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2024/25 KSP Policy Consultation Report

Kyrgyz Republic

Strengthening the Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Investment Projects in the Kyrgyz Republic

Ministry of Economy and Finance

KDI Korea Development Institute

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Public Investment Projects in the Kyrgyz Republic

Kyrgyz Republic

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2024/25 KSP with the Kyrgyz Republic

Hyunjee Sung (CID, KDI)

2024/25 KSP with the Kyrgyz Republic

Hyunjee Sung (CID, KDI)

Amid ongoing economic growth and increasing public investment, the Kyrgyz Republic has sought to improve the efficiency and strategic alignment of its development finance. As official development aid (ODA)-supported projects expand in scale and scope, the need for a more structured monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to support informed decision-making and maintain alignment with national priorities has increased. Specific challenges have included inconsistent project-level evaluations, limited post-project assessment mechanisms, and a lack of standard indicators to measure development outcomes across sectors.

To address these issues, the 2024/25 Knowledge Sharing Program (KSP) focused on "Strengthening the Monitoring and Evaluation System for Public Investment Projects." The project was jointly conducted by the Korea Development Institute (KDI) and the Ministry of Economy and Commerce (MOEC) of the Kyrgyz Republic, with the shared objective of developing usable tools and institutional arrangements that can be applied within the government's existing policy framework. The project focused on producing results, including a governance model, an indicator framework, and a post-project evaluation methodology, which reflect the operational context and policy requirements of the Kyrgyz government. While the initial project proposal was framed within the broader theme of public investment management, preliminary discussions with the partner government clarified that, in the Kyrgyz context, public investment projects were understood to primarily denote ODA-supported initiative given the growing volume and strategic significance of ODA within the national investment portfolio. Accordingly, the research primarily focused on the M&E practices applicable to grant-based and technical assistance programs within the national investment system.

The project was conducted through close cooperation between Korean and Kyrgyz experts throughout all stages of research and consultation. The table below presents the sub-topics, the Korean researchers, and the local consultants who contributed to ensuring relevance to the local context and alignment with policy applicability.

Sub-topics	Researchers	Local Consultants
Enhancing governance and evaluation of ODA public investment projects in the Kyrgyz Republic	Juchan Kim (Professor, Kwangwoon University)	Omorov Erkinbek (Government Relations Specialist of the Promotion and Development Center)
Development of monitoring and evaluation criteria and indicators of ODA projects	Eunju Kim (Professor, Hansung University)	Erkinbaeva Sonun (Head of the grant and technical assistance coordination division, Ministry of Economy and Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic)
Development of monitoring and evaluation methodology in the post-project period: sustainability, sectoral impact, and models for assessing socio-economic development	Kyu Dong Park (Professor, University of Seoul)	Askarov Emil (Head of Division of Monitoring and Evaluation of External Assistance of Department of External Assistance, Ministry of Economy and Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic) Akmatova Meerim (Chief specialist of Division of Monitoring and Evaluation of External Assistance of Department of External Assistance, Ministry of Economy and Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic)

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- Project Officers: Hyunjee Sung (Research Associate, CID, KDI), Daeun Kim (Research Associate, CID, KDI)
- Principal Investigator: Juchan Kim (Professor, Kwangwoon University)

The project began with the Launching Seminar held from November 19 to 23, during which the two sides agreed on the project scope and implementation strategy. It was agreed that the project would prioritize developing practical and operational tools tailored to the working conditions of MOEC, rather than focusing on theoretical or abstract policy discussions. A theory of change and a project design matrix (PDM) were jointly developed to serve as a framework for implementation.

During the Policy Seminar and In-depth Study held in Bishkek from January 19 to 25, the research team conducted structured consultations with MOEC, line ministries, and development partners responsible for project implementation. These consultations aimed to identify operational difficulties and institutional barriers in applying the current M&E framework.

From April 14 to 19, the Interim Workshop and Policy Practitioners' Workshop took place in the Republic of Korea. Eight officials from the MOEC and the Ministry of Finance participated in the program, which presented the full policy cycle through visits to relevant Korean institutions. The program included organizations involved in policy research and design (e.g., Korea Institute of Public Administration, Korea Development Institute, Busan Development Institute), implementation and operations (e.g., Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power), and performance evaluation management (e.g., Government Performance Evaluation Office). Particularly relevant was Korea's transition from an aid recipient to a self-financing economy, and the corresponding evolution of its public sector evaluation systems.

The project concluded with the Final Reporting in Bishkek from July 1 to 5, marking the final stage of the consultation process. About 50 participants attended the event, including representatives from

MOEC, line ministries, development partners, and subnational authorities. The workshop helped increase awareness across government institutions of the role of M&E systems in public investment management. During both the Final Reporting and the Senior Policy Dialogue with Bolotov Sanzharbek, Deputy Minister of MOEC, the research team stressed the need to adapt and institutionalize the proposed recommendations in line with national priorities, institutional capacity, and implementation context.

This KSP supported the development of institutional processes for evaluating public investment projects in the Kyrgyz Republic. By providing practical reference models and structured knowledge exchange, the initiative is expected to support the Kyrgyz Republic in developing a sustainable and effective M&E system tailored to the national context.

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Chapter

Enhancing Governance and Evaluation of ODA Public Investment Projects in the Kyrgyz Republic: Insights from Korea's Policy Evaluation and Fiscal Management Systems

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Keywords:
ODA, Monitoring & Evaluation, Evaluation Methodology, Institutional Capacity, Post-Project Evaluation

Enhancing Governance and Evaluation of ODA Public Investment Projects in the Kyrgyz Republic: Insights from Korea's Policy Evaluation and Fiscal Management Systems

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Omorov Erkinbek (Promotion and Development Center)

1. Introduction

In today's governance landscape, achieving effective and accountable public policy is a fundamental responsibility for governments worldwide. This need is especially evident in developing and transition economies, where institutional processes are often fragmented and limited. Building reliable administrative capacity and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems is essential for effective M&E. M&E is not simply a technical exercise; it provides a foundation for adjusting policies based on evidence, allocating resources more effectively, and improving government performance.

The Kyrgyz Republic has adopted a long-term development strategy focused on sustainable economic growth and improving the quality of life. On June 11, 2025, President Sadyr Japarov signed the Decree "On the Nation Development Program of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2030," which outlined the strategy and measures to ensure continued dynamic and broad-based development of the country. key target is to raise the country's gross domestic product (GDP) to USD 30 billion by 2030, which requires maintaining a stable nominal GDP growth rate of 8% per year. To achieve this goal, the government has identified several priority policy areas, including job creation, industrial development, agriculture and agro-processing, tourism, energy, transport infrastructure, export capacity, and the second phase of administrative-territorial reform. In parallel, improving the education and healthcare systems remains a central component of the national development agenda.

Within this policy framework, Official Development Assistance (ODA) plays an essential role as an instrument of public policy designed to support sustainable development, encourage international cooperation, and advance socio-economic progress. Provided in the form of grants, technical assistance, and concessional loans, ODA makes substantial contributions to key development objectives, including infrastructure modernization, public service delivery, administrative reform, and environmental protection. The Kyrgyz Republic is actively developing an ODA management framework that aligns with its national development priorities. Within this policy context, ODA is positioned as a key driver of national development goals.

Two key legal instruments govern the implementation and oversight of ODA projects in the Kyrgyz Republic:

- Regulation on the Procedure for Attracting and Utilizing International Grant and Technical Assistance (Government Resolution No. 389, June 19, 2017); and
- Regulation on the Management of Public Investments (Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 714, December 26, 2022).

These frameworks outline the formal procedures for initiating, approving, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating post-project ODA-financed initiatives.

Achieving the Kyrgyz Republic's development goals requires more than strategic planning. It requires a rigorous, system-based evaluation of the implementation and performance of sectoral strategies and externally funded interventions. Fragmented and ad hoc assessments must be replaced by a multidimensional evaluation framework that measures not only outputs and efficiency but also long-term sustainability, relevance, and impact. A robust national evaluation system is therefore not only a technical instrument; it constitutes an institutional foundation for strengthening the credibility of public policy and building citizen trust in governance.

This study is situated within the context of this policy and institutional framework. It seeks to develop a framework for strengthening and institutionalizing the M&E system for ODA projects in the Kyrgyz Republic, guided by the principle of national ownership and based on a governance-oriented perspective. Moving beyond a purely technical approach, the study incorporates institutional analysis, stakeholder interviews, participatory workshops, and comparative case studies to prepare practical and context-specific policy recommendations. In doing so, it aims to contribute to the long-term achievement of the Kyrgyz Republic's development ambitions by laying the foundation for a sustainable, integrated, and nationally owned performance evaluation system.

2. Analysis of the Current Status of ODA Project Management in the Kyrgyz Republic

2.1. Governance and Evaluation System of ODA Public Investment Projects in the Kyrgyz Republic

2.1.1. Objectives and Functions of the ODA System

The ODA system in the Kyrgyz Republic serves as a policy tool to support the country's sustainable socio-economic development. The system is designed to mobilize additional external financial resources and direct them to nationally prioritized sectors, thereby supporting the implementation of government programs and long-term development initiatives. In doing so, it aims to support the modernization of key economic and social sectors, including infrastructure, healthcare, education, and public administration.

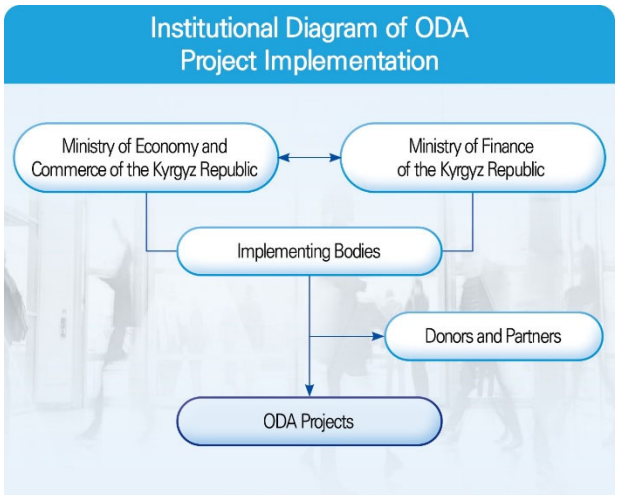
A key aspect of the ODA system is its contribution to human capital development and the enhancement of institutional capacity within public authorities. By developing a more capable and responsive public administration, the system helps improve service delivery and policy implementation. Moreover, the ODA framework is designed to strengthen the Kyrgyz Republic's participation in international cooperation, thereby supporting the country's gradual integration into the global community and increasing its engagement in regional and multilateral development dialogues.

To achieve these objectives, the ODA system performs several core functions. It seeks to establish favorable conditions for attracting and effectively using external aid, ensuring that such resources are directed toward areas of high importance. Transparency and accountability are central to the system's operation, particularly in the management and use of external financial flows. Furthermore, the system prioritizes the adoption of modern tools and practices for project planning, monitoring, and evaluation, which are essential for ensuring the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of development interventions.

A key operational feature of the system is its integration of ODA into broader national and sectoral development planning frameworks. This approach supports policy coherence, reduces duplication of efforts, and aligns donor-funded activities with the country's long-term development goals. In parallel, considerable attention is given to strengthening the professional competencies of personnel involved in managing and implementing ODA-funded projects, recognizing that institutional capacity and skilled staff are indispensable for the sustainability and success of development cooperation.

2.1.2. Institutional Framework for ODA Management

[Figure 1-1] Institutional Diagram of ODA Project Implementation



Source: Author (2025).

The system for managing ODA in the Kyrgyz Republic operates within a defined institutional framework that sets out the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders across four main levels.

At the central level, the Ministry of Economy and Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic is the primary coordinating authority for ODA. It is responsible for registering ODA-funded projects, approving project parameters, and overseeing their implementation. In addition to these operational responsibilities, the Ministry prepares analytical reports and policy briefs for the national government and international development partners. A main function of the Ministry is to ensure that externally funded initiatives are aligned with the objectives and priorities of national development programs.

The Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic plays a complementary role, with primary responsibility for overseeing the financial aspects of ODA projects. It ensures that these projects are consistent with the state's broader fiscal policies and frameworks. The Ministry also coordinates the financial terms for co-financing arrangements and the servicing of financial obligations arising from ODA commitments.

Sectoral ministries and other designated government agencies act as implementing bodies for ODA initiatives. These institutions are responsible for initiating project proposals, implementing the activities defined in project frameworks, and ensuring the delivery of planned outcomes. They are also accountable for project performance and must submit progress and completion reports to the relevant oversight bodies.

International donors and development partners are another main component of the ODA management system. They provide financial and technical resources to support the Kyrgyz Republic's development priorities. These partners are also actively involved in monitoring the use of the resources they provide, ensuring their targeted and effective use. Collaboration with national authorities is also emphasized, particularly in the coordination and joint implementation of ODA projects.

This multi-tiered governance structure is intended to ensure transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in the planning, execution, and evaluation of development assistance activities nationwide.

2.1.3. Procedure for Implementing ODA Projects in the Kyrgyz Republic

Effective management of ODA in the Kyrgyz Republic requires adherence to established implementation procedures. These procedures are intended to ensure transparency, alignment with national development priorities, and the long-term sustainability of project outcomes. The regulatory framework governing ODA sets out a series of mandatory stages that guide the entire project lifecycle, from initiation to post-implementation evaluation.

Project Initiation

ODA project development begins with authorized implementing agencies, such as line ministries, government bodies, and sectoral authorities, which act as project initiators. Project proposals are typically developed within the framework of national programs and development plans. Once prepared, proposals are submitted to the Ministry of Economy and Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic for review and consideration. This review assesses the proposal's feasibility and its conformity with national priorities, as stipulated in Article 12 of Regulation No. 389.

Project Assessment and Approval

Upon submission, ODA projects undergo an interagency assessment and approval process. The Ministry of Economy and Commerce evaluates each project's alignment with the country's socio-economic development objectives, including its consistency with key national documents such as the National Development Strategy. At the same time, the Ministry of Finance conducts a financial and economic evaluation, examining factors such as budget availability, the absence of overdue debts, and projected post-project maintenance costs. This assessment is conducted under Regulation No. 714.

Project Registration

Once a project has received favorable evaluations, it proceeds to the registration stage, which is administered by the Ministry of Economy and Commerce. Registration is a legal requirement that ensures national-level transparency and accountability. At this stage, the project is officially entered into the national ODA registry, under Articles 13 through 19 of Regulation No. 389.

Project Implementation

During the implementation, the designated executing agencies organize and oversee the full range of project activities. This includes managing procurement processes, signing contracts, and

ensuring that project works and services are delivered as planned. Throughout this stage, implementing agencies must submit quarterly progress reports to the Ministry of Economy and Commerce, as specified in Article 21 of Regulation No. 38. To support project execution, Project Implementation Units (PIUs) are established. These units, which may function as temporary structures within ministries or as dedicated project-specific entities, are responsible for implementing projects within approved budgets and schedules.

Project Completion and Post-Project Evaluation

Upon completion of an ODA project, final reporting and outcome assessments are mandatory parts of the national post-project management process. Under the oversight of the relevant implementing agency, the PIU prepares and submits a final implementation report to the Ministry of Economy and Commerce, under Article 22 of Regulation No. 389. Following this, the Ministry of Economy and Commerce, in collaboration with sectoral ministries and the Ministry of Finance, conducts a post-project evaluation. As outlined in Articles 124 to 134 of Regulation No. 714, this evaluation examines the project's actual impact and long-term sustainability. It also identifies lessons learned, develops recommendations for future initiatives, and improves the overall quality and consistency of the national ODA portfolio.

Special attention is needed for projects that include international treaty obligations. In such cases, the draft treaty must first undergo interagency review, including coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice. The treaty must then be submitted to the Jogorku Kenesh, the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic, for review and authorization. Under the Constitution and relevant legislation on international agreements, parliamentary approval is required for treaties related to public finance, foreign policy, and international cooperation. Only after all domestic procedures are completed, including parliamentary consent, may these ODA projects proceed to full implementation. This process ensures legal and procedural compliance, reinforces the country's commitment to transparency, the rule of law, and the protection of national interests, and secures the international legal validity of commitments made under ODA-funded projects.

2.2. Challenges in the Post-Project Management of ODA in the Kyrgyz Republic

An analysis of the post-project management system for ODA in the Kyrgyz Republic indicates opportunities to strengthen the institutional and managerial foundations that support the long-term effectiveness of external aid. While formal structures are in place, there is considerable potential to improve the system's capacity to contribute more directly to national development priorities. Moving from a primarily procedural approach to a broader framework, based on standardized practices, clear regulatory guidance, strong institutional mechanisms, and integration with national planning, would allow post-project evaluations to play a more constructive role. Such progress would help ensure that ODA interventions deliver sustainable results, improve operational efficiency, and achieve measurable development impact.

Several opportunities have been identified to strengthen the ODA system in the Kyrgyz Republic, particularly in enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of project outcomes. These findings highlight areas where improvements could enhance institutional performance and alignment with national development objectives.

Reframing the Approach to Post-Project Evaluation

One area with potential for improvement lies in the current approach to post-project evaluations, which often emphasizes procedural formalities over substantive assessment. Evaluation reports, while systematically produced, often focus on documenting completed activities rather than analyzing broader social, economic, or institutional impacts. The lack of standardized methodologies and evaluation criteria can lead to varied interpretations of project effectiveness, thereby limiting the comparability and utility of findings. In some cases, evaluations are conducted by the same agencies responsible for implementation, raising concerns about the objectivity of the evaluations. In addition, reporting formats often prioritize compliance with donor requirements over national development priorities. Addressing these issues could help shift evaluations from a procedural requirement to a practical source of learning and forward-looking planning.

Enhancing Strategic Alignment of ODA with National Planning

Stronger alignment between ODA initiatives and national planning would support a more coordinated and effective use of development resources. While ODA projects are generally designed to complement national programs, inconsistencies sometimes occur, particularly where demographic, environmental, and sector-specific considerations are underemphasized. This can lead to underuse of completed infrastructure or reduced development relevance. More systematic integration with national and sectoral strategies, including early-stage coordination and consultation, could improve coordination and increase the impact of external assistance, especially in socially important sectors.

Expanding Resources and Capacity for Post-Project Support

Maintaining the long-term outcomes of ODA investments requires sufficient financial and institutional support. In practice, local budgets often have limited resources for operating and maintaining ODA-supported infrastructure. At the same time, local self-governance bodies may lack the technical and human capacity to manage these assets efficiently. Strengthening local fiscal planning, diversifying revenue sources, and improving institutional capacity can address these constraints and support the long-term viability of infrastructure.

