



Evaluation of Public Policies by Supreme Audit Institutions, Best practices and experiences

A study of the Moroccan Experience

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Summary

Public policy Evaluation is gaining more field in the agenda of the Supreme Audit Institution in Morocco since 2011, especially after the recent amendments of the Moroccan Constitution which established an advanced relationship between the Court of Accounts (CAs) and the Parliament based on cooperation and assistance in the domains related to the control of public finance, legislation, and evaluation. Such situation has actually increased the challenges facing the Moroccan SAI in relation to this kind of assistance which aims to improve the decision-making process of public managers.

Considered as a new culture in Morocco, this practice started at the beginning of the twenty-first century and has been strengthened through the deep changes that have been introduced in the public management system that shifted from a system of management by means to a system of management by objectives (MBO), besides witnessing changes in audit and control types.

Basically, public policy analysis is an original function of the Parliament according to the Moroccan Constitution, as it is the body from which the Executive obtains the confidence to implement its program. However, regarding the limits of evaluation work carried out by parliamentary representatives, the Parliament can address requests to some other constitutional institutions, including the Supreme Audit Institution to conduct evaluation of public policies, programs and projects.

Besides this, it is to be mentioned here that the Moroccan legislator has entrusted the SAI since 2002, with the task of public projects' evaluation. This empowerment constituted an opportunity and a starting point for evaluating both public policies and programs, given the fact at a program or project constitutes one of the public policy components, which by its turn can be a set of coherent and interconnected programs and projects.

Within this framework, the SAI has therefore started issuing a new generation of reports dealing with evaluating and analyzing public policies and programs and providing necessary information and adequate and timely answers to public managers responsible for these policies in order to help them establish appropriate public policies and programs.

To face the challenges raised by public policy evaluation, whether in terms of professional expertise or in terms of financial resources allocated to them, Supreme Audit Institutions are invited to improve their performance regarding this type of tasks, especially through adopting some measures which aim is to structure their relations with the Parliament as it has the original mandate to conduct public policy evaluation, provide the necessary technical support and training to the evaluation teams, and coordinate with stakeholders and different partners habilitated to conduct such work to avoid duplication and overlap.

Introduction

Public Policy Evaluation is a strategic area of interest for the Court of Accounts, as the Supreme Audit Institution in the Kingdom of Morocco. This field has gained increasing attention of the SAI since 2011, especially after amending the Moroccan Constitution that established a new relationship between the institution responsible for public finance oversight and the Parliament based on networking, cooperation, and assistance.

In fact, the democratic development witnessed by Morocco since the 1990s, has strengthened the powers of the Parliament in controlling the action of the Government. This evolution has been crowned by entrusting the Parliament with a new function related to the evaluation of public policies, according to the Article 70 of the 2011 Constitution of the Kingdom of Morocco.

In parallel with this mandate that falls within the domain of the Parliament, the Court of Accounts is entrusted with the task of public projects evaluation, according to its establishing law. The Moroccan Court is also required, by Article 148 of the Constitution, to assist the Parliament in the fields related to public finance oversight, and respond to its questions and consultations in the domain of legislation, control and evaluation related to public finance.

Thus, the importance of this topic consists in the challenges facing the Supreme Audit Institution in assisting the Parliament in performing its functions related to the evaluation of public policies, in order to control the action of the Government and improve the decision-making process of public managers.

This subject raises many questions including: How does the Supreme Audit Institution conduct public policies, programs and projects? How does it respond to Parliament's requests related to public policy evaluation? What are the resources and tools necessary for the SAI to perform this type of mandates led either at the request of the legislative institution or by its own initiative?

To address this issue, we will adopt a research methodology that combines between a legal and a field-based approach that aims at the same time to highlight both the conceptual and legal framework of public policy evaluation, and underline the achievements of the supreme audit institution (the Court of Accounts) in the field of public policies and programs' evaluation through its reports related to this mandate.

To provide a comprehensive understanding of this topic, the first section will focus on defining the concepts and basics of public policy analysis. The second section will address the constitutional and legal foundations of public policy evaluation in Morocco and the methodological framework adopted by the Court of Accounts in performing this work. The third section will present the outputs, best practices and experiences of the SAI, and ends with suggesting ways to improve and enhance the performance of supreme audit institutions in the field of evaluation, based on both the Moroccan experience and comparative experiences.

Section One: Conceptual Definition of Public Policy Evaluation

Approaching public policy evaluation raises many questions about the meaning and the foundations of this complex concept and how to distinguish it from other similar concepts. Such attempt requires in a first step to define this concept, especially from the perspective of both researchers and scholars, and to differentiate it from the concept of general policy and public programs, as well as to identify the entities responsible for formulating public policies.

1- The Concept of Public Policy

Public policies find their origin in the recognition of a social, cultural, economic, or environmental phenomena or problem, such as unemployment, pollution and climate change, which require a strategic planning and conception to get resolved, since “In an ideal world, there would be no need constantly to be introducing new social programs and fine-tuning existing ones and, consequently, hardly any evaluation activities”.¹

▪ Public Policy vs. General Policy

A “Public Policy” refers to a set of coherent and synchronized decisions and procedures designed and established by a public authority to resolve national problems or address potential challenges and threats.

Unlike the “General Policy” which refers to political positions and programs adopted by the Government or the State by all its components, and which is implemented through taking major political decisions or through the enactment of laws, the “Public Policy” represents higher levels of planning in the field of development within the country. It is designed in harmony with the General Policy as determined by the governmental program, and implemented to resolve the issues which face the country, whether related to weak development, economic growth, social vulnerability, or unemployment (...). The design process of such a policy aims to set its practical goals and associated programs, and usually includes sectoral or horizontal measures and plans embedded within these programs.²

A public policy may cover various sectors such as tourism, agriculture and industry, and include a range of activities like education, social security, healthcare, housing, transportation, energy, water and environment. It can be either central or local, general or specific, simple or complex, broad or narrow (...). Its design is shaped by the influence of various stakeholders including the targeted groups.

