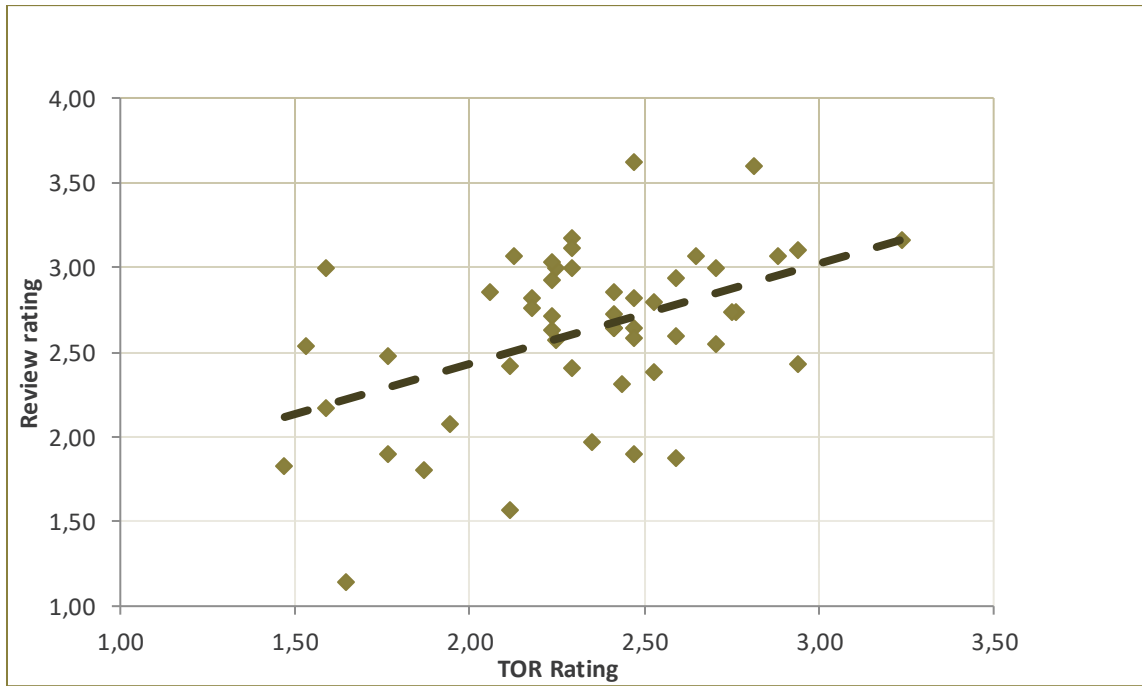
Figure 4 Plot of Evaluation days and Overall Review Rating (n=27)



1.4 Comparison of overall quality ratings for TORs with quality ratings for evaluations

Analysis showed a significant and positive statistical relationship between the overall TOR and review average ratings, with a correlation coefficient of 0.46 for the 51 cases (Figure 5). This suggests strongly that higher quality TORs are associated with higher quality reviews. The 't' statistic was highly significant indicating (t value of 4.56 against a critical value of 2.0) that this relationship is likely to occur in the wider population.

Figure 5 Review / TOR rating comparison (51 cases)



Appendix 1 Evaluation methods mapped against OECD/DAC quality standards³

OECD/ DAC Standard	TOR quality area	Review quality area	Instrument
1. Overarching considerations			
1.1 Transparent/independent	2.1		CS
1.2 Ethics	3.4	3.7	QR CS
1.3 Partnership			
1.4 Coordination/alignment			
1.5 Capacity development			
1.6 Quality control	2.3		QR CS
2. Purpose, planning, design			
2.1 Rationale and purpose	1.1	2.1	QR
2.2 Specific objectives	1.2	2.2	QR
2.3 Evaluation object and scope	1.5	2.4, 2.5	QR OS
2.4 Evaluability			
2.5 Stakeholder involvement			
2.6 Joint Evaluation considered			
2.7 Evaluation questions	1.8	2.6	QR
2.8 Applies selected DAC criteria	1.7	4.1-4.5	QR
2.9 Approach and methodology		3.1, 3.3	QR OS
2.10 Resources	1.9		QR
2.11 Governance and Management			
2.12 TOR	All		QR CS
3. Implementation and reporting			
3.1 Evaluation Team	2.1		QR
3.2 Independence	2.1		CS
3.3 Stakeholder consultation/protection		3.7	QR
3.4 Timely and within budget	2.2		OS
3.5 Report is understandable		1.2	QR
3.6 Executive summary		1.1	QR
3.7 Context		2.3	QR
3.8 Intervention logic		5.2	QR
3.9 Valid and reliable data		3.2	QR
3.10 Methodology explained		3.1,3.5	QR
3.11 Clear analysis		5.3, 5.4	QR
3.12 Questions answered		5.1	QR
3.13 Limitations explained		3.6	QR
3.14 Team disagreements			
3.15 Stakeholder comments			

³ Standards marked grey were not covered by the evaluation.

4. Follow-up use and learning			
4.1 Timely, relevant, usable, disseminated, stored, accessible			QR CS OS ES
4.2 Response and follow-up			CS OS ES
4.3 Dissemination			CS OS

QR = Quality Review, CS = Case Studies, OS = On line Survey, ES = Email Survey

Annex 7 Case study analysis

1 Introduction

While the quality reviews provided an understanding of the reporting phase, the case studies focused on the three other phases of an evaluation, i.e. planning, implementation and use. The aim was to understand the main factors influencing the use of the reviews, and to complement the other sources in understanding review quality.

The case study component provides an in-depth assessment of a sample of five reviews together with their associated documentation available to the evaluation team (such as terms of reference (TOR), inception reports⁴ and management responses), analysing enablers and barriers of evaluation quality and use (see Appendix 2). This was fed into the overall analysis of Evaluation objective 2 – to examine the use of the outputs of the reviews – and Evaluation objective 3 – to identify factors contributing to both quality and use of reviews.

2 Methodology

2.1 Evaluation questions

The analysis of case studies serves to answer the following main evaluation questions:

- EQ4. From the perspective of stakeholders, to what extent are reviews timely, and present relevant and realistic recommendations?
- EQ5. To what extent have review findings, conclusions and recommendations been used by the unit responsible for managing the grant to the intervention that have undergone review?
- EQ6. What are the main factors contributing to quality and the use of reviews and decentralised evaluations?

The main questions was supplemented with a range of sub-questions in order to identify how evaluation process elements influence evaluation and review quality and different dimensions of uptake and use. Appendix 1 provides the detailed case study interview guides containing most of these questions. In addition, open-ended questions allowed stakeholders to explain their views about differences in quality and use. Appendix 2 lists the main documents used.

2.2 Conceptual framework

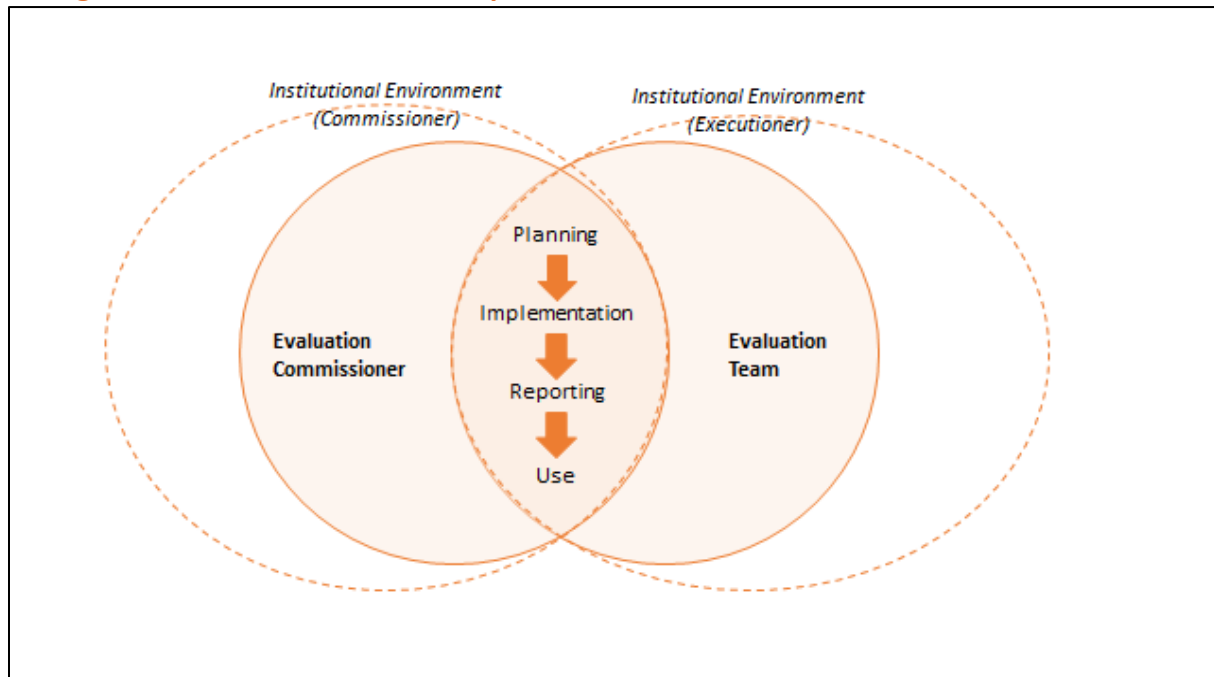
Evaluations and reviews can be understood as a process. Review reports are only one product of this process, which includes the stages of planning, implementation, reporting and use. Review quality cuts across all stages of the review process and needs to be assessed within each phase (Lloyd and Schatz 2015).⁵ The study's framework recognises that the review process is embedded in the relationship between the review commissioner and the review team and their respective capacities, and the wider institutional environment in which the review is being conducted.⁶ Review quality and use depend to a large extent on this interplay, as illustrated by Figure 1.

⁴ Only one of the reviews had an inception report.

⁵ Reference.

⁶ Winckler Andersen, O. (2014) Some thoughts on development evaluation processes, *IDS Bulletin* 45(6): 77–84.

Figure 1: The review/evaluation process and its context



Here the study focus is on the planning, implementation and use of reviews and the factors influencing evaluation quality and use. The approach is therefore to assess quality and use in the different phases through a set of common questions. These questions reflect a deductive approach that draws on existing literature on evaluation quality⁷ and use,⁸ including findings on key factors influencing evaluation quality in recent meta-evaluations such as DFAT (2014), Norad; Itad/Chr. Michelsen Institute (2014); USAID (2013), UNDP (2013).⁹ The relevant questions for the various stages of the review process were then specified into three questionnaires for the key involved parties; the grant manager or review/evaluation commissioner, the review/evaluation team leader and a user within the aid administration.

⁷ Cooksy, L.J. and Mark, M.M. (2012) Influences on Evaluation Quality, *American Journal of Evaluation* 33(1): 79–84. Chelimsky, E. (2009) Integrating Evaluation Units into the Political Environment of Government: The Role of Evaluation Policy, in Trochim, W.M.K., Mark, M.M. and Cooksy, L.J. (eds) *Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Practice. New Directions for Evaluation*, 123: 51–66.