Strengthening Institutional Memory and Knowledge Retention

Institutional knowledge gained through project implementation is an important asset for ongoing development efforts. However, frequent staff turnover and the lack of a centralized repository for project documentation can limit the accumulation and transfer of institutional memory. Improving

knowledge management practices, such as creating a unified project database and institutionalizing internal learning processes, would promote more consistent performance across project cycles and improve the quality of future project design.

Clarifying Operational Responsibilities for Completed Infrastructure

Ensuring the sustained use and value of completed infrastructure requires clearer legal and operational frameworks. In some cases, the absence of mechanisms for transferring assets to responsible ministries or local governments has created ambiguities in ownership and oversight. Similarly, when designated operating institutions are not identified or cannot manage facilities effectively, infrastructure may be underused or deteriorate over time. Establishing clear guidelines for asset transfer, assigning capable operators, and securing sufficient resources for operations can help preserve the development value of completed projects.

2.3. Key Issues and Need for Improvement

To address the challenges in managing ODA in the Kyrgyz Republic and ensure that international development projects achieve sustainable and measurable outcomes, a comprehensive reform agenda is necessary. The proposed measures aim to address institutional, organizational, and methodological shortcomings while aligning the national ODA management system with internationally recognized practices and standards.

The overall goal of these measures is to transform the current ODA framework, which remains fragmented and overly procedural, into a coordinated, results-driven system that is capable of delivering targeted and relevant development outcomes. By increasing efficiency in the use of external resources, improving alignment with national development priorities, preserving institutional knowledge, and strengthening transparency and accountability, this transformation will improve the quality and effectiveness of development cooperation.

One of the priorities for improving the effectiveness of ODA management in the Kyrgyz Republic is the creation of a unified electronic platform. The absence of a centralized database for ODA projects has contributed to fragmented data, weakened institutional memory, and compromised the quality of post-project assessments. A centralized platform would address these challenges by maintaining an up-to-date registry of all ongoing and completed ODA projects, enabling thorough tracking and oversight. It would also provide transparent access to project-related information for a broad range of stakeholders, including government institutions, development partners, and the public, thereby improving accountability and trust. Such a platform would also help standardize reporting formats and monitoring procedures, ensuring consistency across projects. It would serve as a repository for project implementation data, outcomes, and lessons learned, supporting institutional learning and long-term policy improvement. Korea's K-Developedia is a notable example in this regard, demonstrating the benefits of integrated digital systems for managing and disseminating development knowledge.

Alongside digital infrastructure, developing a national evaluation methodology tailored to the Kyrgyz context is essential. The absence of standardized evaluation criteria undermines the objectivity and effectiveness of assessment processes, resulting in unclear benchmarks for success. A national methodology should be based on internationally accepted frameworks, such as the OECD-DAC criteria, which encompass relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability, while remaining flexible enough to reflect local priorities and administrative conditions. Core components of this methodology should include mandatory in-depth (ex-post) evaluations for all completed projects, with special provisions for larger or more complex projects. The adoption of standardized indicators specific to project types will also allow for cross-project comparability and more rigorous data analysis. This shift from a formalistic to a results-oriented evaluation culture will provide practical findings and serve as a foundation for improving the quality and coordination of ODA interventions.

Equally important is the strengthening of institutional leadership in the coordination and oversight of ODA. The Ministry of Economy and Commerce, as designated under Article 7 of Regulation No. 389 be given greater authority to fulfill its role as the central coordinating body. This would involve expanding the Ministry's mandate to include the approval of evaluation methodologies, oversight of monitoring and post-project reviews, and preparation of consolidated analytical reports for national decision-makers and development partners. Establishing a permanent ODA evaluation and analysis unit within the Ministry would help institutionalize this function, strengthen technical capacity, and reduce fragmentation in evaluation practices. These measures will contribute to a more coordinated and nationally aligned ODA governance system.

Finally, the integrity and credibility of the evaluation process would be strengthened by involving independent evaluators. Currently, the potential for implementing agencies to assess their projects creates potential conflicts of interest and undermines the objectivity of the findings. Engaging independent experts, whether from academia, civil society, or third-party evaluation firms, can help ensure impartial and evidence-based assessments of project outcomes. Such an approach improves the reliability of evaluation results and builds donor confidence in the transparency and professionalism of the Kyrgyz Republic's ODA system. Overall, these measures will contribute to a more effective, accountable, and nationally guided use of external development assistance.

3. Korea's Policy Evaluation System and Fiscal Program Evaluation

3.1. Understanding Policy Evaluation

Evaluation is a crucial component of human cognition and decision-making. Individuals make evaluative judgments daily, whether assessing the quality of goods and services, the outcomes of interactions, or their conduct. At the individual level, evaluation serves as a mechanism for self-reflection and moral deliberation, supporting personal growth and encouraging a more considered approach to life. In this context, evaluation is not only a technical exercise but a fundamental aspect of rational decision-making.

Conceptually, evaluation goes beyond measurement or judgment; it reflects a way of thinking grounded in dialogue, reflection, learning, and ongoing improvement. Within complex systems, such as organizations, enterprises, and governments, the absence of evaluative reasoning hinders progress, undermines accountability, and restricts organizational learning. Without rigorous evaluation, it becomes difficult to determine whether objectives are being achieved, which interventions are producing intended results, and why certain initiatives fall short. Repeated failures, inefficient resource utilization, and policy ineffectiveness often result from the absence of a strong evaluative framework. While the saying "failure is the mother of success" is frequently cited, it holds only when failure is critically analyzed and used to inform corrective action. Evaluation is, therefore, the means through which historical experience is turned into institutional knowledge and forward-looking planning. For this reason, evaluation is often described as a "school of wisdom," not only for acquiring knowledge but for developing more thoughtful and rational approaches to problem-solving.

The 20th century has been described as the "era of planning," during which states directed economic development through centrally coordinated plans and policy interventions. National governments, including Korea's, prioritized economic growth and modernization through broad planning systems. In contrast, the 21st century is increasingly referred to as the "era of evaluation," where policy legitimacy and effectiveness are determined not only by intent or planning but through systematic assessment and evidence-based decision-making. Reflecting this global trend, the United Nations designated 2015 as the International Year of Evaluation (EvalYear) to promote a culture of evaluation and the adoption of evidence-based policymaking across countries.

In Korea, the institutionalization of evaluation has been driven by the rise of neoliberal governance models since the 2000s. Evaluation mechanisms have become part of the structure of public administration, serving as tools for performance measurement, policy management, and policy accountability. In this framework, evaluation acts as a system of feedback and control, enabling public institutions to adapt to changing policy environments and to generate the evidence needed for policy improvement and reform.

Policy evaluation facilitates a systematic understanding of government interventions by examining the processes through which policies are implemented, the accuracy of their execution, and their varying impacts across different populations. Through this analysis, policymakers can identify shortcomings, adjust implementation strategies, and improve the design of future interventions.

At its core, policy evaluation is the process of assessing the value, importance, and effectiveness of policy actions within the broader context of the policymaking cycle. The scope of policy evaluation varies depending on the specific dimension being reviewed. In a narrow sense, policy evaluation may focus only on measuring goal attainment. Broader definitions, however, include evaluations of the relevance, coherence, efficiency, and sustainability of policy interventions across all stages of the policy process.

Scholars and institutions offer the following definitions of policy evaluation:

- **Vedung (1997):** Defines policy evaluation as a retrospective assessment of the merit, worth, and utility of government interventions, including processes, outputs, and outcomes, to inform future decisions and policy actions.
- **Trochim (1998):** Emphasizes that evaluation is inherently political, often involving conflicts among stakeholders with differing interests. It is a professional activity that uses formal methodological approaches to generate empirically grounded evidence on public programs, products, and outcomes.
- **OECD (2009):** Describes evaluation as the systematic and objective assessment of ongoing or completed projects, programs, or policies, covering their design, implementation, and resulting impacts.
- **Basic Law on Government Performance Evaluation of the Republic of Korea (Article 2, Clause 1):** Defines evaluation as the activity of examining, analyzing, and rating the planning, implementation, and outcomes of government policies, projects, or administrative tasks conducted by institutions, corporations, or organizations.
- **Patton (2008):** Views program evaluation as the systematic collection of data on a program's activities, characteristics, and outcomes to render judgments, improve effectiveness, and inform planning.
- **Widmer and Brunold (2017):** Define evaluation as a research-based, transparent process for systematically assessing policies, strategies, laws, and institutional measures.
- **U.S. Public Law No. 115-435 (2019**): Characterizes evaluation as the systematic collection and analysis of data to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of public programs, policies, or organizations.

In sum, policy evaluation is a methodologically rigorous, criteria-based inquiry into the design, implementation, and impact of public policy. Its purpose is not only to determine the utility and value of governmental interventions but also to enhance their effectiveness through evidence-based feedback and learning mechanisms.

3.1.1. Characteristics of Policy Evaluation

Policy or program evaluation has several defining characteristics that reflect its complexity, usefulness, and inherently political nature. Based on the work by scholars such as Weiss (1998) and Vedung (1997), these characteristics can be described as follows:

Government Intervention as the Object of Evaluation

Policy evaluation focuses on assessing government interventions, including policies, programs, and projects. Although some scholars distinguish between these categories for analytical clarity (Koo, 2003), in practice, the distinctions often blur due to the nested and hierarchical nature of goals and implementation mechanisms. As a result, evaluations often address all three levels in a coordinated way.

Instrument for Organizational and Administrative Improvement

Evaluation is not conducted in isolation; it is action-oriented and designed to inform decision-making. The purpose behind public policy evaluation is to provide practical findings that help improve government performance. It serves a dual role, functioning as both a diagnostic tool and as a normative mechanism for administrative learning and reform.

Emphasis on Implementation, Outputs, and Outcomes

While evaluations may cover the entire policy cycle, from agenda-setting to termination, they often focus on policy implementation, the resulting outputs, and the eventual outcomes. This focus reflects the main concern of evaluation: understanding whether and how intended goals are achieved in practice (Vedung, 1997).

Judgment Through Comparative Criteria

Evaluation involves judgment, which requires a set of criteria or standards. However, the diversity of stakeholders and contexts makes a universal evaluative framework impossible. Instead, evaluators use multiple, context-specific criteria, ranging from cost-effectiveness and efficiency to equity and social acceptability, to make their assessments.

Systematic and Analytical Process

Policy evaluation is systematic and analytical. Its systematic nature lies in procedural rigor, from problem definition and data collection to analysis and reporting. Its analytical character comes from using empirical data and causal reasoning to generate explanations, draw conclusions, and offer recommendations. Evaluative inferences must be based on sound methodology to be credible.

Multidisciplinary Orientation

As a field of applied inquiry, policy evaluation is a multidisciplinary field. It combines methods and perspectives from political science, public administration, economics, sociology, statistics, and organizational theory. Evaluators must be able to work across different theoretical frameworks and methodological traditions to address complex public problems.

Politically Embedded Practice

Evaluation operates within the broader political and economic context of policymaking. It is not a neutral or purely technical process; rather, it is shaped by institutional interests, stakeholder dynamics, and normative considerations (Weiss, 1998; Cronbach et al., 1980). Evaluations may serve different functions, from symbolic legitimation to reallocating resources, depending on the political context. Decision-makers and implementers often prefer evaluations that validate their policies, both to reinforce institutional legitimacy and to influence budget and policy priorities (Weiss, 1988).

In sum, policy evaluation is a complex and politically dependent endeavor that combines methodological rigor with normative judgment. It provides essential tools for understanding, improving, and legitimizing public action.

3.1.2. Misconceptions About Policy Evaluation

Despite its growing role in public administration and policy studies, policy evaluation is still subject to widespread misconceptions. These misunderstandings often lead to resistance, limited use, or superficial application of evaluation practices. The following points, adapted from ACF & OPRE (2010), aim to address common misconceptions.

"Evaluation Diverts Program Resources and Harms Beneficiaries"

A common concern is that allocating resources to evaluation takes away from direct service delivery. While evaluation does incur costs, it ultimately improves program efficiency and effectiveness by identifying what works, what does not, and why. This, in turn, helps target resources more effectively to maximize benefits for end-users.

"Evaluation Increases Administrative Burden"

Program managers often view evaluation as an additional responsibility that detracts from core operations. However, when integrated effectively, evaluation supports rather than hinders administration by providing data-based feedback that guides resource allocation, performance management, and program improvement.

"Evaluation Is Too Complex or Technical"

Seeing evaluation as overly complex can discourage engagement. While some parts of the evaluation require specialized knowledge, many core activities, such as monitoring progress, gathering stakeholder feedback, are within the abilities of most administrators. With appropriate training and support, evaluation capacity can be built gradually within public organizations.

"Evaluation Produces Negative Results with Punitive Consequences"

Evaluations are sometimes feared because they may reveal weaknesses in a program. However, identifying limitations should not be seen as a failure; it should be viewed as an opportunity for improvement and institutional learning. When framed constructively, evaluation builds organizational resilience and adaptability.

"Evaluation Is Just Monitoring in Disguise"

Evaluation and monitoring are related but different. Monitoring involves routine data collection to track implementation, while evaluation analyzes that data to assess relevance, effectiveness, and impact. Confusing the two may lead to an undervaluation of the analytical and strategic role of evaluation.

"Evaluation Requires Rigid Performance Benchmarks That Are Difficult to Establish"

While performance standards are important in some evaluations, not all evaluations rely on fixed benchmarks. Evaluation judgments can be based on qualitative insights, comparative assessments, and stakeholder perspectives. Flexible methods ensure that evaluations can adapt to varying program goals and conditions.

Together, these points underscore the need to foster a more practical understanding of policy evaluation, one that emphasizes its role in learning, accountability, and continuous improvement, rather than merely control or compliance.

3.1.3. Functions and Values of Evaluation

Evaluation serves many functions that are integral to both individual reasoning and institutional decision-making. At its core, evaluation is valuable for its ability to generate information and knowledge that improves human life, institutional performance, and social outcomes.

Functionally, evaluation operates diagnostically by identifying, explaining, and describing policy or program conditions to determine if they meet expected or agreed-upon standards. This diagnostic role is complemented by its role in goal verification, where evaluation confirms whether intended objectives have been met and clarifies the reasons behind success or failure. In addition, evaluative

findings contribute to predictive reasoning by showing the likely effects of maintaining current strategies unchanged, thus motivating timely adjustments.

Evaluation also serves as a tool for individual and organizational learning. Encouraging reflection enables institutions to learn from their experiences and integrate new insights into their strategic planning. This evaluation strengthens decision-making by providing evidence-based, systematically analyzed data, which contributes to more coherent and transparent policy discussions.

Beyond its cognitive and instrumental functions, evaluation acts as a motivator by fostering a culture of accountability and performance improvement. When individuals and organizations know their work will be evaluated, they are more likely to aim for excellence and innovation. Evaluation also plays a key communication role by encouraging dialogue among policymakers, implementers, stakeholders, and beneficiaries. It provides a shared evidence base that supports discussion of policy problems and possible solutions.

Finally, evaluation has significant research value. It advances both theoretical and applied knowledge by testing existing frameworks and identifying new research questions. In this way, evaluation enriches academic research and informs the broader field of policy studies.

In summary, evaluation is a multi-purpose tool that serves diagnostic, strategic, motivational, communicative, and knowledge-building purposes. Its use extends far beyond technical appraisal, covering wider goals of institutional learning, policy accountability, and democratic governance.

3.1.4. Limitations of Policy Evaluation

Despite its many benefits, policy evaluation is not immune to constraints and challenges. These limitations often arise not from methodological flaws but from institutional and cultural conditions that shape how evaluations are perceived, implemented, and used (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2001).

One key limitation is the widespread lack of conceptual and methodological understanding among public officials. Many lack formal training in evaluation and therefore hold incomplete or erroneous views about its purpose and utility. This knowledge gap often gives rise to fear of evaluation results, particularly in environments characterized by low trust or hierarchical rigidity, where evaluation results may be interpreted as grounds for punitive action.

The frequent absence of technical capacity within public organizations worsens these problems. The design and execution of effective evaluations require both methodological skills and the ability to translate findings into actionable strategies. In many institutions, such capacity is limited or altogether absent. As a result, evaluation is often treated as a marginal or externally imposed activity, deprioritized in daily operations.

Even when evaluations are completed, their findings are not always used. When insights are repeatedly ignored or sidelined, organizations can become cynical and disengaged. Staff may come to view evaluation as a symbolic exercise rather than a meaningful management tool.

Evaluation is sometimes perceived as inefficient or burdensome. The time and effort required to conduct high-quality evaluations may appear excessive, especially in resource-constrained settings where short-term operational demands take precedence. This perception is exacerbated by a focus on immediate costs rather than the long-term benefits of evidence-based decision-making.

In some cases, resistance to evaluation comes from managerial overconfidence. Leaders may assume that their experiential knowledge is sufficient, rendering formal evaluation unnecessary. This can result in a reluctance to seek external input or reconsider established practices. A lack of external demand from oversight bodies, funders, or civil society can also reduce incentives to initiate or sustain evaluation efforts. Without this demand, internal motivation and leadership become the key drivers of evaluation.

In conclusion, while evaluation offers great potential as a tool for learning, accountability, and performance improvement, its success depends on organizational readiness, cultural openness, and strategic leadership. Building a robust evaluation system requires more than methodological proficiency; it demands a systemic commitment to reflective governance and adaptive capacity in the face of policy complexity and change.

3.2. Types and Procedures of Policy Evaluation

Policy evaluation encompasses various approaches, which the evaluator's position can categorize, including the timing of the evaluation within the policy cycle and the purpose or methodology employed. Understanding these distinctions is crucial for selecting an evaluation type that aligns with the policy context, stakeholder requirements, and the intended use of the findings.

3.2.1. Classification of Evaluation

Evaluation types are generally categorized as internal, external, and hybrid approaches based on who conducts the assessment.

Internal evaluations are conducted by individuals or units within the organization responsible for policy implementation. These may include self-assessments by program staff or evaluations undertaken by an internal evaluation team or committee. Such evaluations benefit from close familiarity with the program context, institutional knowledge, and ready access to operational data, and they are often more cost-effective and timely. However, they may lack objectivity and entail a higher risk of bias due to organizational proximity and vested interests.

Independent third parties, including academic institutions, research firms, and consulting organizations, conduct external evaluations. These evaluations are valued for their impartiality, methodological rigor, and credibility, particularly in high-stakes decision-making or public accountability contexts. Nonetheless, external evaluators may face challenges in fully grasping the contextual and political nuances of the programs they assess, and practitioners may perceive their recommendations as less feasible.