▪ Definition and Characteristics of Public Policies in Academic literature

Academic studies and researches present a variety of definitions which focus on three major elements: the existence of a public authority, the identification of social, environmental or economic problems, and the presentation of solutions to address these issues.³

¹ - Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, Howard E. Freeman, Evaluation a Systematic Approach, 5th edition, Sage, 1993, P. 57

² - House of Representatives, Framework of Public Policy Evaluation, Morocco, P.33

³ - See : P. Knoepfel, C. Larrue, F. Varone, Analyse et Pilotage des Politiques Publiques, 2006, P. 28

For "Thomas Dye", a public policy is what the State or the Government chooses to do or not to do.⁴ This definition shows that a public policy does not only include positive actions, but also negative action when the Government is unable to act, due to legislative, financial or cultural constraints, or due to the adoption of a political position that aims not to intervene in order to maintain the status quo.⁵

For "Yves Mény" and "Jean-Claude Thoenig", a public policy is a program of action initiated by one or several public authorities to deal with a societal issue or a specific territory. It is the result of the action or activity carried out by any authority that possesses public power and governmental legitimacy.

By his turn, the Canadian researcher "Vincent Lemieux" defines public policy as a set of activities undertaken by political bodies to resolve public problems faced by the society.⁶

In the same context, "Peter Knoepfel", "Corinne Larrue," and "Frédéric Varone" unanimously define public policy as a series of coordinated and coherent decisions or activities taken by several actors, both public and private, who have varying resources, institutional relationships and interests, and which aim to resolve a common problem considered as so from a political reference. According to the same researchers, these activities lead to taking tangible and formal decisions of a binding nature, aiming to change the behavior of the targeted social groups considered to be the origin of this common problem, and that is for the benefit of the social groups that assume the negative impacts of this problem.⁷

From these definitions, we can deduce that a public policy has some distinguishing characteristics. First, it is not an isolated action but a set of coherent strategic decisions, procedures and programs that are formulated, coordinated and implemented by one or more public bodies, because isolated actions, unlike coherent actions, cannot constitute a public policy.⁸ Secondly, public policy is a framework for the Government's or public authority's actions. Thirdly, public policy provides answers to a public issue or phenomenon and sets practical objectives to resolve and remedy to this societal issue.

▪ **Public Policy and Public Program**

The determination of the conceptual framework of public policies requires distinguishing between "public policy" and "public program" and identifying the differences and similarities between them.

A program is a coherent and organized set of objectives and activities, and a set of both human and financial resources, and data, gathered to provide a specific public product and service, or find solutions to specific problems.

⁴ - See : Dye, T.R. Understanding public policy, New Jersey : Perason 14th Edition, 2012

⁵ - House of Representatives, Framework of Public Policy Evaluation, Morocco, P.51

⁶ - Lemieux, V. L'étude des Politiques Publiques, Québec : Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2é Edition, 2002

⁷ - P. Knoepfel, C. Larrue, F. Varone, Analyse et Pilotage des Politiques Publiques, 2é edition, Zurich/Chu 2006, P.29.

⁸- Jean-Yves Bion, Partick Moquay, Balisage d'une Démarche d'Evaluation de Politique Publique, CERTU, 2004, P. 34

A program may be considered as a constituent of a public policy, because strategic programs designed and implemented by governmental sectors are theoretically within the framework of public policies. Conversely, a public policy may consist of a set of coordinated and interconnected programs. Consequently, a public policy is broader than a program and may have a horizontal dimension encompassing two or more government sectors.⁹

▪ **Actors responsible for designing Public Policies**

Public policies have a political dimension as they express a political will resulting from power relations between the Government and different stakeholders, including the targeted groups. Generally, it is the executive authority -governments and public institutions and enterprises under its supervision- which is supposed to establish and implement public policies, as it is mandated by representatives of citizens to manage their affairs and respond to their demands and needs.

However, public policies are the result of the work of the State as a whole, and not just the Government, as they are manifested in the form of development plans, programs, and projects, whether be them programmed by a single ministerial sector, or multiple government sectors, or else through public institutions and enterprises. For example, a health policy involves many sectors responsible for health care, environment, pharmaceutical industries, equipment and infrastructure services, in addition to local authorities, hospitals, and other relevant public institutions.¹⁰

A review of the Moroccan experience reveals that the Government is responsible, according to the Constitution, for preparing the general policy of the state before presenting it to the Council of Ministers, chaired by His Majesty the King as the highest authority in the country,¹¹ making it binding to all components of the state.

The Government is also responsible for preparing public and sectoral policies, which are adopted according to the same process of general policy mentioned above. Additionally, the Government establishes its program in the fields of economic, social, environmental, cultural, and foreign policy,¹² within the framework of a strategic hierarchy which guarantees the consistency of these policies with the general orientations of the State. These general orientations are broader and more comprehensive than the governmental program in terms of their subject matter and time framework, which usually exceeds the governmental term. In the same context, the Parliament also, in some cases, enacts laws that provide visions and frameworks for the fundamental objectives of the activity of the state.¹³

⁹- House of Representatives, Framework of Public Policy Evaluation, Morocco, PP.29, 56

¹⁰- House of Representatives, Framework of Public Policy Evaluation, Morocco, P. 31

¹¹- Article 92 of the Moroccan Constitution, Official Journal n.° 5964 bis, July 30, 2011

¹²- Article 88 of the Moroccan Constitution, Official Journal n.° 5964 bis, July 30, 2011

¹³- Article 71 of the Moroccan Constitution, Official Journal n.° 5964 bis, July 30, 2011

2- The Conceptual Framework of Public Policy Evaluation

A review of academic studies and researches reveals the use of various concepts to refer to public policy evaluation, as a broad concept that encompasses different types of studies, analysis and evaluations, which may serve different purposes at different stages of a program or policy's life.¹⁴ Therefore, the determination of the conceptual framework of this concept becomes necessary to avoid any problems that may be caused by the interpretation of these concepts.

To define this concept, we will consequently try to determine its content based both on scholars' views and positions, and on the official definitions included in the regulating laws and manuals of supreme audit institutions. Defining this concept, requires also outlining its purpose and importance, its different types with regard to the stages of a public policy, and its criteria.

▪ Public Policy Evaluation from the Perspective of Scholars

A review of academic studies shows that many concepts are often used to refer to the evaluation process, with regard to the auditing models especially the Anglo-Saxon model and the Francophone one. While the first model widely uses the concept "Analysis" to refer to this process, the second uses the term "Evaluation" to refer to the same process. In all cases, both terms are used to refer to the same thing.

In this context, scholars and researchers present a variety of definitions which differ based on their different views and perspectives. However, they all emphasize in general on the same mechanisms, methods, and objectives of Evaluation, which aims to assess the objectives of the public policy and measure its impact.