⁸ Johnson, K., Greenesid, L.O., Toal, S.A., King, J.A., Lawrenz, F. and Volkov, B. (2009) Research on evaluation use: a review of the empirical literature from 1986 to 2005. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 30(3), 377–410.

⁹ DFAT (2014) *Quality of Australian Aid Operational Evaluations*, June, Canberra: Office of Development Effectiveness, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Itad/Chr. Michelsen Institute (2014) *Can We Demonstrate the Difference that Norwegian Aid Makes? Evaluation of Results Measurement and How This Can be Improved*, Oslo: Norad; Australian Government, USAID (2013) *Meta-evaluation of Quality and Coverage of USAID Evaluations 2009–2012*, prepared by Management Systems International. UNDP (2013) *Annual Report on Evaluation 2013*, New York: Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP; ALNAP (2004) *Review of Humanitarian Action in 2004, Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action*, London: ODI.

For the purpose of analysing use, the study applied the Stetler model (Stetler 2010).¹⁰ This is a logical, practical and proven framework to analyse responses and the model describes three types of evaluation use:

- Instrumental: this is where the knowledge from an evaluation is used directly to inform an ongoing policy or programme;
- Conceptual: this is where no direct action is taken as a result of the evaluation, but where the knowledge from the evaluation influences people’s general thinking around what works;
- Tokenistic: this occurs when people use the mere existence of an evaluation, rather than its specific findings, to persuade or convince. A version – political/strategic use – is when an evaluation is used to justify or legitimate a policy or decision.

2.3 Sampling

The sample frame for the case studies is the sample for the quality assessment; the 60 reviews conducted in 2014 and rated in our quality assessment. Of these, five reviews of different quality and used were purposefully selected as the sample for the case studies.

To identify reviews with different levels of use, and to provide inputs to the selection of cases, the grant managers (the staff responsible for commissioning the reviews) responsible for the 74 reviews were emailed the following questions:

1. What was the intended use of the study and did it then fulfil that use?
2. In order to understand variations in quality and use, we are planning to look in detail at five particular reviews/evaluations as case studies. Would this example in your view be a valuable case study? If so why (or why not)?

This resulted in 34 answers. The relatively low response rate seemed to stem from the rotation of the staff in the system. Some of those contacted indicated that they were not the right person for answering the questions posed. If this was indeed the reason for no-response, then it is likely to be random to the quality and use. Nevertheless, it was necessary to check for biases, for example due to some underlying factors causing a systematic non-response that influences the measured indicators of interest (quality and use). The study therefore compared the quality scores of the reviews and their TORs between the reviews where no response was given with the reviews where a response was provided (32 of the 34 reviews were rated). Fortunately, there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups. This strengthens the argument that there were no biases according to responses. Table 1 shows the differences.

Table 1 Quality assessments by responses to email survey

Responded to email survey	Cases	Rating of the evaluation report (average)	Rating of the TORs (average)
Yes	32	2.55	2.31
No	28	2.58	2.34
Grand Total	60	2.57	2.32

¹⁰ Stetler, C.B. (2010). Chapter 3: Stetler Model. In Rycroft-Malone, J. and Bucknall, T. (eds), *Models and frameworks for Implementing Evidence-Based Practice: Linking evidence to action*. Evidence-based Practice Series. Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford.

The responses clearly indicate that reviews are highly used by the aid administration. In 76% of the responses, the grant managers indicated that the review had been used. The use was mostly instrumental, either to improve the project under review or to prepare for new grants, and for documenting the results of the project and learning from it. Almost half of the grant managers (44% of the responses, 15 out of 34) stated that the review was used by the aid administration to improve new grants or new strategies while 41% said the review was used to improve the reviewed project. This was a typical response for mid-term reviews. Similarly, 44% of respondents stated that the review had been used for learning or informational purposes or to document the results of the project. Among the respondents who replied but did not indicate use (24%, 8 out of 43), they either did not clearly articulate the degree to which the review had been used or they were not in a position to answer the question due to staff rotation in the system or unavailability of the archives.

Our main choice criteria were quality and use.¹¹ The study selected one high-quality and high-use review, one high-quality and low-use review and, similarly, one low-quality-high-use and one low-quality-low-use. In addition, one review that had mid-level quality was selected. To identify the candidates for the case studies by the quality of the review, the 20% of the reviews with the highest and lowest ratings of the review reports were listed, respectively.¹² Then a purposeful selection was conducted to cover the variants of use in addition to regions and sectors. Since many grant managers did not reply to the email survey, a further inquiry into the high- and low-quality groups of reviews was conducted to identify both high- and low-use cases.¹³ Very few indicated that the review had a low use, but one good low-use candidate was found in the high-quality group.

Moreover, when selecting the fifth review – of mid-level quality, the study chose one from the middle 60-percent group of reviews that was not scored high or low, and decided to select a mid-term review to also cover these types of reviews. The selected mid-term review also had a low use. The selection approach and the selected cases were submitted to the Evaluation Department for their comments and also for preventing the selection of outliers. The lists of the 20% high- and low-scored reviews with the assessment of suitability for case selection is given in Appendix 2 (Case study selection). Table 2 summarises the selected cases and the criteria.

Table 2 Selected case studies

#	Region	Review title	Sector	Basis*	TOR	Review
16	Africa Region	End Review of SAF 2866 SAF-12/006 Benguela Current Commission	Environment	HQ/HU	3.24	3.16
155	Nepal	Mid-Term Review National Rural and Renewable Energy Programme	Energy	LQ/HU	2.47	1.88
122	Madagascar	Project review of ProVert Integrated Green Education Programme	Education	LQ/HU	2.59	1.91
184	Pakistan	End of Project Evaluation: Norway-Pakistan Partnership Initiative	Health	HQ/LU	2.81	3.56

¹¹ The study considered alternative main criteria, but all identified were less useful for our purpose for assessing how and why there are diverging quality and use.

¹² Ratings were taken from the quality reviews, see the main report.

¹³ Mainly by emailing grant managers or calling them to get the responses. This worked well.

#	Region	Review title	Sector	Basis*	TOR	Review
244	East Timor	End Review: Assistance in Management of Petroleum Resources	Energy	Fair quality/LU	2.88	3.03

*HQ= High Quality, LQ = Low Quality, HU=High Use, LU = Low Use

2.4 Data collection

The data collection is structured around a set of common questions. These questions built on existing literature on evaluation quality and use, as noted above and in the main report, and were refined based on our insights from the quality assessment of review and evaluation documents. For each case study, the key stakeholders relevant to the phases of the evaluation process were interviewed:

- Grant managers/review commissioners;
- Review team leader (consultant); and
- Evaluation users in the Norwegian aid administration.

The interviews were conducted by phone and were followed up with additional email exchanges as needed. Each interview lasted up to one and a half hour and followed a semi-structured questionnaire built around the refined set of questions. The interview guides for each stakeholder group can be found in Appendix 1.

The data collection process began with a mapping of the relevant personnel and documents for each case study and an initial assessment of the available material. While all the TORs were already available, the study team asked the grant manager or project officer to share any inception report, management responses, email exchanges or other material relevant for assessing quality and use of the reviews. In only one review case had an inception report been produced. In one review case, there was no information from the responsible officer due to limited capacity as the embassy was in the process of relocation. Four of the cases contain useful management responses, tender documents and email exchanges used in the analysis (see Appendix 2 for the overview of documents).

The interviews were then conducted with up to five relevant actors per case study. The appendix with overview details about the interviewed respondents is not attached to the report to preserve the promised anonymity of respondents.

2.5 Approach to analysis

The findings for each question have been systematically recorded for each case study. A comparative case study approach has been applied to identify common issues and produce generalisable lessons for the cases about the how and why of diverging evaluation quality and use.¹⁴ This allowed exploration of perceived causality in a small-N sample. By comparing factors influencing quality and use across several cases with different degrees of quality and use, the likely influence of each factor may be revealed while taking context into consideration.¹⁵ However, the small-N sample requires a careful interpretation and any generalisations beyond the cases will only be made in conjunction with the triangulation with the findings from the other three components of this evaluation.

¹⁴ For example see http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/brief_9_comparativecasestudies_eng.pdf

¹⁵ Yin, Robert K. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 5th edition, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014.

Key factors influencing quality and use were rated subjectively by the interview respondents without applying any rigorous definitions of quality and use. This followed from our line of inquiry where the intention is to identify the respondents' own views about quality and use (see Evaluation objective 3). Once these key factors were identified, the case studies were focused on how and why evaluation quality varies.

The case study findings and conclusions will be included in a synthesis of all the findings and conclusions from the three other components of our evaluation. This will lead to the drawing of the overall recommendations in our final report. Therefore, the case study does not provide independent recommendations.

3 Analysis of the cases

3.1 What are the main factors contributing to quality of reviews as seen from the involved parties themselves? (Evaluation objective 3)

Usability. When asked to assess the quality of the review, respondents put a lot of weight on whether there was anything that could be used in the review findings or recommendations, or actionable implications that could be drawn implicitly or explicitly from the review report. Respondents in all cases stated that high-quality reviews were targeted towards its use (cases 16, 122, 155, 184 and 244).

Even for the cases where the review got a low-quality rating, it seemed that the perception was that it was of a sufficient quality if it revealed something important and useful that could have been implemented to improve the project. In one of the cases with the poorest quality rating (case 122), the grant manager stated that the review had *'Sufficiently good quality for the purpose and the resources available for the review. The review may not be viewed as very good, but it had sufficient quality for identifying the lessons learned and for creating a common understanding of the need for change'*. The recommendations from this review were highly used.

Also in the case where the review was not used did the grant manager put weight on usability as a factor creating a high-quality review. The grant manager's most important suggestions for improving quality of such reviews included that the commissioning body should be proactive in planning and designing of the review and factor in its intended use (case 184).

The understanding of what is a high-quality review was wide among the respondents. Most of them – the grant manager, review team leader and the users – used a much wider definition of quality compared to what is used in most of the literature and compared to what was used in the rating of the reviews.

Well-qualified review team. A second finding was that respondents in all cases stated that having a well-qualified review team would lead to a high-quality review (184, 122, 155, 16, 244). Qualifications were not only about their formal evaluation competencies and subject knowledge, but respondents across all cases also highlighted country, context and project knowledge as important in generating high-quality reviews. In the Pakistan case (184), for example, the review team leader stated that a very strong team with subject specialists and good local knowledge was one of four most important factors contributing towards having a high-quality review. In addition, a second factor was that the team had very good knowledge of the Pakistan government who implemented the projects and their projects on the ground. This was confirmed independently by the grant manager. He stated that a key explanation for the high quality of the review (one of the highest rated in the quality assessment) was that the review team were experts in the field, had good local knowledge and the team was able to obtain relevant information by utilising their good contacts with government offices/agencies.

Involve stakeholders. Moreover, respondents in all cases stated that the involvement of and/or support from stakeholders were important to achieve a high-quality review (184, 122, 155, 16, 244). Two main linkages between review quality and stakeholder involvement were mentioned. First, the stakeholders sit on information important for the assessments conducted in the review. Without proper involvement, the review team risks missing important issues. Second, without stakeholder involvement, they will not be committed to follow up on the review and use the recommendations. This was especially the case for stakeholders/grant recipients implementing the projects.