Hybrid evaluations integrate the strengths of both approaches by involving internal staff and external experts in a collaborative process. Internal actors contribute contextual expertise and ensure alignment with organizational priorities, while external evaluators provide methodological support and safeguard objectivity. Although hybrid models can be resource-intensive, they often produce more actionable and institutionally accepted findings.

3.2.2. Stages of Evaluation

Evaluation may also be classified based on its timing within the policy lifecycle. Each stage addresses distinct questions and serves purposes:

- **Ex-ante evaluation**, conducted before a policy or program is implemented, assesses the feasibility, relevance, and anticipated impacts of proposed interventions. It clarifies objectives, refines program design, and establishes baseline indicators for future comparison. Common tools include needs assessments, cost-benefit analyses, and feasibility studies.
- **Mid-term evaluation** takes place during policy or program implementation to monitor progress, identify challenges, and support adaptive management. It examines whether the implementation is proceeding as planned, assesses initial outputs, and recommends mid-course corrections to enhance effectiveness and efficiency.
- **Ex-post evaluation,** conducted after a policy or program has concluded a policy or program, determines the extent to which objectives were achieved, assessing the efficiency and sustainability of outcomes, and deriving lessons for future interventions. It is often used for accountability purposes and to inform decisions on scaling or institutionalizing initiatives.
- **Post-hoc evaluation**, undertaken well after program completion, assesses long-term impacts and sustainability. It examines whether intended changes have been maintained and identifies enduring effects of the intervention. Post-hoc evaluations are particularly valuable for understanding systemic transformations or unintended consequences that emerge over time.

In practice, these stages are not always distinct, and evaluations may address multiple phases of the policy cycle simultaneously. An effective evaluation strategy will align the timing and type of evaluation with strategic decision points and the information needs of stakeholders.

In summary, the classification and timing of evaluations are pivotal in shaping their utility and influence. Aligning evaluation approaches to policy goals, implementation contexts, and organizational capacities increases the likelihood of generating actionable insights and contributing meaningfully to public sector learning and improvement.

3.2.3. Monitoring and Evaluation

Although often used interchangeably, M&E are distinct yet complementary processes in public policy and administration. Both are essential for evidence-informed decision-making, program accountability, and adaptive management; however, they serve different purposes and operate through distinct mechanisms.

Monitoring is a continuous and systematic process that tracks the implementation of a program or policy in real-time. Its primary objective is to determine whether planned activities are carried out as intended and whether inputs and outputs align with original expectations. Monitoring generates operational data for immediate managerial oversight and day-to-day adjustments. It typically focuses on indicators such as resource utilization, task completion, adherence to timelines, and service delivery metrics.

Evaluation, by contrast, is episodic and analytical. It assesses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of a program or policy. It goes beyond description to address causal questions about how and why certain outcomes were achieved. While monitoring reveals what is happening, evaluation helps explain why it is happening and whether it should be happening at all.

Despite these differences, monitoring and evaluation are functionally interconnected. Monitoring data provides the foundational evidence upon which evaluations are built. Evaluations, in turn, can identify gaps in monitoring systems and recommend improvements to data collection. Together, they form a feedback loop that supports continuous learning and adaptive governance.

The complementarities between monitoring and evaluation can be grouped into three types. First, sequential complementarity occurs when monitoring generates information that guides the formulation of evaluation questions, while evaluations highlight areas requiring further monitoring. Second, informational complementarity arises when both processes can draw from shared data sources but apply different analytical frameworks. Third, interactional complementarity occurs when managers use insights from both processes simultaneously to inform strategic planning, operational refinement, and policy development.

For monitoring systems to be meaningful and effective, they must adhere to several principles. Effective monitoring is results-focused, emphasizing outcomes rather than merely tracking activity. It should be participatory, engaging relevant stakeholders in indicator development and data interpretation to foster ownership and accountability. Monitoring systems must also maintain methodological rigor, employing valid and reliable indicators and ensuring the quality of the data. Furthermore, the collected information should be timely, relevant, and aligned with the program's theory of change, thereby facilitating informed decision-making throughout the implementation process.

In sum, monitoring and evaluation serve distinct yet synergistic functions. When effectively designed and integrated, M&E systems enhance policy transparency, institutional accountability, and program impact. They enable public sector institutions to detect implementation issues early, make evidence-informed decisions, and continuously refine policy interventions in response to emerging needs and contextual changes.

3.3. Korea's Policy Evaluation System

3.3.1. Development of the Evaluation System

The evolution of Korea's government performance evaluation system can be broadly divided into three distinct phases, each reflecting institutional reforms and evolving governance paradigms.

The first phase, referred to as the Period of Review and Analysis (1961–1998), marks the initial institutionalization of policy evaluation in Korea. It began with the enactment of the "Regulation on Government Planning and Review Analysis" (Presidential Decree No. 947) in 1961. The system was introduced to facilitate efficient economic development under conditions of resource scarcity. The Office of Planning and Coordination under the Prime Minister's Office was designated as the central agency responsible for evaluation, which it conducted annually in collaboration with academic experts. Within individual ministries, vice-ministerial-level auditors oversaw internal evaluations. Following the 1981 government reorganization, the Economic Planning Board assumed responsibility for evaluation and began linking outcomes with budgetary planning and allocation. In 1990, the Prime Minister's Office institutionalized policy evaluation as a formal function under the Administrative Coordination Office through the "Regulation on Evaluation and Coordination of Major Government Policies." During this period, review analysis was handled by the Economic Planning Board, while policy evaluation was led by the Prime Minister's Office, resulting in a bifurcated system. From 1983 onward, the Economic Planning Board also implemented performance evaluations for government-invested institutions. In 1994, a Presidential Decree integrated review analysis and policy evaluation through the "Regulation on Review Evaluation and Coordination of Government Affairs." Evaluations were conducted either as regular assessments, focusing on effectiveness and reported semiannually to the Cabinet, or as ad hoc assessments initiated by the Prime Minister to address urgent governance issues. This phase of evaluation practice was predominantly process-focused, emphasizing progress analysis and operational problem-solving in the context of budget execution.

The second phase, the Period of Evaluation Expansion (1998–2004), marked the formalization and expansion of evaluation practices across central administrative agencies. In 1998, Korea introduced an institutional evaluation system, and, in 2001, enacted the "Framework Act on Government Performance Evaluation." The first full-scale institutional evaluations were conducted in 2003, focusing on core policy initiatives, administrative capacity, and public service satisfaction. Agencies also began conducting self-evaluations of their annual work plans. Concurrent reforms included the introduction of a performance management system by the Central Personnel Committee (1999), a goal-oriented management model by the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs (1999), a pilot performance-based budgeting system by the Ministry of Planning and Budget (1999), and performance audits for individual programs by the Board of Audit and Inspection (1995). These initiatives collectively reflected the growing emphasis on outcomes, accountability, and administrative efficiency.

The third phase, known as the Period of Program and Institutional Evaluation (2005–present), was shaped by the enactment of the Government Performance and Results Act in 2003, followed by the Government Performance Evaluation Act in 2006. This legislation institutionalized a performance-based evaluation framework across the public sector. The Act defines evaluation as a systematic activity involving the review, analysis, and appraisal of the planning, implementation, and outcomes

of public policies, programs, and tasks conducted by government bodies and public institutions. The Act's goals include enhancing efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability in state governance. It introduced three formal types of evaluation: self-evaluation, targeted evaluation, and re-evaluation. Influenced by new public management (NPM) principles and performance-driven administrative reforms, evaluation has become embedded within broader public sector innovation. Agencies now conduct evaluations under various labels such as review, analysis, appraisal, and inspection, sometimes outside the formal legal framework.

In addition to executive-led evaluations, legislative oversight has expanded. The "National Assembly Budget Office Act," enacted in 2003, authorized the Budget Analysis Bureau to evaluate major national programs. The Board of Audit and Inspection conducts performance audits in accordance with the "Standards for Public Audits," which focus on assessing economic efficiency, productivity, and policy effectiveness. These legislative and audit-based evaluations are integral to Korea's contemporary policy evaluation landscape.

3.3.2. Current Policy Evaluation System

Korea's current evaluation system comprises two primary layers: integrated evaluations mandated by the Framework Act on Government Performance Evaluation and agency-specific evaluations conducted under individual statutes. The Act sets forth legal and procedural requirements for evaluations and specifies eligible entities, including central government ministries, local governments, affiliated agencies, and public institutions. To oversee the national evaluation agenda, the Act also establishes the Government Performance Evaluation Committee, under the Office of the Prime Minister. This committee is responsible for promoting the systematic, consistent, and efficient execution of evaluations and for supporting the development of evaluation infrastructure.

In practice, central administrative agencies conduct three types of evaluations: self-evaluation, targeted evaluation, and individual evaluations.

Self-evaluation refers to internal assessments conducted by the agencies themselves. As of 2022, forty-six central agencies conducted self-evaluations under the authority of their respective heads. These evaluations aim to improve policy effectiveness and strengthen accountability, with findings integrated into policy planning, organizational restructuring, human resource management, and compensation systems. Self-evaluations cover major policy initiatives, fiscal programs (including general expenditures, R&D, disaster safety, and balanced regional development), and administrative capacities such as organization, staffing, and informatization. Agencies prepare their evaluation plans and establish self-evaluation committees, composed primarily of external experts, to ensure impartiality. While policy evaluations typically emphasize goal attainment and effectiveness, evaluations of fiscal programs and administrative capacity rely on indicators provided by oversight bodies. To prevent leniency bias, a relative evaluation method is applied, and sector-specific oversight agencies validate the results. Self-evaluation results are publicly disclosed through the government evaluation portal,[1] agency websites, and National Assembly standing committees.

[1] Statistics Korea. n.d. "Evaluation Portal." Accessed August 1, 2025. http://www.evaluation.go.kr.

Targeted evaluation refers to evaluations initiated by the Prime Minister to assess overarching national policies that span multiple ministries, as stipulated in Article 2 of the Government Performance Evaluation Act. In 2022, targeted evaluations were also in four policy domains: major policies, regulatory reform, government innovation, and policy communication. An additional merit-based evaluation of proactive governance was also included. The evaluation of major policies, which accounts for 65% of the total evaluation score, examines each agency's strategic initiatives in terms of implementation effort, goal attainment, policy impact, and public satisfaction. Expert panels assess policy effectiveness and satisfaction, and public perception is measured through citizen surveys. Based on these assessments, agencies receive numerical scores and are assigned performance grades.

Policy analysis, also referred to as the analysis of key policy issues, is a sub-type of targeted evaluation designed to address high-priority social or policy concerns from an integrated governance perspective. The Office for Government Policy Coordination selects topics based on public interest and the urgency of the issue at hand. Evaluations are conducted using expert analysis, field investigations, and stakeholder engagement, culminating in policy improvement recommendations. These recommendations undergo inter-agency consultations and are finalized through deliberations in policy coordination or Cabinet meetings. The results are publicly released through press briefings and formal reports. The National Assembly Budget Office conducts similar analyses under the designation "Policy Issue Analysis in Project Evaluation."

Together, these mechanisms form the core of Korea's contemporary policy evaluation system, combining executive oversight, legislative scrutiny, and stakeholder engagement to promote accountability, transparency, and policy learning across government institutions.

3.4. In-Depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects

To improve the effectiveness of public expenditure and strengthen performance-based fiscal management, the Korean government introduced the Autonomous Evaluation System for fiscal programs in 2005. Under this framework, each ministry is responsible for conducting self-assessments of its fiscal programs. The Ministry of Economy and Finance (MOEF) verifies and reviews these evaluations to inform broader fiscal policy decisions. Recognizing the limitations of autonomous evaluations in fully capturing the complexities of program performance, the government supplemented this mechanism in 2006 with the establishment of the In-Depth Evaluation System on Fiscal Projects. This system enables more rigorous and methodologically advanced assessments of both individual programs and program clusters. While autonomous evaluations are conducted annually on one-third of all performance objectives, in-depth evaluations are selectively conducted based on the results of prior autonomous assessments and recommendations from the National Assembly and other external institutions.

3.4.1. Autonomous Evaluation System for Fiscal Programs

The legal basis for the Autonomous Evaluation System is provided by the Enforcement Decree of the National Finance Act, which authorizes the Minister of Economy and Finance to request

evaluations of major fiscal programs from the heads of central government agencies and fund managers. In principle, all fiscal programs involving budgetary or fund allocations are subject to performance management and eligible for evaluation. Evaluations are conducted using a relative assessment methodology, typically based on the number of projects, budget size, and other context-specific indicators. The results are disclosed publicly by each ministry to ensure transparency and accountability. Programs receiving low performance ratings are flagged for potential expenditure restructuring or institutional reform. This system was modeled in part on the U.S. Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART).

Evaluations are structured around three primary phases: planning, implementation, and performance. The planning phase assesses the clarity of program objectives, identifies overlaps with existing programs, and evaluates the appropriateness of performance indicators and targets. The implementation phase assesses whether regular monitoring activities are conducted and whether budget execution aligns with the initial plan. Finally, the performance phase evaluates the extent to which program outcomes have been achieved and whether evaluation results are integrated into subsequent fiscal planning and decision-making.

Key evaluation indicators include program appropriateness, efforts to improve execution rates, achievement of performance targets, quality of program outcomes, and efforts at institutional reform. Additional considerations, such as innovation or mismanagement, may also result in either positive or negative adjustments to the overall evaluation.

3.4.2. In-Depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects

The In-Depth Evaluation system is designed as a policy tool that applies rigorous, evidence-based evaluation methods to programs deemed fiscally or strategically significant. Its primary objective is to evaluate the actual performance of major programs, identify factors contributing to success or failure, and recommend structural improvements to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public expenditure. To ensure neutrality, objectivity, and methodological soundness, in-depth evaluations are generally conducted by the Korea Institute of Public Finance (KIPF), an independent expert institution.

In-depth evaluations are categorized according by the unit of analysis and intended purpose. There are three main types: individual program evaluations, program group evaluations, and core program evaluations. Individual evaluations target specific programs listed in the national budget or fund management plans, primarily assessing their effectiveness and efficiency. Program group evaluations assess clusters of programs pursuing similar policy goals. These evaluations aim to identify overlapping or redundant programs, improve inter-ministerial coordination, and enhance mid-term fiscal allocation strategies. Core program evaluations involve more detailed assessments of specific programs or sub-programs with high strategic priority. These evaluations assess implementation processes, performance outcomes, and the extent to which programs contribute to overarching policy objectives, typically spanning multiple years.

Programs selected for in-depth evaluation must meet both policy and technical criteria. Policy criteria include a program's significance in terms of fiscal scale, public interest, and alignment with national strategic priorities. Technical criteria relate to the availability of relevant data, the potential for comparative analysis, and the feasibility and projected timeline of the evaluation.

The Ministry of Economy and Finance develops an annual implementation plan for in-depth evaluations, specifying their objectives, scope, and schedules. Evaluation institutions are selected based on their demonstrated expertise, independence, and objectivity. To ensure methodological rigor and consistency, the Ministry issues detailed operational guidelines that all designated evaluation institutions must follow. These guidelines cover evaluation design, data collection standards, analytical methodologies, and reporting requirements. In this way, the In-Depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects system plays a vital role in ensuring the integrity and usefulness of performance assessments for fiscal policy planning and public accountability.

3.4.3. Key Provisions of the Operational Guidelines for In-Depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects

The operation of Korea's In-Depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects is governed by detailed guidelines that specify criteria for target selection, evaluation structure, responsibilities, methodologies, and the use of results. These provisions aim to ensure rigor, consistency, and the strategic value of the evaluation process.

Criteria for Selecting Evaluation Targets

Programs eligible for in-depth evaluation are generally those that have been operating for at least two to three years. However, in the case of program group evaluations, more recently launched programs may be included if necessary to assess the relevance of overarching policy goals or verify the adequacy of fiscal accountability frameworks. Eligible programs include those directly managed by the national government, delegated programs, and local or private sector subsidy programs that receive public funding. Programs funded exclusively through local or private sources are generally excluded unless national coordination is required for comprehensive improvements. Programs may also be selected for in-depth evaluation if they have received unsatisfactory results in autonomous evaluations, exhibit duplication or inefficiencies across ministries, or continue to receive fiscal allocations without verified performance outcomes.

Evaluation Execution Structure

Designated institutions with proven methodological and subject-matter expertise conduct in-depth evaluations. Under Article 8-2 of the National Finance Act, the Minister of Economy and Finance delegates evaluation responsibilities to qualified institutions. KIPF serves as the lead management institution, overseeing the design, methodology, and quality of evaluations. For each evaluation task, a project manager (PM) and a supporting research team, comprising internal or external experts with relevant academic or professional backgrounds, are appointed. Institutions must submit a formal evaluation proposal and enter into contractual agreements with the Ministry. Unless an extension is granted, evaluations must be completed within the same fiscal year. Participating institutions must adhere to rigorous standards of academic integrity and confidentiality. Evaluation data must be securely stored for a minimum of five years, and institutions are required to provide data and insights upon request. They may also be called on to contribute to related policy deliberations if needed.

Role of the Evaluation Steering Committee

The Evaluation Steering Committee supports the coordination and oversight of in-depth evaluations. Chaired by the Director General of the Budget Bureau at the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the committee includes officials from relevant budget and policy departments, evaluation researchers, and representatives from KIPF. It serves in an advisory capacity, providing input on implementation planning, reviewing interim and final reports, and formulating follow-up policy recommendations based on evaluation findings.

Responsibilities of the Management Institution

KIPF is responsible for ensuring the integrity and consistency of the evaluation process across all assignments. Its duties include assisting in selecting evaluation targets, conducting preliminary research, providing methodological training to participating institutions, and overseeing the application of appropriate evaluation techniques. KIPF also manages a comprehensive database containing past evaluation outcomes, expert researcher profiles, and statistical and analytical resources from prior evaluations.

Evaluation Standards and Methods

All in-depth evaluations must address both the performance outcomes and the structural relevance of the programs. Evaluations employ a mix of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. They are expected to assess multiple dimensions: effectiveness (achievement of objectives), efficiency (cost-benefit alignment), equity (distributional fairness), sustainability (long-term impact), and the adequacy of program design and operational modalities. These dimensions are tailored to the characteristics of each program under review, and evaluations must adhere to methodological standards set out in the Ministry's guidelines.

Utilization and Feedback of Evaluation Results

The MOEF is responsible for translating evaluation results into actionable policy measures. Based on the findings, MOEF formulates improvement measures and notifies the relevant agencies. These agencies must reflect the results in subsequent budget proposals and operational adjustments. Noncompliance may result in budget reductions or program discontinuation. Evaluation results are published on the websites of the implementing institutions. However, if public disclosure compromises fiscal operations or strategic planning, the Ministry may authorize restricted disclosure to safeguard policy interests.