For some authors- *Peter Knoepfel, Corinne Larrue, and Frédéric Varone*¹⁵ public policy evaluation involves describing, understanding, and explaining the logic of a policy, of its outputs and outcomes on the targeted groups, as well as understanding the behavior and actions of public actors throughout all the stages of the policy.

According to "Peter Rossi," "Mark Lipsey," and "Howard Freeman," analyzing public policy is to measure and assess the design, planning, and implementation of Government interventions.¹⁶ According to the same authors, public policy analysis is a set of research activities necessary for designing, implementing, and appraising the utility of social programs."¹⁷

It should be mentioned that some definitions emphasize on the act of measuring the effects of the policy, with distinction between the specific effects of the public action and the various effects resulting from external factors. This is the case of the French definition appeared in 1985 in the report of the General Planning Delegation, known as the "Delau Report," which states that "Evaluating a public policy is determining and measuring its specific effects."¹⁸

¹⁴- Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, Howard E. Freeman, *Evaluation a Systematic Approach*, 5th edition, Sage, 1993

¹⁵ - P. Knoepfel, C. Larrue, F. Varone, *Analyse et Pilotage des Politiques Publiques*, 2^e édition, Zurich/Chu 2006

¹⁶ - Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, Howard E. Freeman, *idem*, P. 5

¹⁷- Peter H. Rossi, Mark W. Lipsey, Howard E. Freeman, *idem*, P. ix

¹⁸- « Evaluer une politique, c'est reconnaître et mesurer ses effets propres » : M. DELEAU et al., *Evaluer les Politiques Publiques : méthodes, déontologies, organisation. Rapport pour le Commissariat General du Plan*, Paris, la Documentation Française, 1986.

Other definitions focus, however, on the origin of the word "Evaluation" and its phonetic structure, which includes the word "Value," since there are referential values that govern the background of all evaluation processes and methods. This is the case of the definition given in 1989 by "Patrick Viveret" in his report presented to the French Prime Minister, which states that "Evaluating a public policy is making a judgment on its value."¹⁹

The term "value judgment" that refers to the relationship between something and its model, means that this judgment is made based on the perceptions, representations and assessments of the person issuing the judgement. Unlike factual judgments that express the nature of things, value judgments express the value we attach to these things (Émile Durkheim).²⁰

This last definition raises the issue related to the limitations of the evaluation methodology. In fact, making a value judgment on this or that policy depends on the actor conducting the evaluation process, and on the value system that governs his work, because, as Émile Durkheim argues, the value of something varies from one person to another.

However, if the value judgment reflects approximate assessments, we can enhance the reliability of this judgment by using evaluation manuals that provide various mechanisms and methods leading to more reliable judgments. This can be done through dividing the judgment into several components according to the relationship model of causality or through founding such judgement on quantitative elements when the subject of evaluation is measurable.²¹

Actually, evaluation aims to issue a reasonable and reliable judgment on the success of the policy or on the foundations on which this policy is based. It is this reasoning that helps decision-makers to make the final decision about corrective or reforming actions, or about whether to continue or abandon the public policy under evaluation.

▪ **Public Policy Evaluation according to laws, legislations and manuals**

There are many official definitions adopted by the institutions mandated to perform the task of public policy evaluation, especially supreme audit institutions and national parliaments.

In this context, the Moroccan Parliament has adopted a definition of the evaluation function, that focuses on the purpose of the evaluation process, its method and methodology. In fact, the article 288 from Chapter Seven of the internal policy of the House of Representatives, stipulates that "The evaluation carried out by the House of Representatives aims to conduct precise researches and analysis in order to identify the results of public policies and programs, and measure their impact on the targeted groups and society."²² This definition shows that the Moroccan Parliament uses the concept "Analysis" and "Research" as functional tools for conducting the evaluation work, which are concepts strongly used in the Anglo-Saxon culture.

¹⁹- "Evaluer une politique, c'est former un jugement sur sa valeur ": Patrick VIVERET, L'Evaluation des Politiques et des Actions Publiques, Rapport au Premier Ministre, Paris, La Documentation Française, Collection des Rapports Officiels, Juin, 1989.

²⁰- See : Jean-YVES BION, Patrick MOQUAY, Balisage d'une Démarche d'Evaluation des Politiques Publiques, CERTU, Mai 2004, p.55

²¹- Jean-YVES BION, Patrick MOQUAY, Opcit, p. 57

²²- The Internal Policy of the House of Representatives, Constitutional Court Decision n°. 65/17, October 30, 2017. <http://www.chambredesrepresentants.ma/fr/reglement-interieur-de-la-chambre-des-representants>

For the INTOSAI, “public policy evaluation is an examination aiming at assessing the utility of this policy. It analyses its objectives, implementation, outputs, outcomes and impacts as systematically as possible, and measures its performance in order to assess its utility.”²³ This definition shows that this organization uses the concept “Examination” to refer to the process of evaluation and analysis. It also has some common points with other definitions given by scholars at the level of the aim of the evaluation process, which is to assess the utility and value of the policy. However, the INTOSAI draws some guidelines for the evaluator to avoid prescribing the policy orientations, especially through maintaining adherence to the principle of independence and ensuring that the recommendations resulting from the conclusions in the final report are simple orientations for the policy based on facts and observations without any mandatory nature for the executive and legislative authorities.

With regard to the American experience, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) uses the concept "Analysis" along with a range of other similar terms, such as “Study”. This office defines the evaluation process as "A systematic study using research methods to collect and analyze data to assess how well a program is working and why."²⁴ The definition shows that the supreme audit institution in the United States, is more interested in evaluating public programs as a mere component of performance audit, given the fact that a public policy is a set of coherent and interconnected programs.