Sufficient time to conduct the review. Most of the review leaders pointed to having sufficient time for conducting the review as an important factor for generating a high-quality review (184, 122, 155, 244). One of these reviews was even conducted without fieldwork. In this case the review team leader stated that it was more of a pro-forma exercise where Norway had decided to exit the project irrespective of the findings from the end review. Moreover, the grant manager clearly indicated that this had influenced review quality, but still rated it as a mid-level quality review. Even though the time for the reviews varied a lot for the cases, from 10 days (case 155) to 48 days (case 184), most stated that time was too short for the job.

Good TOR. When asked in general what contributes to a high-quality review, developing a good TOR was seen as key. Most review team leaders (16, 122, 155, 184) and all the grant managers (16, 122, 155, 184, 244) stated that a high-quality TOR was a key factor for generating a high-quality review. One respondent stated that all the key issues should be explained well in the TOR, be specific on purpose, have clear requirements to review team on knowledge, experience and the methodology of review. It should have a limited number of pages and be concise – what should be included and what not. Key messages and action points should be prioritised. Moreover, stakeholders should be given enough time to help developing the TOR in order to include all the important issues.

Comprehensive methodology. Two respondents stated that a comprehensive methodology was important for generating a high-quality review (the grant managers in cases 16 and 184).

Review support. There was a clear need for review support in the aid management system in order to ensure high-quality reviews, especially in the planning phase. The GMM was often mentioned as important in guiding the review process and providing the general information about what the review should contain. In three out of four cases where this was relevant (122, 155, 16),¹⁶ it was clearly articulated that the Norwegian aid system did not contain adequate support and it was revealed a strong need for formal system support during the review process. The lack of guidance material posed challenges for grant managers and review commissioners. Norad staff may be more familiar with writing TORs and planning for reviews, but overall many staff use foreign agencies' guidance to supplement the GMM or the old Norad grant manual. Norad was involved in several cases in developing the TOR, either because they were involved themselves in the internal review or because the grant manager sought help from Norad.

¹⁶ In one case, it was an externally managed review so the Norwegian system did not apply.

3.2 Were the reviews used, and how? (Evaluation objective 2)

3.2.1 To what extent have the review findings, conclusions and recommendations been used by the unit responsible for managing the grant? (EQ 5)

This section first describes to what extent the review reports were used, and how they were used. Next, the types of use are classified before the findings on timeliness and relevance are presented.

It is important to acknowledge that in the Norwegian aid management system, it was up to each grant manager or the head of the unit responsible for the grant to decide which parts are to be used, if any, and the approaches to follow up. The GMM only stipulates that the responsible officer will assess the report, propose measures on the basis of the recommendations and implement and follow-up the approved measures (GMM, p.66). In addition, any documents associated with follow-up should be registered in the PTA and filed in the archives.

Sometimes the respondents did not recall whether they used findings, conclusions or recommendations but refer to the 'issues being raised'. Therefore, there was not a sharp distinction between exactly what parts of the reports were used.

The **Benguela** end review was used to a large extent. The review was used to inform a new intended cooperation phase with the partner including a detailed follow-up with the grant recipient based on the review recommendations. The organisational analysis part was seen as particularly useful. Later, the grant manager found that the project had changed in accordance with some of the key recommendations. The review also functioned as a source for learning in the Norwegian aid administration. It was used by embassy to understand the impact of Benguela Current Commission and how Norway's support had assisted, and this information was fed to MFA and Norad. It was viewed as very useful to diplomats due to the staff rotation in the system – it was good for the embassy to have a report summarising the knowledge. More widely, the review also fed into the 'Fish for Development' programme begun by Norway, and it enhanced their competence in sustainability work on oceans. The previous year, a team from Norad came to the embassy to look at what was termed the 'blue economy' and then they used the review report. It contributed to the understanding of these issues regionally and internationally and to related political issues, e.g. the 2016 ocean conference in Washington, 'security at seas'. The political relations between the three countries was sensitive and the review addressed not just the scientific issues but the gains made in terms of tri-partite aspects of consensus building between the parties.

The **East Timor** end review of the Assistance in Management of Petroleum Resources project was a desk study conducted from Norway without any fieldwork in a situation where the embassy already had decided to close down the project. The end review was seen as 'an exercise to confirm closure' and not strongly focused on results. Moreover, the recommendations in the review focused on arguing that a new phase of funding should be entered, despite the TOR clearly indicating that the review was not to include extensions of the project (see below). Hence, the recommendations were not realistic and not relevant for the donor, something that led the embassy to 'shelf' the review and not use it. In addition, there was low buy-in to the review process from the grant recipient's side and the review was seen as an internal matter for the embassy that was not relevant for them. The grant manager said the review was not used although it had some good points and concluded that the review was only for information purposes for the embassy and the project partners. This review was rated as low use.

The **Madagascar** end review of the ProVert programme was internally conducted where the grant manager was also the review team leader. The review was designed for addressing many of the issues that the grant manager felt should be improved, and the grant manager developed the TOR in

consultation with the stakeholders. The review generated nine concrete recommendations, and these were actively followed up in a tight way jointly from Norad and the embassy. This resulted in comprehensive changes to both the programme in its new phase, and a substantial cut in the budget for the programme. Results of the programme were not documented so the use was solely towards changing the programme structure, narrowing the focus and reducing the budget. Nevertheless, the review was used a lot along several dimensions to improve the new project and during a long process. This review was categorised as high use.

The **Pakistan** review was not intended to be used by the Norwegian aid administration. It was an externally conducted team with independent consultants and it was conducted for the purpose of documenting the results of the programme for the other involved parties and to provide some lessons for the implementing agencies. The embassy had already taken the decision to pull out not only of the programme, but also from the entire sector in the country. The case revealed different perceptions among the involved parties on whether the review provided general lessons that could be used in the Norwegian aid administration. The grant manager indicated that this was not the case as it was highly specific for the province it was implemented in, but the review team leader stated that it had several recommendations that could be used more generally. In any case, this was classified as a low-use review.

The **Nepal** review of the National Rural and Renewable Energy Programme case represents the only mid-term review (MTR) among the cases, and it was an internal review led by Norad. The MTR was highly used, not only were recommendations used in a comprehensive way to improve the programme but also to influence the Nepalese Government’s policy on energy subsidies. The embassy used the MTR as an entry point for discussing rural energy matters with the government. The use for the latter purpose continued in the years after the completion of the review and was still being used for the same purpose at the time when case study interviews were conducted. This use led to specific inputs being used by the government. As the grant manager stated – ‘The MTR had a large influence on this revision and we can see the same wordings from the MTR recommendations into the new subsidy policy’.

The cases revealed several types of use that were categorised as follows:

- instrumental use, in which the review was used explicitly for decision making or to achieve certain concrete goals,
- conceptual use, when the review was used to influence policies or some overarching goals outside of the project, and
- tokenistic in which case the review had no practical use but was rather produced as a system requirement or as a token to show that there in fact had been a project.

Table 3 presents the categorisation of the use of each of the cases.

Table 3 Types of use

Case	Use	Instrumental (decision making)	Conceptual (policy development)	Tokenistic (tick box)
Benguela end review (16)	High	Yes – it did inform several aspects of the programme	Yes – the findings influenced wider Norad policy and thinking on fish and maritime issues, managing common resources etc.	No
East Timor end review (244)	Low	Limited	No	Yes. A desk study to show results. Low buy-in from

Case	Use	Instrumental (decision making)	Conceptual (policy development)	Tokenistic (tick box)
				grant recipient. Not used or operationalised
Madagascar ProVert end review (122)	High	Yes, provided a lot of important contributions that had major implications for next grant for the project (funding and content/focus).	No, narrowly focused on the project so no such use would be relevant	Partly. On the results, the review did not attempt to verify any results, so seems it was included just to comply with the GMM on that part
Nepal National Rural and Renewable Energy Programme Mid-term review (155)	High	Yes	Yes. Used to contribute to changing the energy policy of Nepal government	No
Norway Pakistan Partnership Initiative end review (184)	Low	The end review was not used for any practical purpose because the MTR led the donor to end the programme during the grant period and request repayment of the reminder of the grant	No. Diverging views on whether the review was suitable for such purpose	Yes. Used to show that the project had improved since the MTR and that some good outputs had been delivered

3.2.2 Were the reviews timely? (EQ4)

There was a mixed picture on the timeliness of the reviews. On the one hand, it was logical timing that end reviews were conducted towards the end of the project period and MTRs around mid-way of implementation. However, timing could have been better in some of the cases.

In two of the cases, poor timing had negative consequences. In the Pakistan case, the project had already closed when the review team started their work, which made it more difficult to develop a high-quality review. The review team had difficulties in getting hold of project staff and the necessary project documentation as staff had left and documentation could not be traced. In the Timor case, the decision was already made to discontinue funding when the end review was conducted. Again, this timing of events seems to have influenced the design of the review confining it to a desk study without fieldwork that likely contributed to the low buy-in from the grant recipients.

For the three other cases, the reviews seem to have been timely and contributed to the high use, especially in the Madagascar and Nepal cases. In the Madagascar case, the review was timed so that it fed directly into the discussions of the next funding period. Similarly, in the Nepal case, the review was conducted at the same time as the government started to revise their energy policy.

3.2.3 Did the reviews present relevant and realistic recommendations? (EQ4)

The case studies showed that most reviews provided relevant and realistic recommendations. They were relevant since they fed directly into the needs of the users, both for the Norwegian aid management and the grant recipient. One exception concerns the recommendations in the Timor-Leste case. The TOR explicitly stated that the review would not explicitly deal with the issue of a possible extension of the programme.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the recommendations of the review were only about the arguments in favour of project extension, that section contained no other recommendations. Given the explicit request in the TOR, the review recommendations seem both not relevant for the Norwegian aid administration and not realistic since they had already decided not to fund a third phase. One may argue that the recommendations were relevant for the Government of Timor-Leste, but still not realistic. In any case, the lack of relevant and realistic recommendations for the Norwegian aid administration likely led them not to use the review.

Similarly, the Pakistan review did not provide realistic or relevant recommendations for the use of Norwegian funds given the Norwegian decision to pull out of the project and sector. Nevertheless, the recommendations were relevant and realistic for the co-funders and implementing partners, which continued to work both with similar programmes in similar areas of Pakistan.

In the Benguela case, the embassy clearly pointed out that the recommendations were both relevant and realistic and therefore considered valuable. This view was substantiated with examples of use. Similarly, the changes made to the ProVert programme clearly indicates the relevance of the recommendations in addition to being realistic, and the same is found for the Nepal case with its changes in the programme and government policy (see above).

3.3 What are the main factors contributing to use of reviews as seen from the involved parties themselves? (Evaluation Objective 3)

Good TOR. It was stated by several respondents in the high-use cases that the development of a good TOR was key to having a useful review that in turn would be highly used (16, 122, 155). In the low-use cases the reviews were not used for reasons that did not have anything to do with the TOR. Therefore, one might not put too much weight on the finding that in the low-uses cases, none of the respondents indicated that having a good TOR would be important to the use.