Collectively, these provisions ensure that the In-Depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects system operates as a comprehensive performance management tool, assessing not only fiscal efficiency but also strengthening strategic planning, accountability, and institutional learning within Korea's public finance system.

3.4.4. Evaluation Methodologies by Program Lifecycle Stage

This section categorizes the fiscal program lifecycle into three stages—design, early implementation, and mature operation—and presents corresponding evaluation methodologies for each stage. It outlines key evaluation methods and categorizes evaluation items according to their suitability for quantitative or qualitative analysis.

Planning Evaluation

In principle, in-depth evaluations target programs that have been implemented for at least two to three years, enabling outcome assessment. However, under Article 5 of the In-Depth Evaluation Operational Guidelines, programs that have not yet reached the three-year mark may still be evaluated if their institutional design or fiscal accountability justifies an assessment of policy relevance.

Programs in the early implementation stage often lack adequate outcome data for impact evaluation. Therefore, evaluators focus on assessing the appropriateness of the program's design. Alternatively, process evaluation may be used to determine whether the program is proceeding as planned and to identify deviations from its original design. If activities have not yet begun, planning evaluation becomes the primary method for assessment.

Even for programs that have been in operation for more than two to three years, design evaluation may be necessary, particularly when impact evaluations reveal underperformance. In such cases, evaluators may review demand forecasts, beneficiary selection criteria, and other design-related factors to ensure the accuracy of the evaluation.

Evaluators should also consider whether the program's objectives could be achieved through non-fiscal instruments. Reviewing the adequacy of fiscal support, funding mechanisms, and implementation structures can provide valuable insights for expenditure restructuring.

Process Evaluation

Process evaluation examines whether a program is being implemented in line with its original plan and design. It identifies deviations and traces the causal pathways leading to the program's impacts. Specifically, it examines the continuity between inputs and activities, as well as between activities and outputs, within the program's logic model. If discontinuities are identified, evaluators must determine whether they stem from program activities or characteristics of the target population.

Process evaluation is particularly useful when outcome evaluations reveal weak results, as it helps identify the reasons for underperformance. It can also serve as a standalone evaluation approach when the program has not matured sufficiently to warrant an impact assessment.

Key process evaluation questions include:

- Were program activities implemented as planned?
- Were sufficient resources allocated to support implementation?

- If deviations occurred, what were the causes?
- What were the associated implementation costs?
- What aspects of the implementation were particularly effective or deficient?

Impact Evaluation

The primary goal of in-depth evaluation is to verify a program's effectiveness and produce actionable insights for future program design. The core focus of in-depth evaluation should be on effectiveness and impact, with implementation quality and efficiency as supplementary considerations.

Impact evaluation comprises two types: outcome evaluation and net impact evaluation. Outcome evaluation measures program effects on beneficiaries, whereas net impact evaluation compares beneficiaries with non-beneficiaries to isolate the program's specific effects.

Evaluation items typically include both general impact measures and those addressing impact heterogeneity. Identifying variations in program impacts across demographics, service providers, or program components provides critical insights for restructuring expenditures and refining policies.

When quantitative data for impact evaluation are unavailable, evaluators should conduct qualitative surveys with beneficiaries. Where feasible, non-beneficiaries should also be surveyed to support net impact evaluation based on qualitative data.

If the program has been in operation long enough to undergo primary impact evaluation, net impact evaluation should be the central method. Outcome and process evaluations should complement the analysis. Relying solely on outcome evaluation is insufficient to establish causality, as improvements in indicators may result from external trends. For example, an increase in cultural facility usage may stem from broader societal changes from rather than the program itself.

(1) Outcome Evaluation

Outcome evaluation determines whether a program has achieved its intended outcomes. Depending on data availability, it may take the form of:

A. Assessment of goal attainment

B. Evaluation of changes in outcomes

C. Analysis of variations in outcomes across groups

Outcome evaluation assesses changes in outputs and outcomes resulting from public investment, employing both quantitative and qualitative methods. However, when external factors are suspected of significantly influencing outcomes, establishing causality becomes difficult. In such cases, conducting a net impact evaluation is essential.

Key evaluation questions include the following:

- Has the program achieved its stated objectives?
- Have there been unintended effects?
- Does program effectiveness vary by demographic characteristics of beneficiaries?
- Does effectiveness vary by service provider?
- Does effectiveness depend on program approach or components?
- Could alternative program designs achieve similar or better outcomes?

(2) Methods of Outcome Evaluation

A. **Assessment of Goal Attainment:** Compare actual performance against pre-established targets.

B. **Change Assessment:** Evaluate differences in outcomes before and after the intervention, or compare participants with non-participants when formal targets are absent.

C. **Variation Assessment:** Investigate whether program effects differ by demographic characteristics, service providers, or program components, providing valuable insights for improving performance.

These methodologies provide a comprehensive understanding of program impacts, supporting evidence-based decision-making in public financial management.

4. Strategies for Strengthening Governance of Public Investment Projects

As the Kyrgyz Republic advances its use of ODA to meet national development priorities, strengthening the governance framework for public investment projects has become increasingly important. Central to this effort is the institutionalization of a robust, nationally owned M&E system that transcends procedural formalities and promotes evidence-based decision-making.

First, the government should focus on building a unified electronic platform to centralize ODA project information. This platform should serve as a national repository for project data, facilitate real-time reporting and evaluation, and ensure the long-term preservation of institutional memory and lessons learned. Korea's K-Developedia platform is a valuable reference in this regard.

Second, the government should develop a coherent national M&E framework that incorporates internationally recognized standards, such as the OECD-DAC criteria, specifically relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. This framework must be tailored to the Kyrgyz Republic's specific administrative context while maintaining methodological rigor. Investments in evaluator training, technical workshops, and collaboration with experienced development partners will be crucial for developing the necessary methodological capacity across institutions.

Third, evaluation functions should be separated from implementation responsibilities to enhance the objectivity and credibility of findings. Independent assessments, particularly for high-risk or high-value projects, can help reduce potential conflicts of interest and enhance public confidence in ODA management.

Fourth, the Ministry of Economy and Commerce should be officially authorized to lead and coordinate all evaluation-related activities. Its responsibilities should include the development and approval of evaluation methodologies, oversight of reporting quality, and dissemination of findings to policymakers and the public. Establishing a permanent analytical and evaluation unit within the Ministry would strengthen continuity and support strategic oversight.

Finally, ODA must be fully integrated into national strategic planning processes. All proposed projects should undergo pre-approval screening to ensure alignment with national development programs, such as the 2030 National Development Strategy. Evaluation findings must inform future budget and policy decisions, ensuring that ODA supports a broader framework for adaptive and sustainable governance.

5. Conclusion

This report examined the institutional, procedural, and technical dimensions of the M&E system for ODA in the Kyrgyz Republic. Drawing on lessons from the Republic of Korea's experience in performance-based fiscal and policy management, this analysis reveals both progress and persistent challenges. While the Kyrgyz Republic has made strides in formalizing its ODA governance structures, significant limitations persist in the practical implementation of effective evaluation practices.

A central concern is the prevalence of formalistic evaluations that prioritize procedural compliance over substantive assessment of results. Reports often focus on activity completion rather than development outcomes and are frequently compiled by implementing agencies, which can undermine their objectivity. The absence of standardized evaluation criteria, coupled with fragmented data systems, further weakens the capacity to generate actionable insights and sustain institutional memory.

Moreover, the integration of ODA projects into national development strategies is still limited. Many initiatives are implemented in isolation from broader sectoral plans, resulting in inefficiencies, underused infrastructure, and lost opportunities for collaboration. Local institutional capacity constraints, particularly in post-project maintenance, further exacerbate these challenges.

To address these issues, this report emphasizes the need for a rigorous, transparent, and embedded national M&E system within domestic policy processes. Evaluation should be seen as a core governance function that supports evidence-informed policymaking and continuous improvement. The Republic of Korea's approach demonstrates that such a system requires not only legal and technical foundations but also a strong political will, effective leadership, and a culture of continuous learning.

Key recommendations include developing a national evaluation methodology based on international standards, tailored to the Kyrgyz context; establishing a centralized digital platform for ODA data and evaluations; capacity-building initiatives to enhance evaluator expertise; and empowering the Ministry of Economy and Commerce to lead evaluation coordination.

Additionally, introducing an in-depth evaluation mechanism for strategically significant projects, modeled on Korea's fiscal evaluation framework, would allow for prioritization and more meaningful analysis of outcomes.

In summary, institutionalizing evaluation is not a peripheral administrative task—it is foundational to achieving policy coherence, ensuring accountability, and maximizing the developmental impact of foreign assistance. By committing to these reforms, the Kyrgyz Republic can reinforce its role as a transparent, competent, and forward-looking development partner, while ensuring that ODA plays a transformative role in realizing the country's long-term aspirations.

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02

Chapter

Development of Monitoring and Evaluation Criteria and Indicators of ODA Projects

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Keywords:
M&E Indicator, M&E Guideline, Aid Information System

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Purpose of the Study

Although development aid has increased in recent years, the Kyrgyz government faces challenges in evaluating the effectiveness of Official Development Assistance (ODA) projects due to the fragmented management of these projects across different ministries. Therefore, a coordinated approach is necessary to manage the contribution of ODA projects to national economic development.

The Ministry of Economy and Commerce, which oversees ODA management, has emphasized the need to develop Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) guidelines and indicators for use by implementing ministries to ensure effective ODA management and evaluation. They have also requested Korea's policy consultation and experience-sharing, which led to the launch of this project.

Accordingly, this chapter aims to develop criteria and indicators for M&E that the Kyrgyz government can apply to ODA performance management and evaluation. It also proposes M&E guidelines to support more structured and consistent assessment.

The study aims to provide essential elements for operating an effective M&E system, ensuring that ODA projects align with the Kyrgyz Republic's national development strategy.

1.2. Scope and Methodology of the Study

First, this chapter analyzes the current ODA M&E system in the Kyrgyz government. It examines ODA project information management and reviews the M&E operational system and methods, including evaluation indicators. It also analyzes the current status of M&E guidelines in the Kyrgyz government.

Second, the chapter presents case studies of ODA information management and M&E systems from a recipient country perspective. It focuses on the cases where recipient countries take the lead in the integrated management of ODA projects. The representative cases selected for analysis are Rwanda and Vietnam. In Rwanda, the government uses the Donor Performance Assessment Framework (DPAF) to manage donor contributions and ensure alignment with national development strategies. In Vietnam, the government utilizes the Development Assistance Database to coordinate and manage donor projects in line with national development strategies.

Third, the chapter analyzes Korea's in-depth evaluation of fiscal projects and their policy implications. It examines Korea's In-depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects system, in which the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MOEF) assesses the effectiveness of projects implemented by executing ministries. It provides the guidelines and processes of In-depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects, including evaluation planning, establishing a logic model, developing evaluation questions, determining evaluation methods, collecting and analyzing data, and conducting evaluations.

Fourth, based on the analysis, it will finally suggest policy implications for the Kyrgyz government. It will provide policy recommendations on evaluation methods, criteria, and indicators for ODA M&E within the Kyrgyz government.

For this purpose, we will explore official documents related to ODA monitoring and evaluation methods, as well as the current aid information management system in the Kyrgyz government. We will also analyze how they conduct M&E to enhance development effectiveness through interviewing government officials in the Kyrgyz Republic. The examine official documents of other developing countries, such as Rwanda and Vietnam for case studies. This chapter is written by internal experts from the Ministry of Economy and Commerce in the Kyrgyz Republic for local data collection and preliminary analysis.

2. Analysis of the Current Status of ODA Project Monitoring and Evaluation in the Kyrgyz Republic

2.1. Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) system

In the Kyrgyz Republic, the Ministry of Economy and Commerce oversees grant aid, while concessional loans (public investment projects) are jointly managed by the Ministry of Finance (lead agency) and the Ministry of Economy and Commerce. Line ministries are responsible for implementing ODA projects report to their supervising ministry under two decrees governing aid project management. Decrees No. 389 and No. 232 address project planning, implementation, and M&E of ODA projects. ODA projects with a grant are reported under Decree No. 389, while ODA projects with a loan follow Decree No. 232 for project management. In particular, monitoring reports on aid projects and evaluation reports after project completion are submitted within the guidelines of the two decrees.

2.1.1. M&E System for ODA project with Loan

An annex to Decree No. 232, titled “Regulation on the Management of State Investments,” defines the reporting requirements for monitoring the results of public investment projects and specifies the format for reports submitted upon project completion. This regulation was updated by Resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic on December 26, 2022 (No. 714), and August 14, 2023 (No. 405).

Monitoring

Under paragraph 116 of the Regulations on Public Investment Management approved by Resolution No. 232 of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic on May 28, 2019, the executive agency must prepare and submit, both electronically and in printed form, a summary report on project implementation to the Ministry of Economy and Commerce and the Ministry of Finance every quarter, not later than the 25th of the month following the reporting period.

According to paragraph 114 of the Regulations, representatives of the Ministry may conduct random site visits to monitor project implementation or engage independent experts, as well as public or private organizations, for this purpose.

Furthermore, a summary report on the progress of PIP projects is prepared and submitted to the Presidential Administration.

For example, project implementation monitoring is addressed in Chapter 10, "Project Implementation Monitoring," of the regulation. The regulation specifies the following key monitoring requirements: actual implementation status of the project; budget status compared to the initial plan; compliance with technical, environmental, and safety standards; analysis of issues preventing timely and high-quality implementation; sector-specific factors requiring special monitoring; and analysis of measures to mitigate or resolve issues based on monitoring results.

In addition, the regulation provides detailed definitions for submission deadlines and procedures. For example, quarterly reports must be submitted by the 25th of the month in which the reporting period ends. The regulation imposes strict penalties; if a report is incomplete, it is considered not to have been submitted at all. It also defines the feedback procedure. The Economic Forecasting Department within the Ministry of Finance reviews the regular reports and provides feedback as needed. If significant issues arise, the matter is reported to the Council of the Cabinet of Ministers on Fiscal and Investment Policy, which decides on the course of action for the project.

Project Completion Report and Evaluation

Upon project completion, the performance of each project must be reported. The responsibility for performance measurement and reporting lies with the relevant ministry overseeing the project. Performance evaluation must be conducted using sector-specific methodologies that have been approved by the relevant institution before implementation.

Upon project completion, the following aspects must be assessed as evaluation criteria for completed projects. First, the evaluation must verify the achieved performance indicators. The evaluator conducts physical verification and analysis to confirm whether the performance indicators were achieved as planned. Second, it assesses whether the project was completed within the planned timeframe, compared to the original schedule. Third, it compares the planned budget with the actual expenditure to evaluate cost efficiency and financial management. Fourth, it reviews whether the project complied with the required technical, environmental, and safety regulations. Fifth, the evaluator assesses whether the project complied with technical, environmental, and safety regulations as required. Sixth, it analyzes key sector-specific issues that required special attention from the implementing agency during the project. Through evaluation criteria, the completion evaluation serves as a critical process to enhance future project effectiveness, accountability, and policy improvement in ODA project management.

Within three months of project completion, the implementing agency must submit a Project Completion Report to the Ministry of Finance using the designated template. If necessary, the Economic Forecasting Department may conduct on-site visits to evaluate project performance. Additionally, independent experts, members of the public, and private institutions may participate in the evaluation process. Within one month of receiving the Project Completion Report, the Economic Forecasting Department provides feedback to the implementing agency, with recommendations to enhance project performance. The implementing agency then prepares a summary document outlining the project's outcomes and submits it to the Cabinet of Ministers. All project-related documents must be stored and managed in compliance with the national records management regulations.

Ex-post Evaluation of ODA Projects with Loans

The ex-post evaluation is conducted after a project has been completed and fully implemented to assess its long-term impact, sustainability, and lessons learned. This evaluation aims to improve the planning and effectiveness of future ODA projects.

In the Kyrgyz Republic, relevant decrees and regulations include provisions for conducting ex-post evaluations to assess a project's long-term impact after a specified period following its completion. Ex-post evaluations are the responsibility of the implementing agency.

There are two approaches to ex-post evaluation. First, it examines the functionality of assets created by the project. It assesses whether the assets and infrastructure created through the project are operating as intended. For this purpose, it uses predefined performance indicators established during project planning as the basis for assessment.

Second, ex-post evaluation includes an assessment of the socio-economic impact. It analyzes the impact on the sector in which the project was implemented. It evaluates the effectiveness of activities by taking into account how the project-generated assets contribute to socio-economic development.

The implementing agency determines the appropriate methodology, considering sector-specific factors, and must use an approved evaluation framework. Ex-post evaluations are conducted annually for five years after project completion. Before each ex-post evaluation, the implementing agency must prepare a detailed evaluation plan. The evaluation plan must include the following in <Table 2-1>.

<Table 2-1> Evaluation Plan for Ex-post Evaluation

- A description of the tasks, stages, tools, and timelines for monitoring.
- Key questions for monitoring and/or evaluation.
- The composition of the specialist group conducting monitoring.
- Indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the object.
- Preliminary analysis of information about the monitored object (results of previous monitoring, contact and technical information about the object, suggestions and complaints from service recipients, etc.).
- Timelines for conducting the evaluation.

Note: Regulation on the management of state investments. The resolutions of the Cabinet of the Kyrgyz Republic dated December 26, 2022, No. 714, and August 14, 2023, No. 405

Source: Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. (2023. 8.14) Appendix to the Regulation on the Management of Public Investments the Kyrgyz Republic No. 232 https://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/14565/edition/4832/ru

Indicators

During the ex-post evaluation process, both quantitative and qualitative indicators are considered to comprehensively assess the project's effectiveness. Key material outcomes include the operational functionality of project assets and the quality of services delivered. The evaluation also examines financial resource expenditures to ensure that funds were allocated and used efficiently. Productivity measures, including service capacity, service delivery time, and labor productivity, are

analyzed to assess operational efficiency. Additionally, service utilization rates, such as the number of visits to healthcare facilities per 10,000 people or the extent to which services meet demand, serve as key performance indicators. For service quality, the evaluation assesses compliance with standards, survey feedback, and the presence of quality control systems. Depending on the project's nature, other sector-specific indicators may also be incorporated to provide a comprehensive assessment of the project's long-term impact.