In the French legislation, the first official definition of this concept appeared in 1990, when a regulation related to the evaluation of public policies, stated that "Evaluating a policy means examining whether legal, administrative or financial resources produce the expected outcomes of this policy and achieve its defined objectives." This definition emphasizes on the necessity to assess the effects of the policy based on its goals and the resources used to implement it.²⁵

In another definition, the French legislator focused on analyzing the results in relation to the issues of efficiency and effectiveness, considering that public policy evaluation consists of comparing its outcomes with the inputs – be them legal, administrative or financial- and with the objectives initially set.²⁶

▪ **The Purpose and Importance of Evaluation**

The evaluation process serves different purposes, mainly forming a good understanding of the public policy and its results through collecting and analyzing data related to the public action (a cognitive and perceptual purpose), measuring its value and effects on targeted groups, and identifying best practices (a normative purpose), in addition to suggesting necessary recommendations to improve the policy and ensure the effectiveness of the undertaken measures (a functional purpose).²⁷

The different official and doctrinal definitions unanimously consider that the aim of public policy evaluation is to identify the results of these policies and programs, measure their effects

²³- INTOSAI, Evaluation of Public Policies, GUID 9020, 2019, P.8

²⁴- U.S. Government Accountability Office, Designing Evaluations, January 2012, P. 7

²⁵ - Décret n° 82.90 du 22 Janvier 1990 relatif à l'évaluation des politiques publiques, Conseil Scientifique de l'Évaluation, Petit Guide de l'Évaluation.

²⁶- Décret n° 98.1048 du 18 Novembre 1998 relatif à l'évaluation des politiques publiques .Danièle Lamarque, l'Évaluation des Politiques Publiques Locales, L.G.D.J. Paris, 2004, pp. 18-19

²⁷- House of Representatives, Framework of Public Policy Evaluation, Morocco, P.121

on society, assess to what extent the defined objectives have been achieved and determine the factors that enabled or hindered the achievement of those objectives in relation to the allocated resources. The aim of evaluation is also to suggest appropriate recommendations to address issues identified in the evaluated policy.

In addition to the purposes mentioned above, especially those related to knowledge production, institutional strengthening and implementation improvement, the most commonly recognized purposes of evaluation for INTOSAI, consist in assessing the planning process and the efficiency of the public action, in order to ensure that the adoption of the policy is justified and that the resources are being used efficiently. Moreover, INTOSAI recognizes that evaluation helps implementing the principle of accountability through demonstrating to what extent a policy has been able to achieve its objectives and how well resources have been used and what have been its impact.²⁸

It should be mentioned that if the objectives of public policy evaluation are diverse from a theoretical point of view, they may differ based on the institution conducting the evaluation, in terms of its outcome, purpose and objective, depending on the adopted methodology. Therefore, the evaluation conducted by the Government differs from the evaluation carried out by the Parliament or by the Supreme Audit Institution or other institutions.

The Government can conduct a form of auto-evaluation as it is responsible for designing and implementing the public policy. Through this process, The Government focuses on analyzing the results in order to improve the public action and to draw lessons from its experience. On the other hand, the Parliament not only focuses on analyzing the results but also examines the impact of public policies on the targeted groups and society, with regard to the nature of the parliamentary work which involves representing citizens and exercising oversight over government actions, in order to enhance good governance and ensure transparency and democracy.²⁹

Meanwhile, Supreme Audit Institutions focus on analyzing financial, administrative, and managerial efficiency of public policies, assessing the effectiveness of public actions, measuring their impact on targeted groups and giving recommendations to improve the quality of public management, increase its efficiency and ensure its effectiveness. When necessary, they also hold public officials accountable for the irregularities committed during the preparation or implementation of public policies and programs, in line with the principle of accountability.

²⁸- INTOSAI, Evaluation of Public Policies, GUID 9020, 2019, PP.8-9

²⁹- The Parliament, The Annual Session for Public Policy Evaluation Guide, 2021, Morocco

▪ **Types of Evaluation according to the stages of the public policy**

Evaluation research may be conducted at different stages of the policy or program, particularly before its design and after its implementation. Consequently, evaluation can be either prospective dealing with forward-looking questions, real-time dealing with ongoing actions or retrospective dealing with what has happened in the past.

Prospective evaluation is conducted before the policy or program is designed and implemented. This type of evaluation involves analyzing the context of the public action, its content, its implementation conditions and its expected results and impacts.³⁰ Its purpose is to inform and provide insight to decision-makers about the relevance of the policy with regard to the needs of citizens, as well as to assess the coherence and relationship between available resources and desired objectives. It also aims to compare different alternatives of the policy or program which have the best chances of success by examining their strengths, weaknesses and potential risks.

Concurrent evaluation, also known as policy and program monitoring, accompanies the public policy throughout its implementation stages and aims to assess whether the program or action is proceeding according to the design initially planned. Unlike retrospective evaluation, this type does not focus on the impact of the policy which can only be measured when the policy is implemented, but is interested with the coherence between the allocated resources and the intended objectives.³¹

Retrospective evaluation which is carried out after the implementation of the policy, aims to improve the adopted policy by assessing its efficiency and effectiveness and measuring its impact on the targeted groups, in order to help decision-makers enhance the policy or program's performance, address any identified shortcomings and determine whether to continue funding the policy or program, reduce its budget or ever stop it.

▪ **Criteria of the Evaluation Methodology**

While both prospective and retrospective evaluations focus on the results of public policy and its real or potential effects on targeted groups and society, these results and impacts can be assessed and measured according to several criteria that are commonly found in various definitions of this concept. These criteria generally vary depending on the institution conducting the evaluation, work and include efficiency, effectivity, effectiveness, coherence, and relevance. (Daniele Lamarque, 2004 - P. Knoepfel et al, 2006). Some of these principles, especially efficiency and effectiveness, are used in both approaches of performance audit and evaluation of public policies, however evaluation work focuses more on the relevance and utility of a public action.³²

³⁰- AFIGESE-CT- Groupe de travail « Evaluations des Politiques Territoriales », Glossaire de l'Evaluation, Paris : les éditions de l'épargne, 2001, p. 67

³¹- Jean-YVES BION, Patrick MOQUAY, Opcit, p. 49

³²- See : INTOSAI, Evaluation of Public Policies, GUID 9020, 2019, P.10

- **Efficiency**

Efficiency is interested in assessing the relationship between the results obtained and the resources employed to achieve them. It aims to measure the coherence between the outputs and the resources allocated to them, to ensure that the obtained results are at the level of the means and resources employed and to determine whether these resources are capable of achieving the intended results.

- **Effectivity**

Effectivity assesses whether the impact of public policies has resulted, as expected, from the public action. It measures the degree of coherence between the objectives of the policy and the actual behavior of the targeted groups. It also assesses the validity of the underlying assumptions of the public action, ensuring that the outputs generate their intended effects and lead to behavioral changes among the targeted groups.³³

- **Effectiveness**

Effectiveness helps measure the results achieved in relation to the pre-established objectives. It revolves around answering the following questions: To what extent have the expected results of public action been achieved? Do the results match with the predefined objectives?