The involvement of the stakeholders in developing the TOR contributed to their buy-in and enhanced the likelihood that they would act upon the recommendations (155, 122). Having a sufficiently long planning phase where involved stakeholders were allowed time to comment and provide inputs to the TOR was seen as important. It was also argued that the TOR needed to be narrowed towards its specific use and not contain too many messages and or too wide scope (155, 16). In one case it was pointed out that the embassy was aware of their information gaps and knew what they needed which could then be entered directly into the TOR.

Practical and relevant. The respondents indicated that to have a high use, the review report needed to be highly practical and include realistic actions important for commissioning body and donors (16, 122, 155, 184). They also argued that it needed to be relevant. If the review was not focused on the future plans of the aid administration, it could risk not being used, such as in the Timor-Leste and Pakistan cases

¹⁷ Invitation to tender, p.2: 'On 17 September 2013, the Government of Norway through its embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia received a request from the Minister of Planning and Resource Management for an extension of the programme with a scale down approach lasting for four new years. This review will not explicitly deal with the issue of a possible programme extension.'

(244, 184). Changing aid priorities could suddenly render a review irrelevant. End reviews were often considered not useful when the decision to shut the project /sector down due to their narrow project focus and few general lessons.

True partnership and joint involvement. Evidence from the case studies suggest close and good collaboration between the aid administration and the grant recipient throughout the review process was seen as key to increasing the likelihood of having high use. It was recommended that the collaboration should take place from the initial phase, from developing the TOR and the planning, and throughout the review process including the implementation and follow-up of recommendations (184, 155, 244, 122).

Internal versus external reviews. The respondents argued that internally conducted reviews were likely to be more efficient while externally conducted reviews would likely be more independent (122, 155). It seemed to be the perception that internal reviews were more efficient in terms of more value for the money. In one of the cases (122), it was highlighted that with a given budget, one would get much more and better analysis because the grant manager already knew the programme very well and could go straight to the important issues instead of searching for the issues (as external consultants would do). It was argued that the review modality would depend on the intended use and on how the grant recipient would respond to the requests and messages from an external as opposed to an internal reviewer. Having a review team consisting of stakeholders would increase ownership and construct relationships that could help in later implementation of recommendations (i.e. use) (155).

The internal review also provided important learning for the involved grant managers and internal staff and they (Norad advisors) would use that learning in other projects (155, 122).

Project/subject knowledge. In most cases, it was argued that knowledge of the review team about the project or subject matter would lead to good decisions on how to conduct the review and on how to do the fieldwork in a way that could generate findings that would have a high potential for being used (155, 184, 122, 16).

Routine for use. In one of the cases, it was stated that there were no institutional mechanism or routines in the aid administration to ensure follow-up and use of reviews/evaluations (184). It was up to the grant manager and this person's availability to follow up the review recommendations. Nevertheless, the GMM description of the activities to be conducted for reviews stipulates that the programme officer or the head of the responsible unit is responsible for proposing measures on the basis of the review recommendations and for implementing and following up the approved measures (GMM p. 66). Moreover, they are required to register the review and the main conclusions in the PTA and file in the archives the review report, its mandate and any documents associated with the follow-up.

4 Conclusions

The case study findings suggested that the key to achieving a high-quality review was to involve stakeholders throughout the review process, develop a good TOR and ensure the work was conducted by a well-qualified team with enough time and resources for the tasks. A high-quality review was understood as one that could be used for important purposes for managing the grant, improving new grants or for informing policy development. It was hence important that the recommendations were clear and actionable with a direct application. Moreover, there was no focus on the role of providing a proper evidence base for the review, selection of appropriate methods or the logical derivation of the findings from the analysis of data to show a clear line of evidence. In only one case was it mentioned that a comprehensive methodology was important for generating a high-quality review.

The use of these reviews focused on organisational improvements and much less on the use of the documentation of results to compile an evidence base to guide future decisions, to influence future grants or in other ways manage for results.

The respondents' views on the key factors contributing to high use of reviews were focused on developing a good and specific TOR, having a review team with in-depth project and subject knowledge and ensure the delivery of practical and relevant recommendations. Again involvement of stakeholders was regarded as important and key to finding good improvements in the project. For high use, this was also important for ensuring buy-in when the review recommendations would be used by the stakeholders and grant recipients for improving the project. One stakeholder pointed to an important issue – that there is no system for following up that the reviews are actually used.

The conclusions from the case studies are that:

1. These reviews were not conducted in a way that fulfils their role of documenting results in the Norwegian aid administration, and
2. That the main reason for this was that the grant management system support and guidance is not designed in a way to ensure reviews are conducted and followed up for this purpose (as specified in the GMM p. 66).

Nevertheless, the study also concludes that the reviews were seen as highly useful by the parties and specifically that:

3. Reviews fulfil an important function to help grant managers in their work to follow up on grant implementation (MTR) and in generating knowledge in a systematic way to improve the performance of the project or to contribute to designing improved projects or recipient policies.

The study also concludes that five cases is a thin evidence base and the findings and conclusions here will have to be triangulated with those of the other components of our evaluation.

Appendix 1 Interview guides

Appendix 1a Grant manager interview guide

Introduction to be read/explained to the respondent:

Itad Ltd. and Chr. Michelsen Institute have recently been commissioned by Norad's Evaluation Department to conduct an independent quality review of a sample of decentralised reviews and evaluations conducted in 2014. In order to supplement our assessment of the sampled reviews, we are conducting interviews with involved parties in a few selected case reviews. This is an independent assessment and your answers will be collected and analysed by the Itad/CMI team. This interview is meant to elicit key informants' views on the quality and use of decentralised reviews and evaluations, and on the support and systems available to commission and manage decentralised evaluations.

The interview is expected to take between 30 to 45 minutes to complete. Your responses will be treated in a confidential manner and they will not be attributed. Your name will not appear in the report. However, we will only conduct five case studies, and details about the cases will appear in the report. Although we will interview several people involved in the review process, it could still be that your identity could be inferred by other people with detailed knowledge about the review.

If you have any questions or issues you would like to raise to the team leader, please email Nick Chapman at Itad Ltd (nick@kercombe.co.uk).

Background

1. How many Norad/MFA/Embassy reviews and decentralised evaluations have you commissioned or managed between 2009 and 2014: ____

The following questions will focus on the review **TITLE** that you commissioned/managed and completed in 2014.

2. How would you assess the quality of the review? Explain the reasons for this assessment.

Review planning – supporting and hindering factors

Please think back to the planning phase of this review. We are interested in identifying the main supporting and hindering factors for review (1) quality and (2) potential use.

3. In your opinion, during the review planning, what were the most important factors contributing towards having a high-quality review?

4. Similarly, in the planning phase, were there any main factors that hindered the quality of the review?

5. In your opinion, during the review planning, what were the most important factors contributing towards having a review with high potential use?

6. Similarly, in the planning phase, what do you think were the main factors that hindered having a high potential use?

7. For any of the hindering factors leading to lower potential for high-quality or high-use– did you do anything to address these hindrances? Explain

We also have some more concrete questions about the planning phase:

Criteria	Responses
Planning: Do you think the review was planned sufficiently in advance? Why/ why not?	
Procurement process: Was there time and space to negotiate the contract? Why/ why not?	
Purpose: Did the review have a clear purpose and clear review questions? Why/ why not?	
Scope and resourcing: Did the review scope match the resources provided? Why/ why not?	
Support: Did you need any external support for planning the review? If yes, is the grant management system providing such support?	
Review team: Did the review team have the right size, composition and skills? Why/ why not?	
Modality: In your opinion, did the review modality ¹⁸ influence review quality and potential use? If yes, how?	

¹⁸ Different modalities could include whether it was an internal review/evaluation (self-evaluation), external review/evaluation or joint reviews with the commissioner.

Review implementation – supporting and hindering factors

Please think back to the *implementation* phase of this review. Again, we are interested in identifying the main supporting and hindering factors for review (1) quality and (2) potential use.

8. In your opinion, during the implementation phase, what were the most important factors contributing towards having a *high-quality* review?

9. Similarly, in the implementation phase of the review, were there any hindrances to having a *high-quality* review?

10. In your opinion, during the implementation phase, what were the most important factors contributing towards having a review with *high potential use*?

11. Similarly, during implementation of the review, were there any factors that could have reduced its *potential use*?

12. For any of the factors that could have reduced the review's quality or use – did you do anything to *address these hindrances* during the implementation phase? Explain

We also have some more concrete questions about the implementation phase:

Criteria	Responses
Commissioner/manager time: Did you have sufficient time to manage the review? Why/ why not?	
Communication: How and to what extent did the extent and quality of communication with the review team influence review quality and potential use?	
Methods: Were the methods chosen appropriate to the review questions? Why were they chosen? Were there any significant limitations?	
Aid Administration evaluation policies, systems and tools: How and to what extent did the Aid administration evaluation policies, systems and tools influence evaluation quality and potential use?	
Management information system: How and to what extent did the quality of your own MIS influence review quality and potential use?	
Ownership: Was there sufficient ownership of the review by project implementers? Why/ why not?	

Overall

13. Overall, what went well/what didn't go well in the review process?

14. Are there any other important supporting or hindering factors that influenced quality and use of this review?

Review use

Now we would like to focus on the period after the review was completed and any follow-up or other use of the review.

15. Could you please elaborate on any aspects of how the review was used or followed up?

16. Were there any particular elements of the review report that were used and others not (e.g. findings, conclusions, recommendations, lessons)? Why/ why not?

17. Who used the review, how and for what purpose (to improve the intervention, to design a new phase, to design a new intervention, to inform strategy and policy, to inform funding decisions, etc.)

18. More specifically, did anyone in the Norwegian aid administration (Embassy staff, Norad, MFA?) use the review? If yes, explain how and for what purpose.

19. In your opinion, what was achieved when the review was used?

Recommendations

Finally, we would like you to provide us with your recommendations to improve the quality and use of reviews and decentralised evaluations in Norwegian Development Cooperation.

20. What would be your most important suggestions for improving quality of such reviews?

21. What would be your most important suggestions for improving use of such reviews?

Appendix 1b Review team leader interview guide

Itad Ltd. and Chr. Michelsen Institute have recently been commissioned by Norad's Evaluation Department to conduct an independent quality review of a sample of decentralised reviews and evaluations conducted in 2014. In order to supplement our assessment of the sampled reviews, we are conducting interviews with involved parties in a few selected case reviews. This is an independent assessment and your answers will be collected and analysed by the Itad/CMI team. This interview is meant to elicit key informants' views on the quality and use of decentralised reviews and evaluations, and on the support and systems available to commission and manage decentralised evaluations.

The interview is expected to take between 30 to 45 minutes to complete. Your responses will be treated in a confidential manner and they will not be attributed. Your name will not appear in the report. However, we will only conduct five case studies, and details about the cases will appear in the report. Although we will interview several people involved in the review process, it could still be that your identity could be inferred by other people with detailed knowledge about the review.

If you have any questions or issues you would like to raise to the team leader, please email Nick Chapman at Itad Ltd (nick@kercombe.co.uk).

Background

1. How many Norad/MFA/Embassy reviews and decentralised evaluations have you led or participated in between 2009 and 2014? (explain decentralised evaluations)

The following questions will focus on the review **TITLE** that you led in 2014.

2. How would you assess the quality of this review? Explain the reasons for this assessment.

Review planning – supporting and hindering factors

Please think back to the planning phase of this review. We are interested in identifying the main supporting and hindering factors for review (1) quality and (2) potential use.