Criteria 1: Sustainability

In the ex-post evaluation process, the project's sustainability is also assessed to determine its long-term viability and impact. This includes assessing financial sustainability, such as analyzing the inflow of funds, comparing actual financing with the forecasts from the feasibility study, and evaluating financial stability indicators like profitability in revenue-generating projects. The assessment examines changes in the composition of service or product consumers to ensure that the project continues to meet the needs of its intended beneficiaries. The condition and functionality of infrastructure, including logistics and operational support, are reviewed to confirm their continued effectiveness. Human resource factors, such as staff retention, turnover rates, and the availability of qualified personnel, are also reviewed, as they play a crucial role in ensuring project sustainability. Furthermore, the evaluation considers potential risks to the project's long-term success and assesses environmental sustainability to determine whether the project aligns with ecological standards and minimizes negative environmental impacts.

Criteria 2: Impact

In the ex-post evaluation process, the project's ultimate impact on society is assessed to determine its long-term effectiveness and contribution to development. A key aspect of this evaluation is service accessibility, measured by indicators such as the number of healthcare facilities per 10,000 population and the extent to which service coverage meets demand. The evaluation incorporates beneficiary assessments to understand how the project has affected their quality of life, providing direct feedback on perceived improvements. A broader impact assessment is also conducted by analyzing long-term changes in key departmental statistics, such as increases in freight flow or reductions in disease risks, to gauge the project's contribution to economic and social well-being. By examining these factors, the ex-post evaluation provides a comprehensive understanding of the project's sustained effects, informing future policy and project design.

Feedback System

Ex-post evaluations of loan-based ODA projects are conducted in the first, third, and fifth years after project completion, with the implementing agency responsible for preparing and maintaining the evaluation reports. To ensure a thorough assessment, the Ministry of Finance's Economic Forecasting Department and Budget Forecasting Department may conduct on-site visits when necessary. If appropriate, the evaluation report is submitted to the relevant committee for review.

Once completed, the ex-post evaluation report must be reviewed by the relevant departments within the implementing ministry within two weeks. If necessary actions are identified, such as resolving operational issues, adjusting performance indicators, or modifying budget allocations, the matter is reported to the committee for further decision-making.

The ex-post evaluation report is made publicly available to ensure transparency and accountability. Additionally, discussions may be held among government agencies, committees, NGOs, local governments, experts, and donor organizations to promote stakeholder engagement and policy improvements.

After receiving the ex-post evaluation report, the Ministry of Finance's Economic Forecasting and Budget Forecasting Departments conduct a detailed review and prepare an analysis report on the effectiveness of public investment projects by year-end. This report is submitted to the Cabinet and includes the following:

<Table 2-2> Ex-post Evaluation Report to Cabinet

- An overview of the current project portfolio and the impact of completed projects, including sectoral trends and potential collaboration with development partners in budgetary investments.
- An assessment of performance indicators achieved in completed projects.
- Identification of key challenges, including analysis of why certain projects failed to meet target performance indicators, if applicable.
- Recommendations to enhance future project effectiveness and sustainability.

Note: REGULATION on the management of state investments (In the wording of the resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic dated December 26, 2022, No. 714, and August 14, 2023, No. 405).
Source: Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. (2023. 8.14) Appendix to the Regulation on the Management of Public Investments the Kyrgyz Republic No. 232 https://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/14565/edition/4832/ru

2.1.2. M&E System for ODA project with Grant

Monitoring

The management of grant-based ODA projects in the Kyrgyz Republic is governed by Decree 389, which establishes clear guidelines for quarterly reporting, monitoring, and evaluation. Under Article 4, implementing ministries must submit quarterly monitoring reports to the Ministry of Economy and Commerce (MOEC) by the 15th day of the reporting month. The MOEC then compiles this data and submits a comprehensive report by the 30th day, after which it consolidates the information and uploads it to the ministry's website to promote transparency and coordination.

Regarding M&E, Article 5 of Decree 389 assigns responsibility to MOEC, which evaluates project efficiency, compliance with objectives, and budget execution in line with donor organizations. Articles 21 to 25 in Chapter 4 of Decree 389 provide further detail on the monitoring and reporting procedures. Article 21 requires that quarterly reports include progress updates, achieved results, and an analysis of underperformance or challenges, along with proposed solutions for improvement. Article 22 requires implementing ministries to submit a completion report within three months of project completion, using the prescribed format outlined in Appendix 2. Failure to submit this report results in the project being classified as unsatisfactorily implemented.

These structured reporting and evaluation mechanisms, as outlined in Decree 389, ensure that grant-based ODA projects are effectively monitored, evaluated, and managed, thereby improving transparency, accountability, and the overall effectiveness of aid programs in the Kyrgyz Republic.

To ensure alignment with national strategies and development plans, the project application form requires implementing agencies to specify how the proposed project corresponds to the National Development Strategy, sectoral programs, and regional development plans. In addition, an internal order of the Ministry of Economy and Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic requires that all project proposals be evaluated by the department responsible for strategic planning and the development of national programs and plans.

Feedback

The M&E feedback system for grant-based ODA projects in the Kyrgyz Republic is governed by Decree 389, ensuring that project results are effectively utilized to improve future aid programs. Article 23 (Utilization of Results) specifies that the outcomes of implemented projects may be used to assess the feasibility of subsequent projects in the same sector, thereby ensuring that lessons learned contribute to improved project planning. Article 24 (Final Report Disclosure) requires that implementing ministries to publicly disclose the final report on their official websites, thereby promoting transparency and accountability in aid management.

To further improve the effectiveness of grant-based ODA projects, Article 26 (Analysis and Recommendations) assigns the relevant government authority the responsibility for conducting in-depth analysis and providing strategic recommendations for attracting additional grant funding. This process may involve establishing external committees and working groups comprising government agencies, donor organizations, NGOs, and independent evaluators to generate comprehensive policy recommendations. Additionally, Article 27 (Annual Report) requires an annual report to be submitted to the Coordination Council on Macroeconomic and Investment Policy. The report provides an analysis of completed projects and includes recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of grant-based ODA projects.

<Table 2-3> Template for Final Report Summary Table

1. No.: Sequential number for easy identification of projects.
2. Project Title: Full name of the project.
3. Project Registration Number: Official registration number assigned by the authorized body.
4. Activities Conducted: Concise description of the tasks and initiatives implemented as part of the project.
5. Achieved Results: Summary of the main outcomes, including quantitative and qualitative indicators.
6. Conclusions and Recommendations: Key insights derived from the project, lessons learned, and suggestions for improving future initiatives.

Note: Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. (2017.6.19.) Resolution on the Approval of the Regulation on the Procedure for Attracting and Using International Grant and Technical Assistance in the Kyrgyz Republic. Decree No. 389.https://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/7-19835/edition/860235/ru

In the Kyrgyz Republic, the M&E framework for loan-based ODA projects is more institutionalized and structured compared to that for grant-based projects, which remains at an early stage of development. As a result, a direct one-to-one comparison across corresponding elements was not feasible. This study is therefore limited in that it remains at the level of providing a baseline overview. However, once the methodology for grant-based projects becomes more systematized, a comparative analysis of equivalent components will become feasible.

2.2. ODA Performance Information Management

2.2.1. Current Status and Development of the Aidstat Platform

In December 2024, the Kyrgyz Ministry of Finance launched Aidstat (https://aidstat.okmot.kg/), a new aid information platform designed to manage loan-based assistance. The platform currently provides information on project names, total budgets, partner organizations, implementing agencies, implementation status, project locations, and key milestones. However, it does not yet include performance-related information such as project objectives, key components, performance indicators, implementation rates, or achievement levels.

2.2.2. Background of the Aid Information System Development

Earlier attempts to establish an aid information platform (2005–2006 and 2015–2017) were unsuccessful due to data collection issues, lack of integration across government agencies, and funding constraints. The first attempt, funded by the EU and USAID, failed due to poor data coordination, particularly during a period of increased NGO and grant-based assistance activities. The second attempt, funded by the Swiss SDC, stalled due to insufficient financial resources (approximately USD 1 million required) and technical challenges, including overseas server hosting. In contrast, the current Aidstat platform was developed in-house by Kyrgyz IT specialists with financial support from the World Bank, ensuring greater feasibility and long-term sustainability.

2.2.3. Aidstat Operational Plans

According to an interview with the Ministry of Finance, quarterly reports will soon be submitted via Aidstat, enabling real-time tracking of budget implementation, project milestones, and socio-economic impacts. At present, donor organizations share evaluation results through official reports and joint review meetings. In the future, Aidstat will function as a centralized data repository, providing authorized government officials with access to evaluation and performance information to enhance aid coordination.

2.3. Discussion

The regulatory framework for loan-based ODA projects in the Kyrgyz Republic is well-defined, whereas more general guidelines with limited procedural detail govern grant-based ODA projects. To enhance clarity and efficiency, more comprehensive and standardized guidelines for grant-based assistance are needed. However, overly strict regulations may impose unnecessary administrative burdens, particularly given the relatively smaller budgets and specific objectives of such projects. Therefore, procedural improvements should aim to strike a balance between oversight and operational flexibility.

At present, the Aid Information Platform provides only basic project details and lacks performance-related data. To improve transparency and accountability, the platform should be expanded to integrate both loan- and grant-based ODA information, including performance indicators, progress updates, and implementation status. Since grant-based ODA projects involve more ministries than loan-based ones, effective inter-agency coordination is essential for data collection and performance tracking. Incentives and mechanisms to foster cross-ministerial collaboration should therefore be developed.

While loan-based ODA guidelines require the Economic Forecasting and Budget Forecasting Departments to review performance data and provide feedback, there is no formal mechanism to ensure that corrective actions are taken. To strengthen this process, structured feedback systems should be introduced, incorporating both incentives and sanctions, such as penalties for underperformance and follow-up measures, including post-project support, to enhance sustainability and long-term impact.

To ensure both effectiveness and a high level of inter-agency coordination, it is necessary to integrate the Aid Information Platform into the national electronic document management system ("Infocom") and to formalize project reporting requirements embedded in appropriate legal and regulatory instruments. In particular, relevant provisions should be introduced into Regulations No. 232 and No. 389.

Past failures to maintain similar digital platforms were largely due to the absence of binding regulatory mechanisms and the platforms' institutional isolation, as they were tied exclusively to a single ministry, specifically the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic. Similar risks may affect the Aidstat platform unless a formal regulatory framework and broader inter-agency cooperation back it.

The Kyrgyz Republic's ODA framework is currently undergoing review to enhance alignment with national development priorities and donor expectations. Interviews and workshops held on January 23, 2025, with relevant government agencies provided valuable insights into both the barriers to and opportunities for improvement. First, there is a pressing need to simplify bureaucratic processes, to enhance procedural efficiency, and to reduce the transaction costs associated with project approval, implementation, and reporting. Eliminating redundant documentation and streamlining approval pathways can significantly improve the overall responsiveness and effectiveness of aid delivery.

Second, the findings underscore the importance of institutional strengthening and workforce development, particularly within sectoral ministries and Project Implementation Units (PIUs). Enhancing the technical skills, organizational coordination, and professional capacities of public officials involved in ODA management is essential to ensuring the strategic alignment and quality of externally funded programs.

Third, there is an increasing need to adopt data-driven systems and advance digital transformation. Establishing centralized platforms and digital databases would enable real-time tracking, strengthen inter-ministerial communication, foster evidence-based decision-making, and enhance transparency and accountability across the entire project lifecycle.

Finally, input from government stakeholders indicates a strong demand for integrated monitoring mechanisms that support continuous learning and adaptive management. Embedding structured monitoring and evaluation processes into both the design and closure phases of projects would enable the Kyrgyz ODA system to assess long-term impacts better, extract policy-relevant insights, and apply lessons learned to future initiatives.

The information presented in Chapter 2 indicates that the Kyrgyz Republic has a well-regulated project management structure for ODA, with a clear distinction between funding sources, including non-repayable grants and concessional development loans, as well as established procedures for project monitoring and evaluation. However, the interview findings on the current operational status, as well as comparisons with international cases, reveal gaps and areas for improvement. Based on an analysis of existing procedures and practices, key issues and recommendations for their resolution are identified below.

Key Issue 1: Limited Capacity of M&E Personnel

One challenge is the limited capacity of employees in implementing agencies. Civil servants working in these agencies often absence the necessary project management skills, as these competencies are not included in their qualification requirements. Although PIUs or consulting firms are responsible for project management, it is ultimately the employees of the implementing agency who are responsible for handling project reporting. Given the high staff turnover and lack of institutional memory, it is recommended that local databases be established for international grant and technical assistance projects.

Another issue is the limited capacity of employees in agencies responsible for coordinating and monitoring ODA projects at the national level. In particular, the Ministry of Economy and Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic has difficulty in assessing projects for economic feasibility. At the same time, the Ministry of Finance is unable to conduct fiscal analyses of public investment projects. In this context, it is crucial to enhance the qualifications of personnel in these ministries and introduce specialized evaluation methodologies.

A further challenge is the low level of coordination between the implementing agency and the coordination and monitoring agency, as well as the poor quality of project reporting. Reports are often delayed, contain outdated data, or fail to identify existing problems. Given that project funds are largely borrowed, implementing agencies should strengthen their coordination efforts to ensure timely and effective project implementation.

The existing monitoring and evaluation methodology for ODA projects also requires improvement, as it is not fully tailored to the specific needs of such projects. An updated M&E methodology should be developed, and training provided to both project implementation staff and monitoring personnel. Based on the analysis conducted in this report, a new methodology is expected to be developed that better reflects the characteristics of ODA projects. This methodology should be based on

international best practices, including Korean models, while taking into account the institutional capabilities and constraints of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Key Issue 2: Challenges in Grant Project Management

In the grant project sector, issues persist regarding proper registration and compliance with procedures. Implementing agencies do not always undergo the necessary approval procedures before approaching donors, and sometimes start project implementation without obtaining approval from the MOEC. This creates misalignment between projects and national strategies and development programs. Additionally, agencies often fail to register projects or submit the required reports. To address this issue, the MOEC sends written reminders and holds meetings, but stronger control measures and improved approval procedures are necessary.

Another problem is the absence of a strategy for allocating grant funds. Currently, projects are considered as they are submitted, without taking into account long-term sectoral development plans and national priorities. This may result in agencies with better skills in project promotion receiving funding, while truly critical initiatives remain unsupported. To address this problem, it is recommended that a strategy be developed for distributing grant funds based on the country's priority development areas.

It is also necessary to modernize and digitalize all procedures. Integrating monitoring processes into the state electronic document management system (Infocom) and utilizing IT technologies for the first evaluation of project proposals and reports would significantly enhance the efficiency of government agencies.

Key Issue 3: Lack of Appraisal for Impact Assessment and Duplication

There is no systematic appraisal and assessment of the impact of projects on economic development and GDP growth prior to the commencement of the projects. Impact assessment mechanisms should be implemented at both the project initiation stage and the post-project period.

Another problem is duplication. Agencies often submit applications for projects similar to those already completed, citing the need to update technical equipment. Duplication also occurs in technical assistance and consulting services across projects within the same sector. Moreover, the effectiveness of capacity-building seminars remains questionable due to high staff turnover. To address this issue, a system should be established to track completed projects before approving new applications, and mechanisms should be developed for evaluating the sustainability of project results.

Key Issue 4: Need to Improve Ex-Post Evaluation Methodology

In practice, elements of evaluation are in place: declared indicators are compared with actual results, deviations from schedules are analyzed, unspent funds are tracked, and challenges in procurement, contractor relations, and project timeline extensions are documented. However, the primary function of evaluation often remains limited to control, focusing on identifying and recording implementation issues.

Despite the extensive monitoring system, there is no clearly structured and methodologically sound framework for conducting qualitative outcome evaluations, particularly impact evaluations.

Criteria for project "success" are largely limited to meeting timelines and achieving quantitative indicators stated in the initial proposal. Approvals follow formal procedures, and evaluations are often conducted without adequate sector-specific expertise. Evaluators rely heavily on reports and data from the executive agency, lacking the capacity to conduct in-depth assessments of the effectiveness of resource allocation.

For example, a project to renovate rural facilities in one region involved overhauling buildings and procuring basic equipment. Upon completion, reports confirmed full achievement of infrastructure targets (renovation and equipment acquisition). The project was formally deemed successful. However, no impact evaluation was conducted to determine whether the quality and accessibility of provided services had improved. No comparisons were made with control areas. Behavioral changes among inhabitants, such as increased preventive care visits or reduced cases of complicated hospitalizations, were not analyzed. The focus remained solely on inputs and outputs, while neglecting the measurement of long-term outcomes and impacts. This illustrates the gap between implementation and assessing the project's actual value for the sector.

Current practices have limitations in determining the extent to which project outcomes influence sectoral development. Even with short-term positive effects, which are common for implemented grant projects, key questions remain unanswered: Could greater impact have been achieved with the same budget? Was the selected intervention the best option? Does the project contribute to systemic changes in the sector? The absence of systematic impact evaluations and cost-effectiveness analyses prevents answers to these questions.

Key Issue 5: Need for Sector-Specific Methodologies

Regulation No. 232 "On the Procedure for the Implementation of Public Investment Projects" requires monitoring and evaluation, as well as post-project review. Regulation No. 389 also provides for monitoring and reporting. In practice, however, these processes are rarely integrated into a single system. There is no methodological link to determine whether the project has achieved its intended outcomes or what actual impact it has had on the well-being of the population and sectoral development. As a result, formal reporting does not substitute for a substantive evaluation of impact.

Given the distinct characteristics of each sector, impact evaluation approaches should be tailored. For example, performance indicators in the transport sector differ significantly from those in healthcare or agricultural policy. General evaluation tools are inadequate for complex cross-sector projects and reforms.

It is necessary to shift from formal monitoring of task completion and indicator achievement to impact evaluations that allow for determining the actual value of a project for sectoral development, comparing alternative approaches to improve resource efficiency, and ensuring accountability to donors and society.

Developing sector-specific ex-post and impact evaluation methodologies is a crucial step toward enhancing the quality and effectiveness of ODA projects, particularly in the face of limited resources and rising expectations for sustainable, long-term change.

3. Case Studies on ODA M&E System in Recipient Countries

3.1. Overview

3.1.1. Background of Case Study Countries: Vietnam and Rwanda

This study aims to provide policy recommendations for the MOEC of the Kyrgyz Republic for establishing an ODA M&E system. To identify good practices, recipient countries were selected that have a government actively managing aid information and integrating aid oversight with implementing ministries and donor agencies. For this purpose, Rwanda and Vietnam were selected for in-depth case analysis.

Vietnam is one of the preferred recipient countries by multilateral and bilateral donors, ranking third globally in total aid received. Vietnam's record of effective aid management and strong ownership of development projects makes it an attractive recipient of aid.