- **Coherence**

Coherence is both internal and external. Internal coherence represents the adequacy between the intended objectives of the public action and the employed resources, while external coherence refers to the adequacy between the evaluated action and other public policies. (Daniele Lamarque, 2004)

- **Relevance**

Relevance is concerned with the relationship between the intended objectives of the public action and the problem it aims to address. A relevant policy is a policy which explicit objectives comply with the economic, social and environmental issue it aims to solve. Relevance, therefore, has a political dimension more than the other criteria, as the definition of objectives is the result of a political agreement among stakeholders during the programming phase. Hence, the relevance of the public policy depends on the relationships among the various involved actors.³⁴

- **Impact**

The impact of public policies represents the real change and the actual impact that the outcomes of these policies should introduce on the behavior of the targeted groups and the ultimate beneficiaries, especially those changes that are attributed to these policies and their outputs, whether they are direct or indirect and expected or unexpected.

The measuring of impact helps answering certain questions such as: Does the implementation of the policy help obtaining the desired behavioral change or maintaining the same behavior

³³- P. KNOEPFEL et al. Opcit, 2006, pp. 251-252

³⁴- P. KNOEPFEL et al. Opcit. P. 258

which would have changed in the absence of the policy? To what extent is the public action sufficient and suitable to introduce the expected change in the behavior of individuals.³⁵

It is worth mentioning that a poor preparation or an inappropriate implementation of the public policy would lead to a negative outcome. We may thus, in some cases, find ourselves facing outputs that are not relevant to the needs and demands of the targeted groups, and in other cases, facing the absence or insufficiency of outputs and effects.

If the absence of impact may be attributed to mistakes committed by public agencies during the preparation and conception of public policies, it may also be due to the rejection of the public action outcomes by the targeted groups, or to the unexploitation of these outcomes by these groups. Obtaining appropriate effects therefore, depends on achieving outcomes that match with the pre-determined goals, in other words, with the degree of the effectiveness of the public action, which depends on how relevant are the goals and how coherent are the allocated resources with the achieved results.

At a practical level, to measure the impact of a public policy, the agency responsible for the evaluation compares two different situations related to the obtained results and the objectives set, in order to measure the difference between reality and a referential situation.

Generally, this reference can be either internal to the action that is being evaluated, or external to its environment and related to best practices and experiences (Benchmark). Therefore, the measuring process can be conducted through analyzing the results obtained after the public intervention compared to the situation that prevailed before this intervention, as it can be conducted by comparing between two similar situations in different situations.³⁶

³⁵- P. KNOEPFEL et al. *Opcit.* P. 243

³⁶- Jean-Yves Bion, Partick Moquay, *Opcit.*, 2004

Second Section: Public Policy Evaluation in Morocco—Foundations and Experiences

Public policy evaluation is relatively a new practice in Morocco that appeared at the beginning of the 21st century and became more common as a new tradition and a new culture among political actors, auditors, experts, and other constitutional institutions concerned with good governance and public finance oversight.

This culture has been strengthened over time due to the changes in the auditing culture that shifted from compliance audit to performance audit and program evaluation, and also due to the change witnessed in the field of public management system that shifted from a mere management by means to a management by objectives and results, leading therefore to the necessity of applying private-sector techniques to the public sector.

This concept has become more common and familiar to the different actors concerned with public finance oversight and management, mainly politicians, analysts, experts, and auditors, under the new constitution of the Kingdom which established a political system based on the principles of linking responsibility to accountability and that of good governance and transparency, along with the enhancement of the role of the Parliament in the field of control and evaluation, and the creation of many constitutional institutions which mandate is to support the legislative in its functions.

To highlight the different aspects of this topic, we will discuss the constitutional and legal framework of public policy evaluation in Morocco (1), and underline the factors encouraging the Supreme Audit Institution to evaluate public policies (2).

1. Constitutional and Legal framework of Public Policy Evaluation in Morocco

Since the executive branch has the exclusive authority to design, implement, and sometimes evaluate public policies, it is essential to have independent institutions and bodies who are able to oversight and evaluate these policies in order to assess the degree of achievement of objectives and measure their impact on society.

A review of the constitutional and legal provisions related to public policy evaluation in Morocco reveals that this function has been assigned, by the country's highest legal document, to the Parliament, with both chambers, in addition to its traditional functions of control and legislation, as it is the body from which the government obtains its confidence, especially during the vote on the government's program. However, the Parliament can ask for the assistance of other constitutional institutions to deliver an opinion or conduct an analysis of a specific policy or program, with regard to the limits of the evaluation work conducted by its members (Deputies).

▪ A Parliament entrusted to conduct Public Policy Evaluation

Public policy evaluation is a new function of the Moroccan Parliament introduced in 2011 by the Constitution of the Kingdom which stipulates in its Article 70 that *"The Parliament votes the laws, controls the action of the government, and evaluates public policies."*³⁷

³⁷- Moroccan Constitution, Official Journal n.° 5964 bis, July 30, 2011

Two years after this constitutional pillar, the Moroccan Parliament, through the internal policy of the House of Representatives, provided for the first time, a definition of this concept by its objectives.³⁸ This definition shows that the Moroccan Parliament focuses on retrospective evaluation which assesses to what extent a public policy has achieved its results, and measures its impact on the concerned groups: *"The aim of the evaluation is to conduct researches and analysis to identify the results of public policies and programs, measure their impact on the concerned groups and society. It also aims to identify the level of achievement with regard to the established objectives, and determine the factors that contributed to reach those objectives. The goal is to recommend and suggest improvements that could be made to the public policy under evaluation."*

In line with this constitutional function, the Moroccan Parliament holds an annual session to discuss the public policies it has evaluated.³⁹ To organize the way public policies are evaluated and discussed, the Parliament formed a working group assigned to supervise the evaluation process of the selected policy.⁴⁰

In addition to the evaluation function, The Parliament, under the framework of its relation with the executive branch, is also mandated to "Discuss" public policies. This responsibility reflects the constitutional legislator's intent to expand the parliamentary control mechanisms over Government actions, as this "Discussion," which is closer to control than to a methodology of analysis and evaluation, concerns various opportunities related to the legislative and control powers of the Parliament, especially when voting "Framework Laws [lois-cadres] (Article 71 of the Constitution), "Annual Finance Laws", "Multi-Year Plans and Programs (Article 75 of the Constitution), "Final Finance Law" (Article 76 of the Constitution), as well as during the vote on the "Government Program", which contains the outlines of its action (Article 88 of the Constitution).⁴¹

Moreover, the Moroccan Parliament has various legal mechanisms which serve to help discuss the content of public policies and the utility behind adopting them by the Government, such as "Permanent Committees". According to the provisions of Article 102 of the Constitution, these committees have the authority to organize hearing sessions for ministers and heads of public administrations, institutions and public enterprises, under the responsibility of ministers.