3. In your opinion, during the review planning, what were the most important factors contributing towards having a *high-quality review*?

4. Similarly, in the planning phase, were there any main factors that hindered the quality of the review?

5. In your opinion, during the review planning, what were the most important factors contributing towards having a review with *high potential use*?

6. Similarly, in the planning phase, what do you think were the main factors that hindered having a high potential use?

7. For any of the hindering factors leading to lower potential for high-quality or high-use – did you do anything to address these hindrances? Explain

We also have some more concrete questions about the planning phase:

Criteria	Responses
Advance planning: Was the review planned sufficiently in advance? Why/ why not?	
Procurement process: Was there time and space to negotiate the contract? Why/ why not?	
Purpose: Did the review have a clear purpose and clear review questions? Why/ why not?	
Scope and resourcing: Did the review scope match the resources provided? Why/ why not?	
Methods: Were the methods chosen appropriate to the review questions? Why were they chosen? Were there any significant limitations?	
Review team: Did the review team have the right size, composition and skills? Why/ why not?	
Quality assurance: Did you have a quality assurance system in place for the review? If no, why not?	
Modality: In your opinion, did the review modality ¹⁹ influence review quality and potential use?	

Review implementation – supporting and hindering factors

¹⁹ Different modalities could include whether it was an internal review/evaluation (self-evaluation), external review/evaluation or joint reviews with the commissioner.

Please think back to the phase when you *implemented* this review. Again, we are interested in identifying the main supporting and hindering factors for review (1) quality and (2) potential use.

8. In your opinion, during the implementation phase, what were the most important factors contributing towards having a *high-quality* review?

9. Similarly, in the implementation phase of the review, were there any hindrances to having a *high-quality* review?

10. In your opinion, during the implementation phase, what was the most important factors contributing towards having a review with *high potential use*?

11. Similarly, during implementation of the review, were there any factors that could have reduced its *potential use*?

12. For any of the factors that could have reduced the review's quality or use – did you do anything to *address these hindrances* during the implementation phase? Explain

We also have some more concrete questions about the implementation phase:

Criteria	Comments
Commissioner time: In your opinion, did the review commissioner have sufficient time to manage the review? Why/why not?	
Commissioner skills: Do you think that the review commissioner have sufficient skills to manage the review? Why/why not?	
Communication: How and to what extent did the extent and quality of communication between the review commissioner and your review team influence review quality and potential use?	

Criteria	Comments
Norwegian aid administration evaluation policies, systems and tools: Are you aware of any policies, systems and tools of the commissioner that influenced the review quality and its potential use?	
Management Information System: Were there any MIS in use that influenced the review quality and potential use? If yes, elaborate (Norad, MFA, Embassy, partner)	
Ownership: In your opinion, was there sufficient ownership of the review by the review commissioners and project implementers? Why/ why not?	

Overall

13. Overall, what went well/what didn't go well in the review process?

14. Are there any other supporting or hindering factors that influenced quality and use of this review?

Review use

Now we would like to focus on the period after the review was completed and any follow-up or other use of the review, including presentations, communication and outreach activities. Often the review team would not know of the concrete follow-up, but please elaborate if you know of any such activities.

(Put DK for don't know)

15. Could you please elaborate on any aspects of how the review was used or followed up?

16. Were there any particular elements of the review report that were used and others not (e.g. findings, conclusions, recommendations, lessons)? Why/ why not?

17. Who used the review, how and for what purpose (to improve the intervention, to design a new phase, to design a new intervention, to inform strategy and policy, to inform funding decisions, etc.)

18. More specifically, did anyone in the Norwegian aid administration use the review (did any staff of the Embassy staff, Norad, MFA contact you after the review was completed?). If yes, explain how and for what purpose.

19. In your opinion, what was achieved when the review was used?

Recommendations

Finally, we would like you to provide us with your recommendations to improve the quality and use of reviews and decentralised evaluations in Norwegian Development Cooperation.

20. What would be your most important suggestions for improving quality of such reviews?

21. What would be your most important suggestions for improving use of such reviews?

Appendix 1c Review user (within the Norwegian aid administration) interview guide

Itad Ltd. and Chr. Michelsen Institute have recently been commissioned by Norad's Evaluation Department to conduct an independent quality review of a sample of decentralised reviews and evaluations conducted in 2014. In order to supplement our assessment of the sampled reviews, we are conducting interviews with involved parties in a few selected case reviews. This is an independent assessment and your answers will be collected and analysed by the Itad/CMI team. This interview is meant to elicit key informants' views on the quality and use of decentralised reviews and evaluations, and on the support and systems available to commission and manage decentralised evaluations.

The interview is expected to take between 30 to 45 minutes to complete. Your responses will be treated in a confidential manner and they will not be attributed. Your name will not appear in the report. However, we will only conduct five case studies, and details about the cases will appear in the report. Although we will interview several people involved in the review process, it could still be that your identity could be inferred by other people with detailed knowledge about the review.

If you have any questions or issues you would like to raise to the team leader, please email Nick Chapman at Itad Ltd (nick@kercombe.co.uk).

Background

The following questions will focus on the review **TITLE** that you participated in 2014.

1. How would you assess the quality of the review? Explain the reasons for this assessment.

Review process and quality

2. Overall, do you have any views about what went well/what didn't go well in the review process?

3. In your opinion, which factors influenced quality of this review?

4. In your opinion, which factors influenced the use of this review?

Review use

Now we would like to focus on the period after the review was completed and any follow-up or other use of the review, including presentations, communication and outreach activities.

5. Could you please elaborate on any aspects of how the review was used or followed up?

6. Were there any particular elements of the review report that were used and others not (e.g. findings, conclusions, recommendations, lessons)? Why/ why not?

7. Who used the review, how and for what purpose (to improve the intervention, to design a new phase, to design a new intervention, to inform strategy and policy, to inform funding decisions, etc.)

8. More specifically, did anyone in the Norwegian aid administration (Embassy, Norad, MFA) use the review? If yes, explain how and for what purpose.

9. In your opinion, what was achieved when the review was used?

Recommendations

Finally, we would like you to provide us with your recommendations to improve the quality and use of reviews and decentralised evaluations in Norwegian Development Cooperation.

10. What would be your most important suggestions for improving *quality* of such reviews?

11. What would be your most important suggestions for improving *use* of such reviews?

Appendix 2 Documentation reviewed

Benguela Current Commission End Review

Questionnaire with interview responses from review team leader
Questionnaire with interview responses from review commissioner
Questionnaire with interview responses from project team leader
Consultancy assignment agreement
Draft end review report
Invitation to tender
Email correspondence

Assistance in Management of Petroleum Resources, East Timor, End Review

Questionnaire with interview responses from review team leader
Questionnaire with interview responses from review commissioner
Questionnaire with interview responses from Norad sector specialist
Questionnaire with interview responses from Counsellor in Embassy South Africa
Tender document (redacted)
Emails between TL and Embassy
Response to email survey

155 Mid-Term Review National Rural and Renewable Energy Programme

Questionnaire with interview responses from review team leader and review user
Questionnaire with interview responses from grant manager
14-23426 FW_ NRREP – draft TOR for Mid-term Review 1415825_1_1
1301850-29 FW_ NRREP – draft TOR for Mid-term Review – – Final version_1338627_1_1
1301850-41 RE_ Differ_231114_Final – EC clean 1351934_1_1
1301850-43 Inge comments on DRAFT NRREP Mid-Term Review Aide Memoire for comments – 3 December 1351943_1_1
1301850-45 RE_ DRAFT NRREP Mid-Term Review Aide Memoire for comments – 3 December 1351953_1_1
1301850-46 RE_ DRAFT NRREP Mid-Term Review Aide Memoire for comments – 3 December 1351963_1_1
1301850-47 RE_ thank you very much 1351966_1_1
1301850-48 RE_ DRAFT NRREP Mid-Term Review Aide Memoire for comments 1351974_1_1
1301850-49 Final NRREP Mid-term Review Aide Memoire 1352003_1_1
1301850-52 Final BTOR – NRREP MTR Nov 2014 1366228_3_1
1301850-53 AVSLUTNINGSDOKUMENT 1403011_2_1
Final draft NRREP Mid-Term RAM – 18 December 2014
Final TOR for NRREP Mid-term review – 04112014
Mid-Term Review Mission Schedule as of 17–28 November 2014_V4_09112014...
Norwegian Embassy Comments on the MTR 2014-12-10
NRREP MTR Work Schedule Nov 2014
Stakeholder comments to draft Mid-term RAM
RE Evaluation of decentralised reviews (email correspondence)

122 Project review of ProVert Integrated Green Education Programme

Questionnaire with interview responses from Review Team leader

Questionnaire with interview responses from Grant Manager (with inputs from review user)

Email correspondence on additional responses from review user

1201261-126 MAMPIATY til amb seksj 1348460_1_1

1201261-169 Response letter to the Norad_Digni Assessment of Mampiaty PD 1460397_1_1

kommentarer fra Norad og Digni okt 2015

Svar fra amb seksjonen 19012015

Emails Rev Team Leader

184 End of Project Evaluation: Norway-Pakistan Partnership Initiative (carried out by Unicef)

Questionnaire with interview responses from Review Team leader

Questionnaire with interview responses from Grant Manager

Questionnaire with interview responses from potential Review User

Final Inception Report End of Project Evaluation Norway-Pakistan Partnership initiative

Annex 8 Online survey results

1.1 Geographic location: Please select one of the options below		
Answer options	Response %	Response count
Americas	0.0	0
Africa South of Sahara	26.5	9
Europe	5.9	2
Far East Asia	5.9	2
Middle East	0.0	0
South and Central Asia	11.8	4
HQ (Norad)	44.1	15
HQ (MFA)	5.9	2
<i>answered question</i>		34
<i>skipped question</i>		0

1.3 Employer		
Answer options	Response %	Response count
Embassy	41.2	14
MFA Regional Dept.	5.9	2
MFA UN/Humanitarian	2.9	1
Norad	50.0	17
<i>answered question</i>		34
<i>skipped question</i>		0

1.4 Gender		
Answer options	Response %	Response count
Male	55.9	19
Female	44.1	15
Prefer not to disclose	0.0	0
<i>answered question</i>		34
<i>skipped question</i>		0

1.5. How many years of experience do you have in Norwegian aid administration (MFA, embassies or Norad)? Indicate number of years

Answer options	Response %	Response count
Less than 1	0.0	0
1	0.0	0
2	14.7	5
3	8.8	3
4	5.9	2
5	5.9	2
6	5.9	2
7	0.0	0
8	2.9	1
9	0.0	0
10 or more	55.9	19
answered question		34
skipped question		0

2.1 Have you been involved in any mid-term, end reviews or evaluations in the last 4 years (since 2012)? Responding 'No' will close the survey

Answer options	Response %	Response count
Yes	79.4	27
No	20.6	7
answered question		34
skipped question		0

2.2 If yes, in what capacity? Please select all the relevant options

Answer options	Response %	Response count
Evaluation commissioner (i.e. the office or person who commissions review)	46.2	12
Grant manager or officer on the programme being evaluated	69.2	18
Other (please specify)	19.2	5
answered question		26
skipped question		8