Vietnam received favorable ratings in the Paris Declaration Aid Ownership Evaluation, with donors aligning their aid with the country's national development strategies. The Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) serves as the central body for coordinating aid, compiling aid data, and overseeing M&E activities across implementing ministries. According to Decree No. 114/2021/ND-CP (dated December 16, 2021), aid must support Vietnam's socio-economic development strategy and align with national priorities. Decree 114 outlines guidelines for resource allocation, aid management, and M&E.

Rwanda is known for its strong national ownership over aid, where the government actively coordinates relations between domestic implementing ministries and external development partners. This reflects a whole-of-government approach to aid management. All foreign governments, international organizations, and NGOs must align their aid with the national development priorities set by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN).

The Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) plays a key role in coordinating stakeholders. Since the 2005 Paris Declaration, Rwanda has been recognized as a leader in aid ownership and effectiveness (Keijzer et al., 2019). Rwanda refers to donor agencies as development partners and operates a Development Partners Coordination Group as well as sector working groups. The government encourages donor alignment by offering incentives such as access to government data and participation in policy dialogues to compliant donors. In 2011, MINECOFIN issued the "Aid Policy Manual of Procedure," which provides guidelines on negotiations, aid management, and M&E. Donor performance is assessed through the DPAF.

3.1.2. Case Study Analysis Framework

To facilitate a comparative analysis between the two countries, this study examines the following elements: lead institutions and donor coordination mechanisms, legal and regulatory frameworks governing aid, M&E standards and key evaluation indicators, feedback mechanisms within the M&E system, and the status of aid information databases.

3.2. Vietnam

Vietnam is often referred to as an “aid darling” due to its high level of foreign aid. During the 1990s and 2000s, it received large-scale assistance from bilateral donors such as Japan, Korea, Australia, and the United States. This was largely due to Vietnam's geopolitical importance, which prompted global powers to establish strategic partnerships with the country. However, Vietnam’s record of effective governance, rapid economic growth, and responsible aid utilization also played a significant role. By aligning aid with national development priorities and investing in infrastructure, governance reforms, and education programs, Vietnam gained recognition from donors as an effective aid recipient.

In the 1980s, Vietnam relied heavily on economic aid from the Soviet Union, which accounted for approximately 10% of its GDP. After the collapse of the communist bloc, Vietnam introduced its Doi Moi (economic reform and open-door policy) in the 1990s. This led to an increase in aid from Western countries, but the influx of multiple donors initially caused aid fragmentation and higher administrative costs. Recognizing these challenges, the Vietnamese government strengthened ownership over aid management (Seo, 2012). As Vietnam's government-led reforms drove rapid economic growth, the country gained confidence in leading its national development planning and became less dependent on donor-led projects (Seo, 2012).

Against this backdrop, Vietnam has established a centralized and systematic framework for managing aid. The MPI has played a key role in promoting collaboration among implementing agencies, local governments, and donor organizations, ensuring a coordinated approach to development assistance.

3.2.1. Leading Institutions for Aid Management

In Vietnam, the MPI oversees all ODA. As the main agency responsible for formulating the national development strategy, the MPI ensures that aid projects align with the national development plans. It conducts negotiations with donor agencies and manages the aid information database.

The MPI also works with line ministries to integrate sector-specific strategies and aid management. For example, inter-ministerial and technical working groups are established to coordinate national development plans and aid policies in key sectors, such as health, education, and climate change, ensuring consistency.

Line ministries responsible for specific sectors, such as health and education, are tasked with ensuring that aid policies in their areas are planned and implemented in line with the national development strategy.

The MPI works closely with implementing ministries to ensure that aid projects align with the national development strategy outlined in key documents, such as the "Vietnam 2030 Vision" and the "Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plans (SEDPs)."

Additionally, local governments take part in implementing aid projects. Provincial authorities manage the execution of aid in coordination with sectoral ministries and donor agencies.

3.2.2. Donor Coordination Mechanism for Aid

To enhance aid harmonization, Vietnam operates a donor coordination mechanism. The Vietnam Development Partnership Forum (VDPF) serves as a platform where the Vietnamese government, donor agencies, and implementing ministries share information on aid project priorities, the alignment of aid with national development strategies, and the current status of aid implementation.

3.2.3. Legal and Institutional Framework for Aid

Vietnam manages both concessional and non-concessional ODA under the Government Decree No. 38/2013/ND-CP on the Management and Use of Official Development Assistance and Concessional Loans of Donors. As a supplementary document, the government issued Circular No. 01/2014/TT-BKHDT, which provides guidelines. The guidelines outline procedures for the approval, implementation, and management of aid projects, as well as procedures for financial disbursement, reporting, monitoring, and evaluation.

In addition, Vietnam requires the MPI to monitor and evaluate not only aid projects but also all public financial projects involving national fiscal resources, as stipulated in Decree No. 84/2015/ND-CP.

3.2.4. Institutional Measures to Enhance Aid Relevance

To ensure that ODA projects contribute to national development, Vietnam has implemented measures to enhance the relevance of aid by recommending that project priorities align with national development strategies.

Specifically, priority is given to the following types of projects:

(1) Socio-economic infrastructure projects;

(2) Projects supporting the implementation of socio-economic development strategies and institutional development of state agencies;

(3) Projects that support human resource development and advances in science and technology;

(4) Projects that address environmental protection, climate change, and green growth; and

(5) Projects that involve public-private partnerships (PPP).

In line with these principles, the Prime Minister classifies major investment projects by priority level and manages them accordingly, while also reporting to the National Assembly. Projects are categorized into groups such as Group A and Group B for more systematic management.

The classification includes:

a) National target programs and important national projects whose investment policies are determined by the National Assembly;

b) Target programs with investment policies approved by the Government;

c) Programs associated with policy frameworks, as well as projects related to national security, defense, and religious affairs, for which investment policy decisions have been made.

3.2.5. Types of Evaluations

Vietnam's official decrees and guidelines classify the evaluation of ODA projects into four main types: initial evaluation, midterm evaluation, final evaluation, and impact evaluation. An extraordinary evaluation may also be conducted in special circumstances.

- **Initial Evaluation:** Conducted by external experts before project implementation begins, this evaluation assesses the project's readiness, including resource mobilization and overall preparedness for execution. Based on the findings, the first-year implementation plan may be adjusted, and legal or environmental issues that could hinder implementation may be resolved. The evaluation results must be submitted to the relevant authorities and donor agencies within 15 days.
- **Midterm Evaluation:** Conducted during project implementation, this evaluation reviews progress toward project objectives. It examines budget execution and project timelines, identifying ways to improve implementation quality. The results are to be submitted to the relevant authorities and donor agencies within 15 days of completion.
- **Final Evaluation:** Conducted within six months after project completion, this evaluation assesses outcomes, implementation efficiency, financial execution, and the impact on beneficiaries. It also examines the economic, social, and technical effects, sustainability, and lessons learned from the project. Based on the findings, recommendations are formulated. The evaluation report must be submitted to the MPI within 15 days of receipt.
- **Impact Evaluation:** Within three years of project completion, this evaluation assesses the broader economic, technical, political, social, and environmental impacts, as well as the sustainability of the project. The evaluation report must be submitted to MPI within 15 days. For projects designated by the Prime Minister, MPI is required to prepare and submit a comprehensive post-impact evaluation report directly to the Prime Minister.
- **Extraordinary Evaluation:** When unforeseen issues arise during project implementation, an extraordinary evaluation may be conducted. This evaluation aims to identify implementation problems and propose solutions.

3.2.6. Vietnam's Aid Information Management System (AIMS)

Vietnam has implemented an Aid Information Management System (AIMS) with support from donor countries, including Japan and the United States. Between 2005 and 2008, Japan supported Vietnam through a capacity-building project aimed at strengthening its aid management capabilities. Additionally, the World Bank has provided technical assistance to improve Vietnam's capacity to monitor and evaluate public financial projects using performance-based approaches. Although Vietnam initially adopted an AIMS, it is no longer in active use. Currently, MPI operates the State Budget Investment Management Information System (SBIMIS), a centralized platform for reporting and monitoring public investment projects. Since its launch in 2016 under an MPI Circular, SBIMIS has registered approximately 21,000 projects. However, the system functions mainly as a digital repository for administrative documents rather than as a tool for performance-based monitoring. It lacks interoperability with the national Treasury system (TABMIS), which limits its ability to incorporate real-time financial data and non-financial performance indicators. SBIMIS is mainly used by central government agencies, with limited application at the local government level. In response to these limitations, the World Bank has proposed improvements, including updating the SBIMIS platform to support results-based monitoring. As part of this effort, an urban development project was selected as a pilot to develop a results-based framework. This framework will guide the formulation of M&E indicators, which are expected to be integrated into the national investment information system. These developments reflect a shift toward evidence-based public investment management in Vietnam, with a focus on strengthening institutional capacity and data interoperability to facilitate more effective decision-making.

3.2.7. Vietnam's M&E case examples

Vietnam has recently taken steps to institutionalize M&E practices, particularly for foreign investment and environmental projects. In 2022, the MPI, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), established a pre-appraisal system for foreign investment projects. Building on this foundation, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Institute of International Investment Studies (ISC), a Vietnamese private research organization, jointly developed M&E standards for evaluating these projects. When formulating evaluation indicators, ISC conducted surveys of line ministries and local government agencies—those directly responsible for M&E implementation—to ensure the feasibility and applicability of the proposed indicators. In another example, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) has led the development of an M&E framework for tracking the implementation of carbon emission reduction plans. Given the range of projects implemented by both central ministries and local governments, MONRE issued a comprehensive policy guideline detailing the required reporting formats, evaluation indicators, and M&E methodologies to be used after implementation. These cases demonstrate Vietnam's efforts to develop context-specific and practical M&E systems through stakeholder engagement and intergovernmental coordination.

3.2.8. Areas for Improvement in Vietnam's Monitoring and Evaluation System

Although Vietnam has established a regulatory framework requiring evaluation through governmental decrees, such as Decree No. 13/2009/ND-CP, the implementation of evaluations remains incomplete and inconsistent (World Bank, 2018). The decree requires evaluations for both ODA projects and publicly financed initiatives, with legal provisions for pre- and post-project assessments, as well as specified timelines. The evaluation framework categorizes assessments into five types: initial, midterm, final, impact, and extraordinary evaluations. Among these, final evaluations are conducted immediately after project completion to assess whether the intended benefits have materialized. In contrast, impact evaluations, carried out three years later, assess the efficiency, effectiveness, and broader socio-economic impact of the project against its original objectives. Conducting impact evaluations for all projects is not a cost-effective approach. Such evaluations should be reserved for high-priority projects closely aligned with national development strategies. According to the World Bank (2018), three elements are essential for improving the evaluation of public investment projects: clear policy and methodological guidance for post-project evaluations, completion of final project reports for all initiatives, and mandatory impact evaluations for significant projects. In Vietnam's case, while the decrees provide a legal and regulatory framework outlining the types of evaluations, they do not provide detailed, concrete methodological guidance. Although final reports are generally produced, they often lack standardized structures and do not focus enough on drawing actionable lessons. Furthermore, while regulations require that impact evaluations assess efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability, these evaluations are rarely conducted in a structured manner. In practice, they occur only when donor agencies take the initiative. The requirement to conduct impact evaluations for all projects is overly burdensome and not realistically implemented, underscoring the need for a more targeted approach to M&E.

To improve the effectiveness of Vietnam's M&E system, several improvements are necessary, drawing on international practices. Ireland, for example, is an example where post-project reviews are implemented regularly. In particular, all projects exceeding EUR 20 million are subject to mandatory ex-post evaluation, and at least 5% of capital investment projects are evaluated annually. The purpose of impact evaluations in this context is to determine whether the anticipated social benefits have been realized, whether value for money has been achieved, and whether the outcomes have contributed to national development priorities. Such evaluations should focus on efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance. A critical component of this approach is conducting social cost-benefit analyses using actual outcome data rather than projections, such as measuring increases in traffic flow or the number of users of public facilities after infrastructure projects like road construction. However, these in-depth evaluations are not intended for every project but are reserved for representative or important ones. They are conducted after sufficient time has passed to assess long-term effects and should be carried out by independent evaluators to ensure objectivity and credibility. For the effective implementation of M&E, Vietnam needs more detailed methodological frameworks that cover various evaluation techniques, along with training programs to build evaluator capacity. In addition to clear methodological guidance, allocating a dedicated budget for evaluation is essential. Furthermore, successful implementation requires that the MPI move beyond its current supportive role and take a stronger leadership position in overseeing and coordinating evaluations across sectors. According to the World Bank (2018), assigning MPI a central role is crucial for transforming the current fragmented system into a coherent and results-oriented M&E framework.

3.3. Rwanda

Compared to other African countries, Rwanda has demonstrated relatively stable political conditions, transparent governance, and an open, proactive stance toward foreign investment, all of which have contributed to its sustained economic growth. This stability and openness indicate that the Rwandan government, as an aid recipient, has the institutional and fiscal capacity to lead a systematic approach to international development cooperation. Rwanda has established systems of donor coordination and institutionalized a zero-tolerance policy against corruption, enabling the effective implementation of development cooperation policies. Accordingly, it is regarded as a well-performing aid recipient with comparatively high aid effectiveness (Republic of Korea, 2022).

Rwanda adopts a government-led approach to managing and overseeing external aid. Rather than allowing donor-driven aid modalities, the Rwandan government maintains control by directly managing how aid is delivered and used. This is reflected in Rwanda's practice of overseeing inputs from donors, and, at times, restricting or rejecting assistance that does not comply with its guidelines. For example, in a mosquito net distribution project for malaria prevention, the Rwandan government rejected aid from a donor who failed to follow the government's directive to use a specific type of net.

Two policies illustrate Rwanda's commitment to local ownership. First is its preference for budget support rather than technical assistance. Rwanda favors direct financial support, as this enables the government to allocate funds in line with national development priorities and maintain policy leadership. To support this, Rwanda has introduced regulations that restrict stand-alone donor projects and instead channel aid through direct budgetary support. Second is the DPAF**,** through which the Rwandan government evaluates the performance of its donors. This system assesses the extent to which donor assistance aligns with Rwanda's national development strategies. Donors with low scores may face restrictions or disadvantages in future aid engagement. This approach strengthens the government's control and ensures donor activities align with Rwanda's development agenda.

In conclusion, Rwanda emphasizes national ownership and leadership in aid management. This principle is applied through institutional and policy measures designed to maintain control over the use of aid. Consequently, donors assisting in Rwanda are expected to align their support with the government's development priorities and follow established institutional procedures and systems. The ministries, institutional structures, and systems through which the Rwandan government implements this centralized aid approach will be discussed in the following sections.

3.3.1. Leading Institutions for Aid Management

In Rwanda, MINECOFIN is responsible for coordinating all ODA. Under the leadership of MINECOFIN, sector ministries, including the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, and the Ministry of Youth and Culture, collaborate within a coordinated aid architecture. The ministry implements aid policies based on Rwanda's Development Cooperation Principles, which emphasize national ownership and inclusive development partnerships. Aid operations are guided by Rwanda's overarching development frameworks, namely the long-term Vision 2050 and the medium-term National Strategy for Transformation (NST1), which together form

the basis of the Rwanda Development Cooperation Policy adopted in 2019 (Republic of Korea, 2022).

Project-level implementation is carried out by the PIU, which is responsible for executing and monitoring the financial and performance aspects of externally funded projects. Since 2010, to reduce redundancy and improve cost-efficiency, the Rwandan government has prohibited the creation of new PIUs and instead introduced the Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) model, which consolidates implementation responsibilities within sector ministries or subnational entities.

The External Finance Unit (EFU) within MINECOFIN plays an important role in managing external financial flows. It serves as the primary interface between the government and development partners, leading the formulation of Strategic Cooperation Frameworks with donors. EFU is also responsible for ensuring that external aid aligns with the national budget and for managing aid-related data, including the recording and tracking of assistance in Rwanda's Development Assistance Database (DAD). These institutional arrangements reflect Rwanda's efforts to strengthen aid coordination, align donor support with national priorities, and maintain government ownership over development cooperation processes (Republic of Rwanda, 2011).

3.3.2. Donor Coordination Mechanisms

Rwanda has established a multi-tiered coordination system to manage dialogue and collaboration with development partners. Key mechanisms include the Development Partners Coordination Group (DPCG) and the Sector Working Groups (SWGs). The DPCG, which convenes quarterly, serves as a mid-level consultation platform where the Government of Rwanda and donors assess progress on previously discussed aid-related issues. SWGs are thematic forums aligned with 15 national priority areas identified by the government, such as ICT, agriculture, and education, and serve as venues for reviewing progress against sector-specific performance indicators.

At the highest level, this coordination architecture is the Development Partners Retreat (DPR), the primary consultation forum between the Rwandan government and development partners. The DPR focuses on aligning donor support with the government's strategic priorities and mobilizing development finance. It serves as the primary forum for defining the overall development agenda and strengthening harmonization efforts between Rwanda and its donor community. These mechanisms ensure continuous dialogue and promote donor alignment with Rwanda's development vision (Republic of Korea, 2022).

3.3.3. Legal and Institutional Framework for Aid Management

Rwanda implements its aid policy through a defined legal and procedural framework, most notably the Rwanda Aid Manual of Procedures. This policy document supports the implementation of aid projects by detailing the aid delivery cycle, budget, and technical support modalities, as well as alignment with national planning systems, public financial management (PFM), and specific operational procedures, including tax exemptions.

The aid cycle, as outlined in the Manual, includes defined stages, from the initial aid request and preliminary appraisal to budget planning and verification of effectiveness conditions, designed to enhance predictability and ensure government-led implementation. In the case of budget support, which Rwanda prefers to project-based or technical assistance modalities, donors are expected to align their contributions with national development plans, enabling the government to integrate funds into its budget framework and maintain policy ownership.

While technical assistance is less favored, when used, it must follow a capacity-building approach, emphasizing the empowerment of local personnel and the transfer of knowledge to strengthen Rwanda's domestic capabilities. Rwanda has also adopted a PFM-linked financial system that integrates aid flows with national financial governance structures. This ensures that all aid resources are centrally managed, enabling effective fiscal oversight and performance monitoring. The system reinforces accountability and aligns donor funding with national priorities under a unified public finance framework.

3.3.4. Donor Performance Assessment Framework (DPAF)

As part of its commitment to mutual accountability and national ownership, Rwanda has institutionalized the DPAF, a monitoring and evaluation tool that assesses donor contributions and behaviors in support of Rwanda's development agenda. The DPAF is implemented by the Government of Rwanda to evaluate the performance and effectiveness of ODA, using structured indicators. It provides a basis for tracking the extent to which donor support aligns with national priorities and adheres to the principles of aid effectiveness, as outlined in the Rwanda Aid Manual of Procedures.