▪ **Limits of the Parliamentary Evaluation**

From a parliamentary perspective, evaluation function is characterized by its political nature, and simultaneously by its technical aspect. Therefore, it raises many issues related to the ability of parliamentary members and committees to carry out this task, regarding the fact that it requires expertise to collect and analyze data and draw appropriate conclusions.

³⁸- Article 212 of The Internal Policy of the House of Representatives, Constitutional Court Decision n°. 65/17, October 30, 2017

³⁹- Article 101 of The Moroccan Constitution, Official Journal n.° 5964 bis, July 30, 2011.

⁴⁰- Articles 287 to 293 of The Internal Policy of the House of Representatives, Opcit.

⁴¹- See : House of Representatives, Framework of Public Policy Evaluation, Morocco, PP. 54-55

Actually, the evaluation process requires a team of trained members who carry out their work according to professional standards which ensure a critical and analytical study that is objective and reliable. However, parliamentary members do not have such training, despite the fact that the Parliament may have specialized committees which members may be experts and practitioners familiar with evaluation and control techniques. Such expertise is not expected from deputies who are not supposed to master all the technical aspects that would allow them to gather data and perform technical analysis of the obtained results. These tasks are usually entrusted to experts and specialists -according to the Parliament itself-⁴², and thus, the role of the Parliament is limited to the choice of the public policies to be evaluated and the use of the evaluation outputs in its control function.

Furthermore, parliament members play a representative role with a political and ideological background, and cannot have the required independence and impartiality that should characterize the work of the evaluator, as this later must be independent and unbiased, so that its work would be reliable and based on sufficient evidence.

Aware of these constraints, the Moroccan Parliament has empowered itself, alongside with carrying out these tasks by its own thematic working groups, to request the Economic, Social, and Environmental Council or one of the good governance bodies⁴³ and constitutional institutions,⁴⁴ including the Court of Accounts, to provide an opinion or conduct a study or research on the public program under evaluation and submit its report to the thematic working group for review.⁴⁵

It should be mentioned that, except from the Court of Accounts which has full independence guaranteed by the Constitution as a supreme audit institution, according to the principles defined by the Declaration of Mexico,⁴⁶ the other constitutional institutions have specific interests, and their work may have similar pitfalls, particularly those related to bias, lack of independence and expertise.

These issues can be explained by the fact that members of these institutions have many socio-professional backgrounds and sensitivities, as we find among them a wide range of individuals appointed either by the Head of the Government or by the Presidents of both parliamentary chambers or by both of them, from representatives of labor unions, professional associations, or civil society members, as it is the case of the Economic, Social, and Environmental Council, which remains a consultative body that releases opinions, but unable to follow up and implement the results of its work.

⁴²- See : House of Representatives, Framework of Public Policy Evaluation, Morocco, P. 5

⁴³- According to Chapter 12 of the Constitution, these institutions include : the High Authority of Broadcasting, the Council of Competition, the National Instance of Probity and the Prevention of Corruption.

⁴⁴- According to Chapter 12 of the Constitution these institutions include : the National Council of Human Rights, the Mediator, the Council of the Abroad Moroccan Community, the Authority of parity and the Struggle against Discrimination, the Superior Council of Education, the Consultative Council of Family and Childhood, the Consultative council of Youth and associative action.

⁴⁵- See : Article 292 of The Internal Policy of the House of Representatives, Opcit.

⁴⁶- INTOSAI, Mexico Declaration on SAI Independence, ISSAI-P 10: www.intosai.org

2. Factors Encouraging the Supreme Audit Institution to Evaluate Public Policies

Promoting the role of the Supreme Audit Institution in conducting evaluations of public policies, programs and projects, is due to many factors which consist basically in the fact that the SAI has been mandated since more than ten years to conduct evaluation of public projects, gaining therefore a considerable experience through its different achievements. These encouraging factors consist also in the establishment of an enhanced relationship of cooperation between the SAI and the Parliament under the framework of the new Constitution 2011.

▪ A SAI conducting Evaluation of Public Projects and Programs

A review of the different legislations and regulations related to public policy evaluation, reveals that the official use of this concept first appeared in Morocco in 2002 among the provisions of the enabling code of Financial Jurisdictions, which defines the organization and functions of the Supreme Audit Institution (Court of Accounts and Regional Courts of Accounts).⁴⁷

By this code, the Moroccan legislator entrusted the Supreme Audit Institution since 2002 with the task of evaluating public projects, in order to "verify the extent to which the objectives set for each project have been achieved, with regard to the resources employed " (Article 75). Such mandate is carried out by the Supreme Audit Institution within the framework of management control or comprehensive audit conducted by law over public agencies, and more specifically within the framework of performance audit which intends to assess the achieved results with regard to the pre-established goals and the allocated resources.

This legal framework has provided the Supreme Audit Institution with an entry point to evaluate both public policies and projects, considering the fact that a program or project can be a component of a public policy, which can itself be a coordinated and interconnected set of programs and projects.

A review of the reports issued by the Supreme Audit Institution at the practical level, reveals that the Court is issuing a new generation of reports which deal with evaluation of public policies and programs, and provide timely and accurate data and answers to related questions for decision-makers, in order to help them establish appropriate public policies and programs.

▪ An enhanced relationship of cooperation between the SAI and the Parliament

Since the amendment of the Constitution in 2011, Morocco has established a new system of control and accountability based on cooperation between constitutional institutions entrusted to control public funds, especially the Supreme Audit Institution and the Parliament. This system combines both the characteristics of the parliamentary model adopted by Anglo-Saxon countries (Westminster model) and the judicial model applied in the Francophone experience, and in Morocco since 1979.