2.3 How many since 2012?

Answer options	Response %	Response count
0	0.0	0
1	26.9	7
2	19.2	5
3	15.4	4

4	19.2	5
More	19.2	5
answered question		26
skipped question		8

2.4 Where does most of your guidance for commissioning reviews and evaluations come from? Please select all the relevant options

Answer options	Response %	Response count
My own professional experience	72.7	8
Guidance/manuals from Norwegian aid administration?	100.0	11
Guidance/manuals from other development agencies?	18.2	2
Line manager	18.2	2
Colleagues	72.7	8
Other (please specify)	9.1	1
answered question		11
skipped question		23

2.5 To what extent do you find the guidance you receive from the Norwegian aid administration useful for planning, implementing and using such reviews? Please rate on a scale from 1 'Not at all useful' to 4 'Very useful'

Answer options	Not at all useful			Very useful	Rating average	Response count
	0	2	9	0	2.82	11
answered question						11
skipped question						23

2.6 Through your involvement in mid-term, end reviews or evaluations, have you used the Grant Management Manual?

Answer options	Response %	Response count
Yes	63.6	7
No	18.2	2
Don't know or not applicable	18.2	2
answered question		11
skipped question		23

2.7 If yes, to what extent do you find the Grant management Manual useful? Please rate on a scale from 1 'Not at all useful' to 4 'Very useful'

Answer options	Not at all			Very useful	Don't know	Rating average	Response count
	0	3	3	1	0	2.86	7
answered question							7
skipped question							27

2.8 Please describe how you use the Grant Management Manual for commissioning or planning reviews?

From the 32 respondents, 5 responded to the question above. Their responses indicate that the grant management manual is used as a document to provide background and general information against which reviews can be commissioned or planned.

Three respondents described it being used to ensure that the necessary steps and issues of the review are taken and considered during the planning stage. One described it as a 'check list'.

2.9 Do you find any chapters more useful than others? Please select all relevant chapters

Answer options	Response %	Response count
Chapter 1: Key terms	0.0	0
Chapter 2: The grant management cycle	20.0	1
Chapter 3: The grant management regimes	60.0	3
Chapter 4: Activity descriptions	0.0	0
Chapter 5: Guides	60.0	3
answered question		5
skipped question		29

2.10 Are there any other manuals you use? Please specify title and author

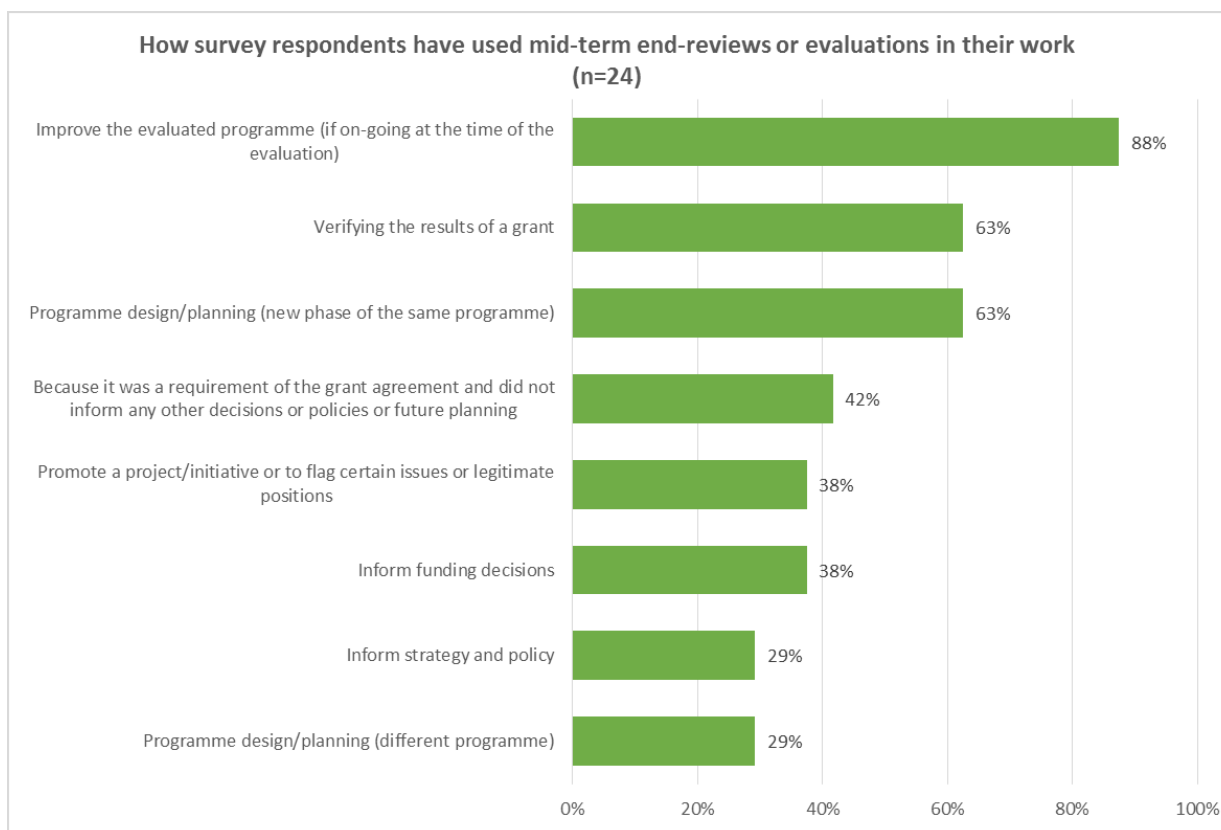
From the 32 respondents, 6 responded to the question above. These results indicate that other manuals are being used to guide the planning and commission of reviews.

Two alternative Norwegian manuals that are used are 'Rammevilkårsmalen' and 'Bistandshåndboka', the latter of which was described as 'still very valid although not officially in use any longer'.

Other sources are 'Norad's evaluation form and template for terms of reference', an 'evaluation manual' (it is not specified which manual), and a SIDA Evaluation Guidelines 'from the past'.

3.1 How have you used mid-term, end reviews or evaluations in your work? Please select all the appropriate options

Answer options	Response %	Response count
I have never used an evaluation report as part of my work	0	0
Programme design/planning (different programme)	29	7
Inform strategy and policy	29	7
Inform funding decisions	38	9
Promote a project/initiative or to flag certain issues or legitimate positions	38	9
Because it was a requirement of the grant agreement and did not inform any other decisions or policies or future planning	42	10
Programme design/planning (new phase of the same programme)	63	15
Verifying the results of a grant	63	15
Improve the evaluated programme (if ongoing at the time of the evaluation)	88	21
Other (please specify)		1
answered question		24
skipped question		10



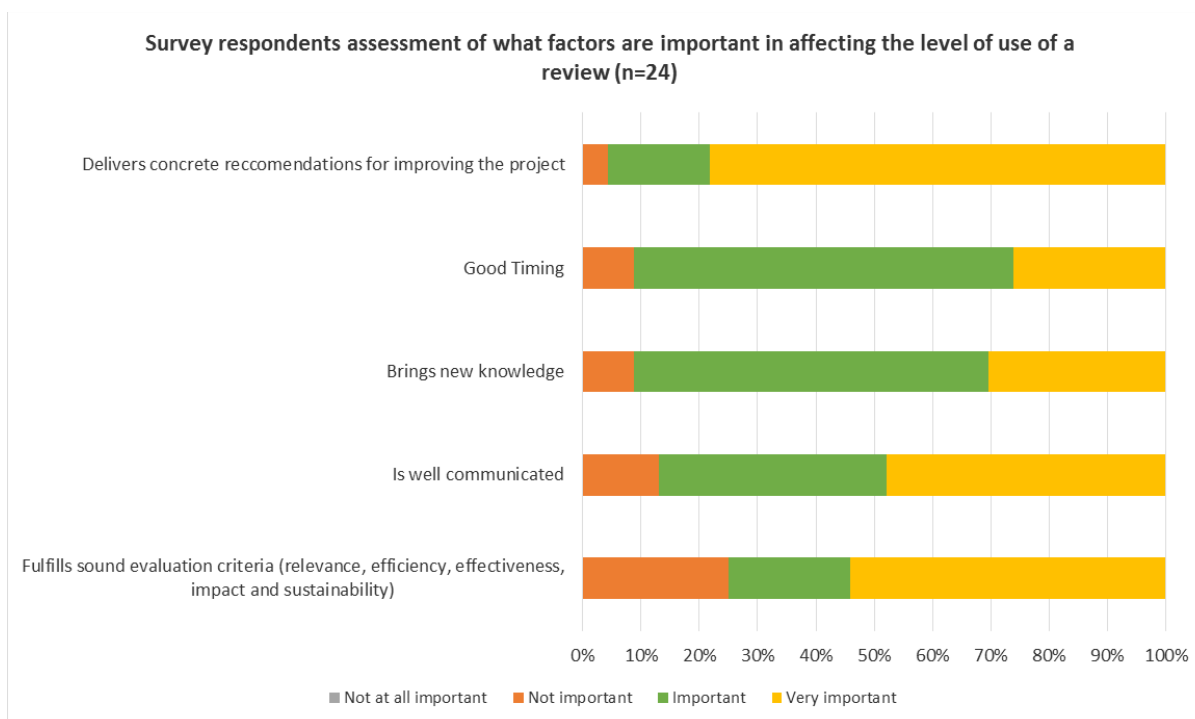
3.2 How would you rate the overall usefulness of mid-term, end reviews or evaluations reports? Please provide a rating from 1 'Not at all useful' to 4 'Very useful'

Answer options	Response %	Response count
Not at all useful	0.0	0
Not useful	8.3	2
Useful	54.2	13
Very useful	37.5	9
Don't know	0.0	0
Comment box (optional)		4
answered question		24
skipped question		10

3.3 How important are each of the following factors in affecting the level of use of a review? Please rate each component on a scale from 1 'Not at all important' to 4 'Very important'

	Not at all important		Not important		Important		Very important		Rating average	Response count
Meets TOR needs	0	0%	0	0%	12	50%	12	50%	3.50	24
Good timing	0	0%	2	9%	15	65%	6	26%	3.17	23
Fulfils sound evaluation criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability)	0	0%	6	25%	5	21%	13	54%	3.29	24
Is well communicated	0	0%	3	13%	9	39%	11	48%	3.35	23
Brings new knowledge	0	0%	2	9%	14	61%	7	30%	3.22	23

Delivers concrete recommendations for improving the project	0	0%	1	4%	4	17%	18	78%	3.74	23
Comment box (optional)										0
answered question										24
skipped question										10



3.4 Please name any particularly useful evaluations that you have seen, explaining why they were useful

Of the 32 respondents, 10 gave more information about particularly useful evaluations. Of the 11 projects mentioned within these, six relate to mid-term reviews. Indeed, a separate respondent simply stated that 'mid-term reviews, not evaluation' were useful. These mid-term reviews are:

- The mid-term review of the Lake Chilwa Basin Climate Change project. The respondent notes 'it was objective and also provide good recommendations'
- The mid-term review of Norway India Partnership Initiative, phase II, February 2016
- Mid-term review Fairtrade Norway
- Mid-term review of CIADP by Aan Associates, PAK-3014-05/023
- Mid-term review of Culture Cooperation with Aga Khan Cultural Services of Pakistan PAK-2738-09/050
- Mid-term review FDC in Cabo Delgado, which 'helped put the project on track'

A number of non-MTR reviews were also mentioned, either end of project or impact assessments. The primary reason given for the value of these projects were their importance for future planning, identifying lessons learned and identifying bottlenecks. These are:

- Impact assessment of Norwegian support to the energy sector in Zanzibar
- Impact assessment of Rural Electrification, Mozambique
- The evaluation of the Norwegian support to Haiti. The respondent stated that it 'was very useful when reviewing specific Norwegian-supported programmes within our field of expertise. Lessons

from this evaluation was also useful to keep in mind before a field visit to Haiti and during the planning of a new phase of an ongoing programme there’

- Review of JOIN’s sexual and gender based violence programme in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The respondent notes that ‘We were almost entering into an agreement, but upon reading Norad’s review of the programmes, we were able to probe further and as a result decided not to fund the organisation’
- MoNo culture project end review helped redesign future cooperation

3.5 From your experience, do you find there is clear communication from senior management that the use of reviews is important? Please provide a rating from 1 ‘not at all’ to 4 ‘yes, very much so’

Answer options	Response %	Response count	
1 – Not at all	4.2	1	
2	41.7	10	
3	41.7	10	
4 – Yes, very much so	12.5	3	
Comment box (optional)		2	
answered question			24
skipped question			10

3.6 How easy is it to find and access mid-term, end reviews or evaluations products (TORs, inception reports, Review Reports, Management responses) in the existing information management systems? Please provide a rating from 1 ‘very difficult’ to 4 ‘very easy’

Answer options	Response %	Response count	
1 – Very difficult	25.0	6	
2	25.0	6	
3	41.7	10	
4 – Very easy	8.3	2	
Comment box (optional)		3	
answered question			24
skipped question			10

3.7 Last time you were involved in a review, was that review adequately followed up by the aid administration?

Answer options	Response %	Response count	
Yes	83.3	20	
No	0.0	0	
Don’t know or Not applicable	16.7	4	
Comment (optional)		4	
answered question			24
skipped question			10

3.8 Do you think it is necessary to have mandatory follow-up procedure for reviews?

Answer options	Response %	Response count
Yes	79.2	19
No	4.2	1
Don't know	16.7	4
Comment (optional)		3
answered question		24
skipped question		10

3.9 Any recommendations to improve follow-up of reviews by the Norwegian aid administration?

Of the 32 respondents, 6 gave recommendations to improve the follow-up by Norad. A number of practical recommendations were given relating to organisational and management structures.

More time invested after the review

Two respondents stated that more time should be invested in management practices after reviews have been produced. One respondent suggests that more time should be allocated for 'preparation and communication of feedback', while another suggested that there should be a 'follow-up meeting' a certain amount of time after the review.

Better design of reviews

Two comments related to the design of the reviews. One respondent suggested developing more standardised TORs relating to specific issues. Another simply stated that Norad need to 'Make them useful in the first place, not just do them out of formal requirements'

Improved Norad management of reviews

One respondent stated that the management of the review process should be improved from Norad's end. They state that 'Backstop from Norad for advice and guidance in all stages of the review is very important but not always forthcoming'.

Increase the use of the reviews

A couple of comments shared the opinion that reviews should be better and more often used. As one respondent explained, these reviews 'should become tools for Norwegian aid to increase funding a programme in certain areas or topics'. Another respondent offered an example of how this could happen, suggesting that it should be 'mandatory to share the executive summary or a short overview of the review with relevant departments'.

4.1 To what extent are mid-term, end reviews or evaluations timely in relation to their intended use?

Answer options	Response %	Response count
1 No, not at all	0.0	0
2	29.2	7
3	70.8	17
4 Yes, very much so	0.0	0
answered question		24
skipped question		10

4.2 To what extent are the reviews and evaluations recommendations realistic and relevant?

Answer options	Response %	Response count
1 No, not at all	0.0	0
2	33.3	8
3	54.2	13
4 Yes, very much so	12.5	3
Don't know	0.0	0
answered question		24
skipped question		10

4.3 Do the reviews and mid-term, end reviews or evaluations tend to present general lessons learned that are relevant beyond the interventions under review?

Answer options	Response %	Response count
1 No, not all all	0.0	0
2	33.3	8
3	50.0	12
4 Yes, very much so	8.3	2
Don't know	8.3	2
answered question		24
skipped question		10

4.4 To what extent do you find the proposed review methodologies appropriate for the scope and objectives of the reviews and evaluation you have been involved with?

Answer options	Response %	Response count
1 No, not at all	0.0	0
2	16.7	4
3	66.7	16
4 Yes, very much so	8.3	2
Don't know	8.3	2
answered question		24
skipped question		10

4.5 Do mid-term reviews tend to show different levels of quality and use than end reviews? Please select all appropriate responses

Answer options	Response %	Response count
MTRs have higher quality	0.0	0
End reviews have higher quality	15.0	3
The same	50.0	10
MTRs have higher use	45.0	9
End reviews have higher use	5.0	1
The same	25.0	5
answered question		20
skipped question		14

4.6 To what extent do you find the time, budget and support adequate for the scope and objectives of the reviews and evaluations you have been involved with?

Answer options	Response %	Response count
1 No, not at all	0.0	0
2	30.4	7
3	60.9	14
4 Yes, very much so	8.7	2
answered question		23
skipped question		11

4.7 In your opinion, are larger projects and programme reviews and evaluations allocated more appropriate time, budget and support than reviews and evaluations of smaller projects and programme reviews?

Answer options	Response %	Response count
Yes	41.7	10
No	33.3	8
Don't know	25.0	6
Comment (Optional)		2
answered question		24
skipped question		10

4.8 Does the level of resources allocated to a review influence its quality?

Answer options	Response %	Response count
1 No, not at all	4.2	1
2	12.5	3
3	50.0	12
4 Yes, very much so	33.3	8
answered question		24
skipped question		10

4.9 Overall, what are the most important factors that support good quality in reviews?

Of the 32 respondents 17 answered the question listed above. Two factors in particular were identified by respondents as essential to enabling a good quality in the reviews: the TOR and the quality of consultants.

The quality of the consultants employed was mentioned in 14 of the 17 responses. A number of the respondents stated that the quality of consultants varies significantly, influencing the insightfulness and relevance of reviews. The quality of consultants was framed in a number of different ways, for example in terms of professionalism, quality, competence, being qualified, having insight, knowing the context, having the right skills and having the right background. Other qualities mentioned as important were being able to 'easily adapt and be objective', and 'understanding what the mandate is'. The second most important factor highlighted was the quality of the TOR. This was listed by eight of the respondents.

Other issues identified as important were the resources allocated to the review, and one respondent mentioned 'having sufficient time to follow up'. Communication was also seen as important and one respondent mentions the 'active participation of the embassy team. Another respondent describes the need for 'clearly divided roles and responsibility' and a further issue raised is having 'a well-organised round of commenting on draft report'.

4.10 Overall, what are the most important factors that support the eventual use of reviews?

Of the 32 respondents, 14 answered the question above. A wide range of factors were commonly identified as supporting the eventual use of the reviews. The factors mentioned the most were the timeliness of the report (mentioned four times) and the clarity of presentation (also mentioned four times). After this the 'quality' of the report, the 'relevance' of the recommendations and the importance of Norad's management were highlighted (all mentioned three times). Further issues raised were whether the recommendations were analysed and whether there was political support.

4.11 What factors reduce quality of reviews?

Of the 32 respondents, 15 answered the question above. The most common factor identified as reducing the quality of reviews was the weakness of the review team. This was described in terms of being incompetent, not knowing the context, not knowing the language, and 9 of the 15 respondents highlighted this issue. The second most significant issue highlighted (mentioned four times) was the lack of time available for the review (and one reviewer specified that a lack of time in insecure zones was a problem). The third most significant issue (mentioned three times) was unclear or weak conclusions/recommendations. After this a number of issues were identified less frequently, including poor logic, poor understanding of objectives, poor presentation, that the review is done for the wrong reasons (i.e. ticking a box), lack of budget, unclear TOR and inadequate support from Norad.

4.12 What factors reduce the use of reviews?

Of the 32 respondents, 14 answered the question above. The issue most identified as reducing the use of reviews were changing priorities of the donor such as no further funding being allocated (four mentions). A number of secondary issues identified include poor quality team, unclear conclusions/recommendations, poor quality report, lack of acceptance by partner organisation and the report not being shared/difficult to access (all two mentions). A final issue highlighted was the report being too long.

5.1 Do you have any additional comments?

Of the 32 respondents only two provided additional comments. These relate to the dissemination of results and the resources allocated to reviews and are quoted in full below:

- We could make better use of reviews by disseminating results at section level in Norad. I find that the most interesting results from MTRs and End reviews are results and recommendations at the project level.
- Resources for reviews and evaluations appear to be reducing which runs counter to needs and building of sound body of knowledge and lessons.

Annex 9 Lessons learned from Norad's reviews

9.1 Summary

The decentralised reviews and evaluations examined through the sample taken offer a number of lessons that have wider applicability both for Norad's work and for international development practice more broadly. These lessons have been categorised here as relating to programmatic design and delivery, or to specific themes. Lessons with regards to programmatic design and delivery are the value and pitfalls of partnerships for delivery and the significance of management in relation to programme design, and finally the relationship between Norad and partner organisations. Two more thematic lessons also emerged relating first to the use of media and second to the dynamics of peace building and political transitions.

9.2 Programmatic design and delivery

The value and pitfalls of partnership in design and delivery

Lessons regarding partnerships emerged from a number of the project reviews. The aspect to partnerships deemed important and of wider applicability relate to diverse areas including the significance of partnership for sustainability, the opportunities of high-level government involvement, and the value of partnership with complementary organisations. Alongside this, however, the consequences of weak partnerships were also highlighted, as is explained below.

In the case of the REDD+Initiatives in Costa Rica, the external assessment conducted highlighted the importance that all parties have a common understanding of project design. They note that interpretation of the project should be shared and not according to particular opinions or purposes. They note the lesson from this is that everyone working on the project must have complete mastery of the designed scope in the project and how this is integrated as a unit.

The same report also highlighted how the creation of what they term a 'bi-institutional' team demonstrates how knowledge can be maximised. A characteristic of this is that each institution contributes based on their skills, experience and technical and scientific knowledge. In the case of this project, they note that the formation of a team from two institutions with regional recognition, allows that the results obtained are subject to attention from major players in Central America.

A further lesson of wider applicability relating to partnership comes from the Lake Chilwa Basin Climate Change Adaptation Programme. The mid-term review notes how the programme was set up with strong involvement of Districts Planning Directors participating in the PMC and District Commissioners and representatives at PS level from relevant ministries in the PSC. They note that this has enabled the programme to feed directly into policy making. It also ensures alignment with existing and emerging national policies and priorities, and the PSC may help to formulate relevant research questions to the programme, further strengthening the linkage.