To improve evaluation efficiency and prevent fragmentation of aid, Rwanda has established a regulation limiting each donor to a maximum of three priority sectors. Donor contributions within these sectors are evaluated using 21 indicators grouped into five thematic areas. Donors must set targets for each indicator and submit annual performance reports. The government then assesses whether these targets have been met, using a traffic light system: green for targets achieved, red for targets not met. These results, including individual scores for each donor and indicator, are made publicly available, reinforcing transparency and accountability (Republic of Korea, 2016).

The DPAF also includes indicators to measure the extent to which donors utilize Rwanda's national systems, such as its public financial management framework, budget execution procedures, and institutional mechanisms. This reflects Rwanda's focus on strengthening local capacity and minimizing parallel systems. The framework includes performance categories that capture the recipient government's role in aid use, further reinforcing Rwanda's principle of ownership. Through the DPAF, the Rwandan government shapes how aid is delivered and encourages donors to support national systems rather than bypass them. This approach enhances alignment and harmonization, promoting mutual accountability and improved aid effectiveness within a defined, government-led evaluation structure.

3.3.5. Areas for Improvement in Rwanda's Monitoring and Evaluation System

Rwanda is recognized as having a relatively well-established M&E framework, particularly compared to other aid-recipient countries. This includes formalized systems and the periodic publication of evaluation reports. However, a major limitation remains: the Rwandan government's limited capacity to analyze and use M&E results effectively. While the structural components of M&E have been institutionalized, the government continues to face challenges in translating collected data into actionable input for policy refinement and strategic planning. Addressing this shortfall, particularly through technological advancements and capacity-building in analytics, remains a crucial long-term priority for strengthening evidence-based governance.

Another consideration is the balance between recipient ownership and donor partnership. Rwanda has consistently emphasized its sovereignty and leadership in managing aid, a stance central to its development cooperation model. However, this assertion of ownership may inadvertently reduce the perceived influence of donor agencies, potentially straining collaboration between Rwanda and its development partners. Moving forward, it is important to maintain Rwanda's leadership in aid coordination while fostering a balanced partnership with donors, one that upholds mutual accountability, transparency, and shared development goals.

3.4. Policy Implications for the Kyrgyz Government

The cases of Rwanda and Vietnam offer valuable insights into how aid-recipient governments can exercise greater ownership over development cooperation while enhancing the effectiveness of aid. Applying international cases should be approached with caution, as differences in political and institutional contexts may affect feasibility. When considering the experiences of Vietnam and Rwanda in the context of the Kyrgyz Republic, careful analysis is required to identify realistically applicable elements and incorporate only those that can be effectively implemented. In light of these caveats, the Kyrgyz government may consider the following policy recommendations:

Strengthening National Ownership and Strategic Alignment

Both Rwanda and Vietnam provide instructive examples of recipient-led development cooperation. In Rwanda, government ownership is reinforced through a strong preference for budget support mechanisms and institutionalized donor performance assessments, ensuring that external financing aligns with national priorities and strengthens public systems.

To emulate such practices, the Kyrgyz Republic should consider developing a comprehensive national aid policy, anchored in ownership, alignment, and accountability principles, that clearly defines the roles of domestic institutions in aid planning, implementation, and evaluation. For example, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic should lead the coordination, prioritization, and evaluation of all external assistance, with line ministries playing a central role in identifying needs and aligning projects with national goals. It could also increase the share of aid delivered through programmatic approaches or sector budget support, contingent on developing robust fiduciary, audit, and risk management systems.

Institutionalizing Donor Coordination Mechanisms

Rwanda's structured donor coordination platforms, including the DPCG, SWGs, and the DPR, facilitate effective dialogue and foster mutual accountability.

The Kyrgyz Republic could strengthen aid governance by establishing or revitalizing regular sectoral dialogue forums involving both government ministries and donors. It also could introduce a high-level annual development forum, similar to Rwanda's DPR, to align strategic priorities and coordinate development financing.

Enhancing Aid Information Systems and Fiscal Integration

Vietnam's efforts to digitize aid and public investment data through systems such as SBIMIS, although still evolving, serve as a model for transparency in information.

The Kyrgyz Republic could develop or upgrade a centralized AIMS integrated with the PFM system. The system ensures real-time tracking of disbursements, outputs, and outcomes for all externally financed projects. It could also promote interoperability between aid data and national budget systems, thereby improving fiscal oversight and planning.

Building a Robust M&E Framework with Mutual Accountability

Both countries have implemented performance-based evaluation systems: Rwanda through its DPAF, and Vietnam through formalized Initial, Midterm, Final, and Impact Evaluations. To enhance evidence-based policymaking, the Kyrgyz Republic should establish a national M&E policy and manual of procedures to guide all donor-funded projects. It also needs to require systematic evaluations for major projects and introduce impact assessments selectively for strategic interventions. The government should consider developing a donor performance assessment tool, modeled after Rwanda's DPAF, to promote accountability and a results-oriented approach among external partners. It should also invest in capacity building for M&E staff across ministries and subnational entities to ensure consistent implementation.

Balancing Ownership with Constructive Partnerships

A key lesson from Rwanda is that asserting ownership must be balanced with sustained, respectful collaboration with development partners. For the Kyrgyz Republic, maintaining transparent communication channels and promoting mutual trust with donors is essential. To operationalize this principle, the Kyrgyz Republic could consider developing and adopting a formal agreement, such as a Development Cooperation Compact or Partnership Charter, between the government and its development partners. It could also revitalize or institutionalize sector working groups and establish a national Development Partner Coordination Platform, chaired by the Ministry of Economy and Commerce.

By internalizing lessons from Rwanda and Vietnam, the Kyrgyz government could take a more proactive role in shaping its aid landscape. Emphasizing national leadership, coordination, information transparency, and performance-based monitoring would not only improve aid effectiveness but also enhance policy coherence and sustainable development. Importantly, institutional reform should be complemented by long-term capacity building and political commitment to ensure the successful localization of these best practices.

4. Sharing Korea's Experience in In-depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects and Policy Implications

4.1. Overview of Korea's Evaluation Framework[1]

Korea has developed a comprehensive, institutionalized system for evaluating public fiscal programs, particularly within the framework of the National Fiscal Management Plan. The government emphasizes not only ex-ante and ex-post evaluations but also in-depth evaluations of selected public investment projects to ensure the efficient allocation and use of public resources.

The MOEF, through its Budget Office, oversees the evaluation system. The in-depth evaluation process is designed to provide strategic feedback on whether a project aligns with policy goals, is implemented efficiently, and delivers its intended outcomes. It serves as a critical tool for both accountability and institutional learning.

Steps in the Evaluation Process

The evaluation of major public fiscal programs in Korea follows a structured, institutionalized procedure, particularly in the context of in-depth evaluations aimed at enhancing the efficiency and accountability of government spending. The process comprises four main stages: (1) selection of evaluation subjects, (2) formulation of evaluation plans, (3) execution of the evaluation and policy recommendations, and (4) implementation of follow-up measures.

The first stage involves the strategic selection of target programs. This selection is based on criteria such as persistent concerns about overlaps, redundancy, inefficiencies, or areas requiring fiscal rationalization. Programs that have repeatedly demonstrated questionable effectiveness or failed to align with evolving policy priorities are prioritized for review.

Once selected, a detailed evaluation plan is prepared. This includes determining the scope of analysis, defining evaluation criteria (e.g., relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability), and selecting the methodologies to be employed (e.g., cost-benefit analysis, performance audits, stakeholder interviews). The plan undergoes inter-ministerial consultations for approval to ensure alignment with national policy goals.

The third phase is the implementation of the evaluation, typically conducted by independent research institutes or expert teams under the supervision of the MOEF. This stage concludes with policy recommendations based on the findings. These recommendations may include adjustments

[1] This chapter is based on the A Study on the System and Methodology of In-Depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects (Korea Institute of Public Finance 2023).

to program design, resource reallocation, or even the discontinuation of underperforming projects.

Finally, a follow-up process is implemented to ensure that evaluation findings are translated into concrete actions. This includes reporting to the National Assembly, public disclosure (where appropriate), and administrative oversight of corrective measures. Evaluation results also inform future budgeting decisions, reinforcing a feedback loop between evidence generation and fiscal planning.

This structured, multi-phase evaluation model has enabled Korea to institutionalize a culture of evidence-based policymaking, serving as a valuable model for other countries aiming to optimize public investment and strengthen performance accountability.

Evaluation Stages According to the Guidelines for Conducting In-Depth Evaluations on Fiscal Projects

- **Stage 1:** Evaluation Planning
- **Stage 2:** In-Depth Analysis and Formulation of the Evaluation Plan
- **Stage 3:** Project-Level Data Collection
- **Stage 4:** Development of a Logical Framework for Each Project
- **Stage 5:** Selection of Evaluation Methods
- **Stage 6:** Analysis and Evaluation
- **Stage 7:** Review of Evaluation Results
- **Stage 8:** Policy Recommendations and Implications

4.2. Evaluation Process by Stages

(1) Stage 1: Evaluation Planning

Understanding the Basic Information of the Target Program

- Gather essential information such as budget size, implementation modality, target beneficiaries, and project duration to establish a comprehensive plan for expenditure restructuring and evaluation.
- If a project with a duration of less than three years is included for specific reasons, it may be conditionally excluded from the evaluation in consultation with the MOEF, or a plan or process evaluation may be conducted instead.
- Basic information prepared before the in-depth evaluation typically includes:
  - Project objectives
  - Specific program components
  - Duration

- Budget
- Implementing agency

Analysis of the Need for Evaluation

- Review criticisms or issues raised regarding the target project(s) and justify the need to conduct an in-depth evaluation.

Analysis of Evaluation Feasibility

- Assess whether the target project(s) are suitable for in-depth evaluation methodology.
- Prioritize reviewing available data to assess the feasibility of a quantitative impact evaluation.
  - Where feasible, quasi-experimental methods with internal validity are recommended.
  - If an impact evaluation is not feasible, a plan or process evaluation should be proposed as an alternative.

(2) Stage 2: Establishing the Evaluation Plan

- At the early stage of evaluation, develop a detailed evaluation plan based on an in-depth review of the project's basic information, the need for evaluation, and its feasibility, all collected during Stage 1.

(3) Stage 3: Project-Level Data Collection

- Conduct an extensive review of relevant literature and materials.
- Collect administrative data from the responsible ministry for performance analysis.
- For example, request specific details such as project title, implementing institution, budget, and execution period.

(4) Stage 4: Developing the Project Logic Model

- Structure a logical framework for the project (inputs–activities–outputs–outcomes), which guides evaluation priorities and the identification of key outcome variables.
- This is a prerequisite for assessing project effectiveness.
- Researchers must refine the logic model based on feedback from the project manager to ensure accuracy.
- This process enhances the feasibility and quality of the evaluation.

(5) Stage 5: Selection of Evaluation Methods

- The choice of method depends on the project's maturity and the availability of data. Quantitative methods are prioritized for in-depth evaluations.
- If the project is in an early stage or the data is insufficient, qualitative methods such as surveys and focus group interviews (FGIs) may be employed.
- Evaluators select the appropriate evaluation type considering the purpose and characteristics of the project:
  - **Plan Evaluation**: For projects in the early planning stage, assess the appropriateness of the design.
  - **Process Evaluation**: Assess whether the project is being implemented as intended and identify deviations from the original plan.
  - **Impact Evaluation**: Determine whether the project achieved its intended outcomes, whether the results were achieved efficiently, whether feedback mechanisms worked properly, and assess unintended side effects.
- Depending on data availability, evaluations may assess: achievement of planned outcomes, changes in outcomes, or variance in outcomes.
- Outcome indicators generally draw from performance indicators set by the implementing ministry.
- Performance evaluation is the core objective of in-depth evaluation and involves analyzing quantitative and qualitative changes in outputs and outcomes resulting from public spending.
- Where data permits, experimental or quasi-experimental designs should be used to isolate net effects by controlling for external influences.

(6) Stage 6: Analysis and Evaluation

Analytical Methodology

- Based on the selected method, evaluation type, and identification strategy, evaluators perform the analysis for each sub-program.
- Since the primary objective is to validate success and generate knowledge to inform future budgeting and planning, effectiveness remains the normative focus.
- Standard approaches such as Difference-in-Differences (DiD), Propensity Score Matching (PSM), and Regression Discontinuity Design (RDD) are used for net impact analysis.
- If qualitative evaluations are unavoidable, interview excerpts, survey statistics, and AHP (Analytic Hierarchy Process) results must be presented in detail.

Reviewing Limitations

- If difficulties arise in interpreting the results due to issues such as project immaturity, lack of data, or problems with applying identification strategies, these limitations must be documented and explained alongside the results.

(7) Stage 7: Review of Evaluation Results

- Once the initial evaluation is completed (typically before the interim reporting session), an external expert reviews the logic model, evaluation type, identification strategy, and results.
- Reviewers provide recommendations focusing on the necessity of evaluation, the appropriateness of methods and data, the adequacy of performance indicators, and the clarity of reporting.
- The responsible ministry also reviews the draft report for logical inconsistencies and impractical policy recommendations.

(8) Stage 8: Policy Recommendations and Implications

- Based on the analysis of project design, implementation, beneficiary outcomes, and the efficiency of policy tools, the research team presents actionable recommendations for policy improvement.
- Examples of recommendations to improve the project implementation system include:
  - Strengthen selection and oversight of implementing agencies.
  - Improve coordination mechanisms to prevent project duplication and fragmentation.
  - Build institutional capacity and refine incentive structures.
  - Enhance project management capabilities at both central and local levels.
  - Develop beneficiary databases and tailored information systems.
- Examples of recommendations for improving the monitoring, evaluation, and feedback system include:
  - Establish regular monitoring to identify barriers and implement mitigation strategies.
  - Refine performance indicators and targets in planning and reporting.
  - Formalize ex-post evaluation and feedback mechanisms for projects requiring continuous assessment.

4.3. Policy Implications for the Kyrgyz Government: Lessons from Korea's In-Depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects

Drawing on Korea's structured system for in-depth evaluation of fiscal projects, the Kyrgyz government can extract actionable policy lessons to strengthen public financial management and development cooperation practices.

Institutionalization of a Structured Evaluation Framework

First, institutionalizing a systematic evaluation framework that covers phases such as project selection, evaluation planning, logic model development, data collection, method selection, analysis, and policy feedback would ensure consistent and transparent public investment oversight. In

particular, a strategic approach to selecting evaluation targets, such as large-scale or high-impact programs, would maximize the relevance and utility of evaluations.

- **Recommendation:** Establish a legal or ministerial directive and clear guidelines outlining the step-by-step procedures for evaluating public investment projects, including donor-funded programs.
- **Rationale:** This provides a standardized reference for government ministries and development partners, reducing ad hoc or fragmented evaluations.

Prioritization and Selection of Strategic Projects

Second, the Kyrgyz Republic should adopt logic model-based evaluation practices that require ministries to clarify the causal chain from inputs to outcomes, thereby strengthening both planning and performance monitoring.

- **Recommendation:** Form a cross-ministerial committee (led by the Ministry of Finance or a central planning agency) to select annual evaluation targets.
- **Rationale:** Ensures evaluations are resource-efficient and policy-relevant.

Capacity Building in Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation Methods

Capacity building is also essential. As Korea employs quasi-experimental methods for impact analysis, the Kyrgyz Republic should invest in evaluator training and partner with academic or international institutions to gradually adopt such techniques.

- **Recommendation:** Develop a government-academic partnership to build local evaluation expertise and gradually introduce data-driven evaluation techniques.
- **Rationale:** Enhances analytical capacity and long-term institutional sustainability.

Development of a Logic Model-Based Evaluation Culture

Furthermore, linking evaluation findings to budgeting by requiring the Ministry of Finance to review evaluation outcomes during the budget cycle—would ensure more effective allocation of public resources.

- **Recommendation:** Integrate logic modeling into project planning guidelines and require ministries to submit logic frameworks as part of funding requests.
- **Rationale:** Establishes causal clarity and facilitates performance monitoring.

Linking Evaluation to Budgeting and Policy Feedback

A core strength of Korea's system is its integration of evaluation results into budget allocation and policy reform. The Kyrgyz Republic should institutionalize mechanisms to ensure evaluation findings directly influence future resource planning and program design.

- **Recommendation:** Mandate that evaluation results be reviewed by the budget committee of the Ministry of Finance before subsequent budget cycles.
- **Rationale:** Aligns evaluation with fiscal decision-making and encourages accountability.

Encouraging Government Ownership with External Support

The Kyrgyz Republic could adopt Korea's learning-oriented evaluation approach, treating evaluation not as a punitive measure but as a tool for continuous improvement, while balancing this with constructive participation from development partners.

- **Recommendation:** Create a joint government-donor evaluation framework that clarifies roles and ensures local ownership.
- **Rationale:** Promotes mutual accountability while empowering national institutions.

Lastly, evaluations should serve as learning-oriented tools rather than punitive audits and be embedded in a cooperative framework with donors to find a balance between national ownership and mutual accountability. Collectively, these steps would enable the Kyrgyz Republic to build a more credible, transparent, and results-oriented fiscal management system, thereby enhancing both domestic governance and the quality of external aid coordination.

5. Policy Recommendations

5.1. Policy Recommendations

1. Institutionalize a Standardized M&E Framework

- Develop a national M&E policy for ODA projects underpinned by a coherent regulatory and procedural framework.
- Mandate ex-post evaluations for all major projects by formally amending to Regulation No. 232 (public investments) and Regulation No. 389 (grants).
- Integrate logic model-based planning into all ODA project proposals.

2. Establish a Sector-Specific Evaluation Methodology

- Develop tailored M&E toolkits for key sectors (e.g., health, transport, agriculture) that reflect distinct performance metrics and development outcomes.
- Adopt a typology of indicators across social, economic, institutional, and environmental domains.
- Require cost-effectiveness and sustainability evaluations for infrastructure and service-delivery projects.

3. Strengthen Institutional Capacity and Evaluation Expertise

- Invest in training for ministry staff and PIUs in advanced evaluation methods, including quantitative techniques such as cost-benefit analysis and quasi-experimental designs.
- Establish government–university partnerships to develop national accreditation programs for evaluators.
- Allocate dedicated budgets for capacity building and long-term technical assistance.