In fact, the Moroccan constitution (Article 148) has established a continuous and permanent relationship between these two main institutions, based on assisting the Parliament in its domain

⁴⁷- Financial Jurisdictions Code n°. 62.99, June 13, 2002, Official Journal n°. 5030, August 15, 2002

of public finance control, and responding to the parliament's questions and consultations related to its functions in the fields of legislation, control and evaluation. Highlights of the key concepts of this assistance, particularly the terms "Questions" and "Consultations", are necessary in order to clarify the fields, methods, and forms of this assistance.

The "Question" to which the Court of Accounts is required to respond is more than a simple inquiry in its written or oral form about current issues of national public interest that requires an immediate and brief answer issued by any designated official or body within the Court. It may include concerns of the Parliament about any particular issue related to its functions, for which it needs professional assistance that can be achieved through conducting studies. These concerns determine the scope and objectives of the analysis and evaluation process carried out by the Court according to applicable standards and protocols and in compliance with the procedures applied for performing its control assignments.

As for "Consultations", these are future-oriented concerns that require answers before they arise or before the establishment of the public policy. Such consultations, when provided by an independent and objective institution to formulate or conceive new policies and programs or amend existing ones, may strengthen the decision-making process and ensure the development of public programs and policies based on solid and reliable foundations.

While responding to the parliament's consultations and questions in the field of legislation, the SAI may analyze new laws or law drafts in their early stages to assess their chances of success, and therefore assist decision-makers in formulating and enacting new legislations or amending existing ones in a manner that prevents legislations' failure and avoids economic and social costs due to ineffective public projects and programs related to the legislation in question, and to inefficient use of public resources, or else due to the unsatisfaction of the needs of the targeted groups.

It should be noted in this context, that providing consultations to the Parliament in the field of legislation is one of the new mandates assigned to supreme audit institutions, in order to help establish appropriate legislations, besides auditing the legislative process within the scope of performance audit.⁴⁸

Convinced that conducting such assignments in an effective way depends on developing constructive relationships based on coordination, communication and exchange, with full respect of the independence of the Court, this later makes, through its strategic plan for the period 2018-2020, of developing its relationship with the different partners, especially the Parliament, one of its main objectives.⁴⁹

To enable itself to perform such work, the SAI started adopting appropriate protocols and mechanisms which help in responding effectively to requests of assistance addressed by the Parliament and different partners. These mechanisms include the establishment of an internal committee tasked to receive and analyze such questions and consultations.

⁴⁸- See : A. Pakarinen, A.Kotiranta, The Role of SAIs in Auditing Policy and Law Making, International Journal of Government Auditing, January 2015.

⁴⁹- Strategic Plan of The Financial Jurisdictions 2020-2020 and 2022-2026

Section Three: Best Practices and Experiences Related to Public Policy Evaluation

Since the end of the first decade following the issuance of the Financial Jurisdictions Code in 2002, the Court of Accounts, as the supreme institution that controls public finances, has begun conducting new kind of assignments which although performed under management control/comprehensive audit, they concern evaluation of public policies, projects and programs.

The improvement of the SAI's performance regarding this type of work requires the adoption of some solutions and measures at both the organizational and the practical level. To highlight this idea, we will try to answers the following questions: What are the best practices and experiences of the SAI in the field of public policy evaluation? (1) And what are the ways to develop and improve this practice, with regard to the Moroccan experience and comparative experiences? (2).

1. Achievements of the Moroccan SAI in Public Policy Evaluation

The close relationship established since 2011 between the Parliament and the Court of Accounts (SAI), is one of the key factors that help develop and improve this practice. This partnership between the two main institutions concerned with public finance oversight first flourished in 2013, when the Court responded to the Parliament's request to evaluate the situation of the Compensation Fund.⁵⁰ The Court, has since then and even before, conducted other assignments related to public policy evaluation on its own initiative.

Other examples of this kind of assignments include the evaluation of the Retirement and Pension System (2012), the evaluation of the Moroccan Digital Strategy (2013), the evaluation of the Local Taxes system(2015), the evaluation of Natural Disasters management (2016), the evaluation of the Public Service System in Morocco (2017), and the evaluation of National Parks (2020) (...).⁵¹

Within the framework of its relationship with his Majesty the King, as the Head of State and the highest authority in the country who supervises the strategic orientations of the State upon which public and sectoral policies and the government program are formulated, the Court conducted in 2017, a new kind of evaluation work through reviewing the Regional Development Program of Al-Hoceima, "Manarat al-Moutawassit", and reporting the main conclusions of this work to His Majesty the King.⁵²

These tasks as performed by the Court, show that the Supreme Audit Institution has become more concerned with current issues of society, including issues which become subject of the public opinion and economic and social actors' interest within the country, and those receiving attention of international institutions and organizations.

⁵⁰- By his letter addressed on July 18, 2013 to the First President of the Court of Accounts, the President of the House of Representatives requested The SAI to evaluate the situation of the Compensation Fund, according to the Article 148 of the Constitution and Article 224 of the Internal Policy of the House of Representatives.

⁵¹- <https://www.courdescomptes.ma/publications/>

⁵²- See : Release of the Court of Accounts on the Regional Development Program of Al-Hoceima, "Manarat al-Moutawassit": www.courdescomptes.ma

▪ Evaluation Methodology

To carry out this kind of assignments, the Supreme Audit Institution adopts a participatory methodology which consists of diagnosing the current situation, summarizing the learned lessons, and suggesting scenarios of improvement. Information is usually collected through questionnaires with both quantitative and qualitative data, directed electronically to the stakeholders to provides answers.

Analysis, conclusions and recommendations included in these reports are made according to a methodology that involves discussions and consultations with external experts and specialists, as well as holding meetings with officials responsible for implementing the policy or program (e.g., Evaluation of the Local Taxes System, 2015).

A review of some reports shows that the methodology adopted to conduct such work may also consist in the use of the SAI's previous audit reports relevant to the subject of evaluation, or else the review of some relevant studies conducted by specialized bodies and experts (e.g., Evaluation of the Pension system: diagnosis and reform options, 2012 - Evaluation of the Compensation Fund, 2014).

It is to be mentioned that the evaluation methodology finds its origin in the procedures and standards contained in the Financial Jurisdictions Code, but also in the standards set by the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), in addition to benchmarking with international experiences (e.g., Evaluation of Natural Disaster Management, 2016).