Alongside these lessons learned however, a number of projects highlighted possible weaknesses within partnerships, and recognising these is of wider relevance for Norad's work. In the case of the Norwegian democracy support via political parties programme, Arbeiderpartiet (the Norwegian labour party) described how their project in South Africa with the African National Congress never took off because the responsible person in the international department of the Women's League moved out. This case highlights how project that are not deeply enough embedded in the partner organisation risk not surviving

personnel changes. In addition to this, in the case of the project to strengthen the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) in the Zambézia province, Mozambique, the report highlighted the lack of ownership of the project at the provincial level. This resulted in a limited willingness or capacity to secure the sustainability of the project through a proper coordination with other donor-funded projects in the health sector.

The importance of management as well as models

A number of reports highlighted how the quality of programme management is absolutely critical to programme success. Even when a project is well designed, it is the way in which it is managed that determines the outcomes.

Reviewers of the REDD+Initiatives in Costa Rica argue that while the project design is based on a deep and relevant conceptual discussion, and with a well-constructed logical framework, these are no guarantee that the project implementation runs through as it had been designed. The lesson they draw from this is that it requires a driver who aligns all parties and gives coherence and consistency to products, as defined in the objectives and expected outcomes.

In a similar vein, the mid-term review for Lake Chilwa Basin Climate Change Adaptation Programme highlights how the programmatic success relied very heavily on field level staff being sufficiently incentivised. Most practical work is completed by the districts officers and extension workers, however direct economic incentives for government staff to participate in the programme are limited to lunch-allowances. They explain that the possibility of increased training and participation in other events, as well as having access to resources to implement actions in the field, have increased interest of both extension workers and staff at FRIM and in the district offices.

Relationships with between delivery organisations and Norad

The 'Review of Norwegian democracy support via political parties' offered a significant number of insights into the relationship between Norad and the organisations they fund. These are highlighted below as they may be of wider programmatic relevance.

Constructive dynamics to relationship with Norad:

- The Christian Democrats report that cooperation with Nordic colleagues has been particularly valuable in the process of building own competence. Also the experiences from bringing regional party organisations directly into project cooperation has been summed up as positive because it enables closer personal relations across cooperating parties. The benefits from linking up with ongoing processes in partner parties is another lesson mentioned by the Christian Democrats.
- Høyre finds it very useful to keep in close contact with the Norwegian embassies and has appreciated the practical guidance offered by Norad.
- Young Christian Democrats' note that the stricter demands and close follow-up provided by Norad has structured their work.
- Sosialistisk Venstreparti (Socialist Left Party) finds that being under Norad has the advantage of forcing the projects to focus on results. This makes the party not only concentrate on activities but on long term effects and impacts. Therefore, SV argues in favour of applying Norad's focus and technical standards.

Problematic dynamics to the relationship with Norad:

- In the case of the Christian Democrats the report notes that although being under Norad is very useful to discipline project management, it could also be problematic. For instance in the case of authorities in the post-Soviet country making the project activities a problem (e.g. by complaining to the Norwegian government) then the MFA would need to be involved by through commenting or engaging more deeply. The Christian Democrats have some but fairly limited contact with the relevant MFA departments for their projects. It is likely that increasing this contact would be a good way to prepare for possible political controversy.
- Høyre finds Norad to expect too much in terms of cooperation across Norwegian party lines.

9.3 Themes

The significance of media

A number of programme reviews highlighted the importance of the media in further their work. In the case of the Benguela Current Commission (BCC) Science Programme, the report notes how building up a media and international presence is important to gain political respect and support beyond the core sectors of the organisation and with international and local communities.

In the case of the Lake Chilwa Basin Climate Change Adaptation Programme, the report notes how radio can be an effective means of involving wider stakeholders. The report notes that efficient communication is very important for a programme covering such a wide geographical area and such a diverse range of stakeholders. The Chanco Community Radio has so far proved to be a very important tool for cross-basin communication, coordination and learning. The approach with Radio Listeners Clubs making local, context relevant programmes has made the radio highly appreciated in the communities, and give them a strong voice and clear feeling of ownership to the radio and the programmes broadcasted from it. In the view of the review team, this impact is partly due to the local character of the radio, a national radio may not be able to have the same impact.

Lessons regarding peace building/political transitions

A set of lessons also emerged from the review relating to peace building and political transitions. These focus on a number of areas, including the potential for future lessons learned in Palestine, the value of political monitoring, difficulties working in post-soviet countries, and measuring outcomes in such contexts.

In the case of the Palestinian Negotiations Support Project the evaluation team sees scope for more systematic international learning and exchange on negotiation support processes, whether in states under occupation, in inter-state conflicts where capacities are asymmetrical (e.g. South Sudan-Sudan) or in intra-state conflicts where state governments are negotiating with rebel movements or opposition groups (e.g. Syria). The report notes that without the need to convey confidential information, the wider international peace building community could learn a great deal from the lessons provided by Palestine Negotiations Support Project's work, especially in terms of the design and set-up of the project, and adaptations made over the years.

In the context of the Monitoring Nepal's Peace Process and Constitution Drafting programme, the real potential value in political transition monitoring, even though specific and directly attributable policy change in the national context is likely to be limited. They note that long term commitment and relationship building, well researched information (especially from communities not within the 'capital bubble'), accurate but timely and analysis, and lack of prescription are likely to be the characteristics of

an effective project. Dissemination and communication will also be key, and need to be an integral part of any project that is given sufficient weight and priority throughout.

The Norwegian democracy support via political parties highlights difficulties working in post-Soviet contexts, noting how there are few opportunities for political work. Nonetheless, they explain that there are political activists in the country eager to learn the skills needed to be ready when democracy is introduced. A lesson from the Arab Spring is that a political upheaval without organisations democratically prepared stand at risk of failing. In this perspective the Christian Democrats' activities with its counterpart provides a preparation to play a role during and upon democratisation of the country. As of now, non-regime groups are hardly allowed to participate in elections. Some independent candidates are allowed to run, and some of them share the Christian democratic values of the Christian Democrats' counterpart. This way some of the skills acquired through the trainings with the Christian Democrats are immediately applicable. The project does not only aim at organisational strengthening of the party but also strengthening the party's communication skills. Consciousness raising and politicisation among ordinary people is strategically important in a country where the word 'politics' is associated with personal power hoarding and enrichment.

A final lesson of potential wider applicability also comes from the Norwegian democracy support via political parties programme. The Young Christian Democrats asks whether in countries with politically repressive regimes what are usually considered project deliveries, such as seminars and workshops, may be considered outcomes in themselves, given the nature of the environment and the significance of such events.

Annex 10 Best practice examples

As requested in the TOR, a number of best practice examples have been identified for TORs and reviews. These are included in Table 1 below.

Table 10 Best practice examples of terms of reference

ID	Title	Best practices	Overall rating
16	End Review of SAF 2866 SAF-12/006 Benguela Current Commission (BCC) Science Programme, Institutional Assessment of BCC and Appraisal of New Application	Prepared in consultative way between embassy, Norad and project. Evaluation questions are well-grouped by objective.	3.24
172	Evaluation External Final Proyecto: Fortalecimiento de las Capacidades Institucionales Para la Gestión Ambiental y el Ordenamiento Territorial de los Municipios Ubicados en la Sub Cuenca III de la Cuenca sur del Lago de Managua Amusclam	Contains a comprehensive background and context section which thoroughly describes the intervention being reviewed, and what is beyond the scope of the review. It also clearly sets out what is expected of the consultant(s) in terms of deliverables and time frames.	2.94
218	Learning from Phase One: Promoting Women's Political Leadership and Governance in India and South Asia	Explains the core purpose of the review well, and includes a clear objective. The review questions are clear, explicit, tailored to the project and respond well to the focus of the review. The descriptions of methodology and deliverables also provide a sound basis on which the review should be conducted.	2.94
244	End Review: Assistance in Management of Petroleum Resources, Phase II – 2008–13	Provides a reasonable basis for a review as the objectives and review questions are clear. The scope of the review is explicit and states what will/will not be included in the review. There is a good level of guidance regarding the methodology to be taken.	2.88

Table 11 Best practice examples of reviews

ID	Title	Best practices	Overall rating
18	Mid-term Review and Appraisal of Plans for Future Work Norwegian-supported	The review score was the highest rated review in the sample. This review is clearly structured, offers detailed and well thought out findings, linking very	3.62

ID	Title	Best practices	Overall rating
	Conservation Farming Unit Programmes.	clearly to conclusions and recommendations. It should be considered best practice among the reviews sampled. It is notably strong where other reviews are weak, for example in offering a clear explanation and justification for the methodology taken.	
184	End of Project Evaluation: Norway-Pakistan Partnership Initiative – NPPI.	This report is an example of a well-considered and designed review, with findings clearly explained in the report in sufficient depth. The conclusions build from the findings and the recommendations are systematic. The methodology is well explained in terms of the approach used (tool guidelines for example). The review demonstrates an understanding of ethical considerations which is also a strength of the report.	3.59
273	Mid-term Review: Health Transition Fund in Zimbabwe.	Overall, this is a clear report which uses multiple lines of evidence and thus provides substantial, evidence-based findings. The methodology is appropriate and thorough, and methods are clearly linked to evaluation questions. The relevant OECD DAC criteria are understood and appropriated assessed. For the most part the recommendations are clear and timed.	3.46
135	2014 Review of Norlam	This review represents a well conducted review with a good depth of analysis and findings, presented clearly, building logically from findings to recommendations. The methodology – like many reviews – is not sufficiently explained however.	3.17
124	The Mid-Term Review of the Lake Chilwa Basin Climate Change project. The respondent notes ‘it was objective and also provided good recommendations’.	Most elements of this report are strong, most importantly the overall focus is clear, and the findings, conclusions and recommendations are insightful and respond clearly to the TOR. This is particularly strong given the diversity of project components. There are, however, weaknesses. The methodology is inadequately explained, leaving the reader more reliant on their interpretation.	2.97

There were several other cases mentioned by the online survey respondents. Only one of these was included in the sample (review case 124). The others area cases were not included in the evaluations sample. These are grouped into MTRs and non-MTRs. The MTR cases mentioned were:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MTR of Norway India Partnership Initiative, phase II, February 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTR Fairtrade Norway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-Term Review of CIADP by Aan Associates, PAK-3014-05/023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-Term Review of Culture Cooperation with Aga Khan Cultural Services of Pakistan PAK-2738-09/050
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-term review FDC in Cabo Delgado, which ‘helped put the project on track’

A number of non-MTR reviews were also mentioned, either end of project or impact assessments. The primary reason given for the value of these projects were their importance for future planning, identifying lessons learned and identifying bottlenecks. These were:

Impact assessment of Norwegian support to the energy sector in Zanzibar
Impact assessment of Rural Electrification, Mozambique
The evaluation of the Norwegian support to Haiti. The respondent stated that it ‘was very useful when reviewing specific Norwegian-supported programmes within our field of expertise. Lessons from this evaluation was also useful to keep in mind before a field visit to Haiti and during the planning of a new phase of an ongoing programme there’
Review of JOIN’s SGBV programme in the DRC. The respondent notes that ‘We were almost entering into an agreement, but upon reading Norad’s review of the programmes, we were able to probe further and as a result decided not to fund the organisation’
MoNo culture project end review helped redesign future cooperation