Evaluation of Local Taxes System: Scope and Methodology

This evaluation was conducted by the Court due to the fact that local taxes, as an important component of the Moroccan tax system, represent one of the mechanisms through which the State intervenes in economic and social policies at the territorial level.

The aim of this study as mentioned in the final report issued at the end of the evaluation work, was to establish a diagnosis of the current situation of local taxes from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives, identify the key challenges relevant to legal, governance and management aspects, determine the deficiencies in the local tax system and provide recommendations that may improve this system.

To conduct this study, the Court adopted a participatory approach based on consulting key stakeholders of local taxation, through addressing questionnaires containing both quantitative and qualitative data to all urban and rural Local Bodies/Governments across the Kingdom, as well as to the General Direction of Taxes and the General Treasury of the Kingdom.

The Court also held interviews and direct meetings with local managers, central officials from both the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Finance, and representatives from the General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises (CGEM).

2. SAIs perspectives of improvement in performing Public Policy Evaluation

Supreme audit institutions are facing many challenges in the achievement of their strategic goals, which for the Moroccan Court of Accounts, consist primarily in increasing the impact of its work on citizens, and developing its relationships with the different stakeholders, especially the Parliament. With regard to these challenges, improving the performance of these institutions in the field of public policy evaluation requires the adoption of some appropriate reforms and measures at both organizational and operational levels.

▪ Establish a monitoring Structure for parliamentary relations

It is obvious that adopting some appropriate mechanisms of coordination with the Parliament will enable this institution, as it is the case in advanced international experiences, to enhance its role in the domain of public finance oversight, strengthen its competencies in analyzing and evaluating programs and public policies, and support its legislative function related to public finance.

In line with this approach, the Moroccan Court of Accounts through its Strategic Plan, has expressed its awareness of the importance of developing constructive relations with the different stakeholders based on coordination, communication and exchange, with full respect of the institution's independence as an insurance of its work effectiveness. The Court also started adopting appropriate techniques and protocols that govern these relations and help in responding effectively to requests of assistance addressed by different partners.

These mechanisms include the establishment of an internal committee responsible for receiving and monitoring questions and consultations addressed by external parties, especially the Parliament. The design of this structure should be adapted to the nature and scope of the SAI's assistance to the Parliament and the size of work that may be requested by this institution, as most of the SAI's engagements may be initiated under its statutory authority as it is the case of the Court of Accounts.

In fact, adopting protocols that govern the relationship between these two institutions, will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the success of this relation, as it is the case of the American experience.⁵³

• Providing Technical Support and Training to Audit and Evaluation Teams

Some SAIs has many technical competencies that can help in conducting evaluation work and improve consequently, the institution's experience in this field. In this regard, the experience of the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) is an inspiring model to enhance the productivity of experts and auditors/specialists in public policy evaluation. GAO experts, statisticians and engineers (...) are gathered into a team called "Applied Research and Method Team" (ARM) to assist audit teams and provide technical expertise in various fields of research such as social science, statistics, computer science, economics, engineering, sampling techniques and data analysis.⁵⁴

⁵³- See : GAO's Congressional Protocols (GAO-04-310G), www.gao.gov

⁵⁴- Working with Arm stakeholders and technical Chiefs : A Guide for Engagement Teams, 2013

It would be very helpful, if supreme audit institutions identify and organize these competencies into a specialized unit to support audit teams and help them in carrying out evaluation work that require technical and scientific expertise, besides hiring external experts, such as engineers, statisticians and legal professionals.

To face the challenges resulting from conducting public policy evaluations, it is necessary for supreme audit institutions to allocate some of their resources, first to fund continuous training programs necessary to qualify their staff and improve their skills in conducting studies, researches, analysis and evaluations, second to develop appropriate manuals to assist them in carrying out this kind of evaluative work, and finally to hire external experts when necessary.

- **Coordinating with Stakeholders to Avoid Duplication and Overlap**

Many experiences share the practice of entrusting constitutional institutions to assist Parliaments in their function of evaluation of public policies and programs, as it is the case of the Moroccan experience, in response to Parliament's requests or on its own initiative. However, despite the fact that these institutions have different objectives, they may be assigned to conduct the same work without coordination between them.

To avoid duplication and overlap in performing their activities and waste of efforts, Supreme Audit Institutions are supposed to maintain a certain degree of awareness on this subject matter, in order to minimize its risks through coordination with the Parliament and other partners, as they are responsible for enhancing and protecting the principles of good governance.

This coordination to avoid duplication in their work will improve the efficiency of public funds and help save resources, which are often scarce, and direct them to fund prior activities instead of doing the same work.

Conclusion

While the Government, public institutions and their affiliated bodies are solely responsible for designing public policies and evaluating them, when necessary, the Parliament – as the representative body of citizens and the entity that grants the government its trust through adopting the Government Program – has the right to evaluate and discuss these policies and public programs to assess whether the intended objectives and results have been achieved and measure their impact on society.

The role of the Parliament consists generally, in selecting the public policies to be evaluated and using the results of the evaluation process to hold the government accountable for its actions, since the Parliament is not expected to have the technical or scientific expertise to conduct evaluation work, which is usually entrusted to experts and specialized institutions, particularly Supreme Audit Institutions.

This witnesses how Supreme Audit Institutions are very important and beneficial for both society and stakeholders, as they conduct evaluation, control and audit assignments based on principles of objectivity, neutrality, and impartiality, to assist both the Parliament and the Government in the decision- making process related to the topics under audit and evaluation.

In fact, the SAI is habilitated to audit, evaluate, analyze and, when necessary, suggest the necessary recommendations to address the identified deficiencies. The final decision remains however, within the domain of the Government and the Parliament, which, based on the results of the evaluation or audit process, can make appropriate decisions about funding, reviewing or prioritizing the objectives of public programs, projects and policies.

To face the challenges raised by public policy evaluation both in terms of professional expertise and resources allocated to such work, Supreme Audit Institutions are required to improve and enhance their performance in this field through adopting some organizational and practical mechanisms of improvement. SAIs are therefore, required to structure themselves in a way that helps govern and monitor their relationship with the Parliament as it has an original mandate to evaluate public policies, provide the necessary technical support and training to evaluation teams, and coordinate with different stakeholders and partners to avoid duplication and overlap.

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