4. Improve Coordination and Interoperability Among Agencies

- Integrate the Aidstat platform into the national digital document system (Infocom) to ensure comprehensive, real-time tracking and document exchange.
- Assign clear roles and responsibilities across the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy and Commerce, and line ministries through inter-agency protocols.
- Create incentives for timely, high-quality reporting by implementing agencies.

5. Implement Strategic Donor Coordination and Ownership Mechanisms

- Develop a Development Cooperation Compact that clarifies mutual responsibilities between the government and donors, and harmonizes reporting and evaluation standards.
- Establish or strengthen Sector Working Groups and a national Development Partners Forum led by the Ministry of Economy and Commerce.

6. Address Grant Management Gaps and Strategic Alignment

- Strengthen the project approval and registration process to prevent unauthorized implementation of grants.
- Align grant proposals with national strategies and develop a prioritization matrix for selecting grant projects.
- Use digital tools to automate screening and ensure compliance with submission requirements.

7. Transition from Output Monitoring to Impact Evaluation

- Reform current reporting practices by embedding long-term impact indicators and requiring the collection of baseline and follow-up data.
- Institutionalize ex-post evaluations in the first, third, and fifth years after project completion with formal submission and feedback procedures.
- Use impact evaluations to inform budget planning and future project selection.

8. Develop an M&E Toolkit and Practical Guide

- Finalize the proposed evaluation manual, including:
  - Step-by-step guidance on ex-post evaluation procedures
  - Evaluation templates
  - Sector-specific indicator frameworks
  - Beneficiary feedback and stakeholder engagement methods

<Table 2-4> Policy Recommendations

No.	Description of the Alternative	Priority Level	Implementation Timeline	Responsible Agency
1	Institutionalize a Standardized M&E Framework	★★★★★	Short-term	• Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Ministry of Finance, Cabinet of Ministers
2	Establish a Sector-Specific Evaluation Methodology	★★★★☆	Short-term	• Line Ministries (e.g., Health, Agriculture, Transport), Ministry of Economy and Commerce

No.	Description of the Alternative	Priority Level	Implementation Timeline	Responsible Agency
3	Strengthen Institutional Capacity and Evaluation Expertise	★★★★★	Short to Medium-term	• Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Academy of Public Administration, donor-supported training programs
4	Improve Coordination and Interoperability Among Agencies	★★★★☆	Short to Medium-term	• Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Ministry of Finance, Cabinet of Ministers
5	Implement Strategic Donor Coordination and Enhance Ownership Mechanisms	★★★☆☆	Medium-term	• Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
6	Address Grant Management Gaps and Strategic Alignment	★★★☆☆	Medium-term	• Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Office of the President
7	Transition from Output Monitoring to Impact Evaluation	★★★★☆	Medium to long-term	• Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Ministry of Finance, Cabinet of Ministers
8	Develop an M&E Toolkit and Practical Guide	★★★★☆	Short-term	• Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Project Implementation Units

Source: Author (2025).

5.2. Development of a Toolkit and Practical Guide

5.2.1. Step-by-Step Instructions for Ex-Post Evaluation

This guide outlines a structured, step-by-step methodology for conducting ex-post evaluations of ODA projects in the Kyrgyz Republic. It aligns with international standards and tailored to national regulations, notably Regulations No. 232 and No. 389. The aim is to strengthen evidence-based policymaking, promote accountability, and enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of aid.

Step 1: Define Objectives and Scope

1) Clarify the primary purpose
   - Clarify whether the evaluation will assess effectiveness, sustainability, impact, cost-efficiency, or inform policy learning
2) Define the scope
   - Specify project components, timeframe (typically one to three years post-completion), geographical coverage, and thematic focus (e.g., service delivery, institutional reform, infrastructure).
   - Reference project design documents and log frames as needed.
3) Identify key stakeholders
   - Identify evaluation stakeholders (e.g., government agency, donor, community).

Step 2: Develop the Evaluation Plan

1) Define evaluation questions based on OECD-DAC criteria
   - Formulate based on OECD-DAC criteria (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability)
2) Develop a Theory of Change or logic model
   - Reconstruct causal pathways from inputs → activities → outputs → outcomes → impacts
3) Use standardized templates to outline evaluation purpose, tasks, timeline, team, budget, and deliverables
4) Secure official approval from the coordinating ministry (e.g., MOEC)

Step 3: Select Methodology and Indicators

1) Select an appropriate methodological approach
   - Quantitative method (e.g., surveys, administrative data) and qualitative method (e.g., focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews)
   - For impact evaluations: consider quasi-experimental methods (e.g., propensity score matching, DiD) if feasible
2) Select relevant indicators (social, economic, institutional, environmental)
   - Select from the national evaluation framework or sector-specific indicator sets
   - Indicators can include service access/utilization rate, beneficiary satisfaction, environmental outcomes, institutional changes
3) Confirm data availability and alignment with national strategies
   - Confirm availability of baseline and target data
   - Align indicators with national strategies and SDG metrics where possible

Step 4: Mobilize Evaluation Team and Resources

1) Form a multi-disciplinary team (internal, external, independent evaluators)
   - Include internal staff, independent evaluators, sector experts, and data analysts
2) Provide orientation and training on the selected evaluation methodology
3) Establish partnerships with universities or think tanks if needed
   - Ensure representation from the project-implementing agency and line ministry

Step 5: Conduct Data Collection

1) Use surveys, interviews, FGDs, field visits for primary data
   - Primary Data: Conduct surveys, interviews, field visits, and beneficiary feedback.
2) Collect secondary data from administrative reports and government statistics
   - Secondary Data: Use project reports, financial documents, government statistics
3) Ensure inclusivity and statistical validity of sampling
   - Apply gender and inclusivity framework collecting data

Step 6: Analyze Data and Draft Evaluation Report

1) Compare planned vs. achieved results
   - Compare actual performance to planned outcomes
   - Disaggregate data (e.g., by gender, region)
2) Apply causal analysis (e.g., DiD, PSM) if feasible
   - Assess causal contribution by determining the extent to which outcomes are due to the project
3) Examine unintended effects and sustainability
4) Conduct cost-effectiveness or benefit analysis if data allow.

Step 7: Stakeholder Validation and Dissemination

1) Organize workshops to present preliminary findings
   - Present preliminary findings to stakeholders for feedback and factual validation
2) Validate with stakeholders (implementers, donors, beneficiaries)
   - Ensure participatory review with implementing agencies, donors, civil society, and beneficiaries
3) Revise report based on feedback
   - Incorporate stakeholder input before finalizing the report

Step 8: Formulate Recommendations and Management Response

1) Provide actionable and SMART recommendations.
   - Provide actionable recommendations: what should be improved, scaled up, or discontinued
   - Recommendations need to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
2) Require ministries to develop a Management Response Plan
   - Specify how recommendations will be addressed
3) Assign responsibilities and deadlines for follow-up

Step 9: Submit and Disclose Evaluation Results

1) Submit to the Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Ministry of Finance, and Cabinet.
2) Publish through Aidstat or relevant public platforms
   - Translate key findings into public-facing materials
3) Include executive summaries for high-level dissemination

Step 10: Monitor Follow-Up and Institutional Learning

1) Track implementation of recommendations
   - Institutionalize a follow-up mechanism (e.g., annual review of evaluation uptake)
2) Integrate findings into future project planning
   - Include evaluation lessons in sectoral planning and budget documents
3) Archive reports and data for institutional memory and meta-evaluation

5.2.2. Templates

Template 1: Evaluation Plan Format

- Project Title and Reference Code
- Purpose and Scope of Evaluation
- Key Evaluation Questions
- Evaluation Team Composition
- Methodology Summary (qualitative, quantitative, mixed)
- Timeline and Milestones
- Budget and Resource Allocation
- Roles and Responsibilities

Template 2: Logic Model Template

Use arrows or flow diagrams to visualize the theory of change.

Impacts			
Outcomes			
Outputs			
Activities		Inputs	

Template 3: Indicator Matrix

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source of Data	Collection Method	Frequency	Responsible Agency

Template 4: Final Evaluation Report Format

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction and Background
3. Evaluation Purpose and Scope
4. Methodology
5. Findings (by OECD-DAC criteria)

6. Conclusions and Lessons Learned
7. Recommendations
8. Annexes (data tables, photos, stakeholder list)

Template 5: Management Response Matrix

Recommendation	Responsible Agency	Timeline	Action Taken	Status (Pending/Ongoing/Completed)

5.2.3. A Set of Indicators Tailored to Various Types of Impact

The methodology may include a system of indicators grouped into several categories:

- **Social Impact:** Changes in household income, poverty reduction, employment growth, improved access to basic services, behavioral changes among beneficiaries, and reduced social vulnerability.
- **Economic Efficiency:** Growth in local economic activity, improvements in labor productivity, changes in the cost of key services, and the multiplicative effect.
- **Institutional Changes:** Sustainability of asset management practices and improved interagency coordination.
- **Environmental Impact:** Reductions in pollution and emissions, adoption of green and energy-efficient technologies.
- **Asset Utilization:** Infrastructure usage rates, availability of budgets and personnel for maintenance, and integration of assets into daily sector operations.
- **Comparison with Project Objectives:** Achievement of stated outcomes and impacts, analysis of deviations, and cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness evaluations.

The framework below (<Table 2-5>) should be adapted to the project type, sector, and local context. Disaggregating data by sex, age, region, and vulnerability status is encouraged wherever possible.

<Table 2-5> Indicators for Social Impact

Indicator	Description	Data Source	Frequency
Change in Average Household Income	Measured in PPP-adjusted local currency among project beneficiaries	Household surveys, statistical agency	Baseline + Year 3/5
Poverty Headcount Ratio Reduction	Share of population lifted above the national poverty line	poverty database, surveys	Annual
Employment Creation	Net new jobs created (by age/gender/region)	Labor Ministry, PIU reports	Biannual
Access to Basic Services	% increase in access to water, health, education	Sectoral reports, local government	Annual
Behavioral Change	Changes in attitudes and practices	FGDs, perception surveys	Baseline + endline
Reduced Social Vulnerability	Change in vulnerability index	Household assessments	Baseline + endline

Source: Author (2025).

<Table 2-6> Indicators for Economic Efficiency

Indicator	Description	Data Source	Frequency
Growth in Local GDP/Business Activity	Change in local economic output	Ministry of Economy, business registries	Annual
Labor Productivity	Output per worker in target sectors	Labor statistics, firm surveys	Annual
Cost of Basic Services	Change in unit costs for water, energy, transport	Utility bills, user surveys	Annual
Project Leverage Ratio	Public investment to private/donor co-financing	MOF, donor records	Post-project (once)
Economic Multiplier	Induced economic gains from public investment	Econometric modeling	Endline evaluation

Source: Author (2025).

<Table 2-7> Indicators for Institutional Change

Indicator	Description	Data Source	Frequency
Maintenance Budget Allocation Ratio	% of Operation & Maintenance costs covered by public budgets	Sector budget reports	Annual
Institutional Coordination Score	Score (1–5) on interagency cooperation	Key informant interviews	Annual
Capacity Retention	% of trained staff retained post-project	PIU records, HR data	Year 1, Year 3
SOP/Policy Adoption	# of institutions adopting new procedures	Ministerial records	Post-project (once)

Source: Author (2025).

<Table 2-8> Indicators for Environmental Impact

Indicator	Description	Data Source	Frequency
Emissions Reduction	Change in CO_2 /PM emissions	Environmental monitoring	Annual
Green Technology Adoption	% of buildings with energy-efficient systems	Infrastructure audits	Post-project (once)
Reforestation/ Rehabilitation	Area restored or reforested (ha)	Environmental ministry	Annual
Resource Efficiency	% reduction in water/waste consumption	Utility records, monitoring reports	Biannual

Source: Author (2025).

<Table 2-9> Indicators for Asset Utilization

Indicator	Description	Data Source	Frequency
Usage Rate	Infrastructure usage as % of capacity	Sector-specific data	Quarterly/Biannual
Operational Status	% of facilities functioning post-completion	Site inspections	Year 1, Year 3
Maintenance Staff Availability	Ratio of personnel to required staffing	HR records	Annual
Operation & Maintenance Budget Sufficiency	Budgeted vs. estimated O&M needs	MOF, sector ministry	Annual

Source: Author (2025).

<Table 2-10> Indicators for Project Alignment and Value for Money

Indicator	Description	Data Source	Frequency
Outcome Achievement Rate	% of outcome indicators met	Final evaluation reports	Post-project (once)
Impact Realization rate	% of projected long-term impacts realized	Follow-up evaluations	Year 3, Year 5
Deviation Analysis	% deviation from budget/schedule/outputs	PIU and audit reports	Endline
Cost-Benefit Ratio (CBR)	Net benefit per unit cost	Economic analysis	Post-project
Cost-Effectiveness Ranking	Cost per unit of service/outcome	Sector benchmarking	Endline

Source: Author (2025).

5.2.4. Mechanisms for Feedback from Beneficiaries and Public Authorities

Effective ex-post evaluation feedback mechanisms are essential for enhancing the quality, transparency, and sustainability of ODA projects in the Kyrgyz Republic. These mechanisms reinforce national ownership, promote adaptive learning, and ensure that evaluation findings inform future policy and program design.

(1) Feedback from Public Authorities and Implementing Agencies

Ex-Post Evaluation Policy Dialogues

The Ministry of Economy and Commerce, in coordination with the Ministry of Finance, should host structured dialogues involving line ministries, donor agencies, and regional authorities. These sessions should review evaluation findings, discuss policy alignment, and formulate corrective measures.

Sector Working Group (SWG) Reviews

Sector-specific working groups, comprising representatives from government, donors, and civil society, should include evaluation reviews as a standing agenda item. SWGs can assess the implications of evaluation findings on sectoral strategies, performance targets, and investment plans.

Local Authority Feedback Workshops

Workshops with oblast and rayon governments should be held to gather operational feedback on infrastructure maintenance, public service provision, and budgeting challenges following the completion of the project. Feedback templates and summary reports should be submitted to central authorities for consideration in the development of policy.

(2) Feedback from Beneficiaries

Community Validation Forums

Community validation forums should be convened at the village (aiyl) or district (rayon) level after the completion of project evaluations. These forums serve as a platform for presenting key findings and collecting community insights, concerns, and suggestions. They should be facilitated by local governments or project staff, ensuring diverse representation from women, youth, farmers, and other stakeholder groups.

Follow-Up Beneficiary Surveys

Quantitative surveys should be conducted 1 to 3 years after project completion to assess beneficiary satisfaction, perceived outcomes, and the quality of service delivery. These surveys can be implemented in collaboration with the National Statistical Committee or local universities using standardized tools.

Digital Feedback Tools

Online platforms and mobile applications, including potential integration with the Tunduk e-government system, can offer scalable mechanisms for capturing ongoing beneficiary feedback. Simple SMS-based tools may be deployed in rural areas where internet access is limited.

<Table 2-11> Feedback Flow

Ex-post Evaluation Completion
↓
[1] Community Validation Forum
[2] Online/Digital Feedback Tool
[3] Follow-up Surveys
↓
[4] Sector Working Group Review
[5] Local Authority Feedback Workshop
↓
[6] Management Response Plan
[7] Annual Policy Reflection Report

Source: Author (2025).

To sustain and formalize these mechanisms, several institutional actions are proposed. First, Regulation No. 389 should be amended to explicitly require ex-post evaluation feedback, thereby ensuring legal backing for participatory review processes. Second, templates, guidance manuals, and standard operating procedures (SOPs) should be developed to support PIUs and local authorities in conducting structured and consistent feedback activities. Third, feedback tracking should be integrated into the Aidstat platform or the broader national M&E system to enable centralized monitoring and reporting. Finally, regional and sectoral officials should receive targeted training in participatory facilitation and feedback analysis to strengthen capacity and promote effective engagement.

Establishing robust ex-post evaluation feedback mechanisms will enhance responsiveness, foster trust, and ensure that ODA interventions meaningfully contribute to the Kyrgyz Republic's national development priorities. The adoption of the proposed evaluation guidelines and toolkits will help shift the focus from traditional control monitoring to genuine ex-post evaluation. This transition will improve public spending efficiency, strengthen the foundations of evidence-based decision-making, and foster greater trust among citizens and oversight institutions. Furthermore, these mechanisms will help link local development needs more effectively with national policy priorities, fostering a more coherent and responsive aid management system. They also provide a practical framework for embedding beneficiary voices and institutional learning into the country's aid effectiveness architecture.

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03

Chapter

Development of Monitoring and Evaluation Methodology in the Post-Project Period: Sustainability, Sectoral Impact, and Models for Assessing Socio-Economic Development

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Keywords:
Post-Evaluation, Impact Assessment, Project Sustainability, Official Development Assistance (ODA), Evaluation Governance

Development of Monitoring and Evaluation Methodology in the Post-Project Period: Sustainability, Sectoral Impact, and Models for Assessing Socio-Economic Development

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1. Introduction

Effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are critical for ensuring that public investment projects deliver sustainable outcomes, inform policy refinement, and enhance accountability. In the Kyrgyz Republic, Official Development Assistance (ODA) has played a crucial role in supporting infrastructure development, social service delivery, and institutional reform across various sectors. However, the capacity to assess outcomes after project completion, including whether objectives were achieved, remain operational, or continue to serve public needs, is still limited.

The government is strengthening its commitment to evidence-based policymaking. This is reflected in the forthcoming National Development Strategy 2025–2030 and the continuation of the "Digital Kyrgyzstan" initiative. In this context, the development of a robust post-project evaluation system has become increasingly important. Sectors such as agriculture, energy, health, and transportation remain central to national development goals. However, systematic post-evaluation of donor-financed and public projects in these areas is uncommon, inconsistent, or primarily driven by donor requirements. This has led to missed opportunities to capture lessons, optimize future investments, and reinforce public trust in the use of domestic and external resources.

This study was conducted as part of the Knowledge Sharing Program (KSP) between the Republic of Korea and the Kyrgyz Republic during the 2024–2025 cycle. It responds to the government's stated need for a strategic framework and methodological guidance to improve post-project evaluation systems. Rather than treating evaluation as a technical add-on or donor compliance task, this study positions post-evaluation as a public governance tool that supports long-term results and responsive decision-making.

The analysis draws on a sectoral review of current practices in the Kyrgyz Republic, identifies key institutional and operational challenges, and presents policy recommendations based on Korea's experience with fiscal project evaluation. The report also introduces practical tools, such as logic

models, cost-benefit analysis, and social outcome tracking, which can be adapted to the Kyrgyz context. By linking these tools to institutional reforms, the study aims to support the development of a feasible, step-by-step action plan for integrating post-evaluation into national development management.

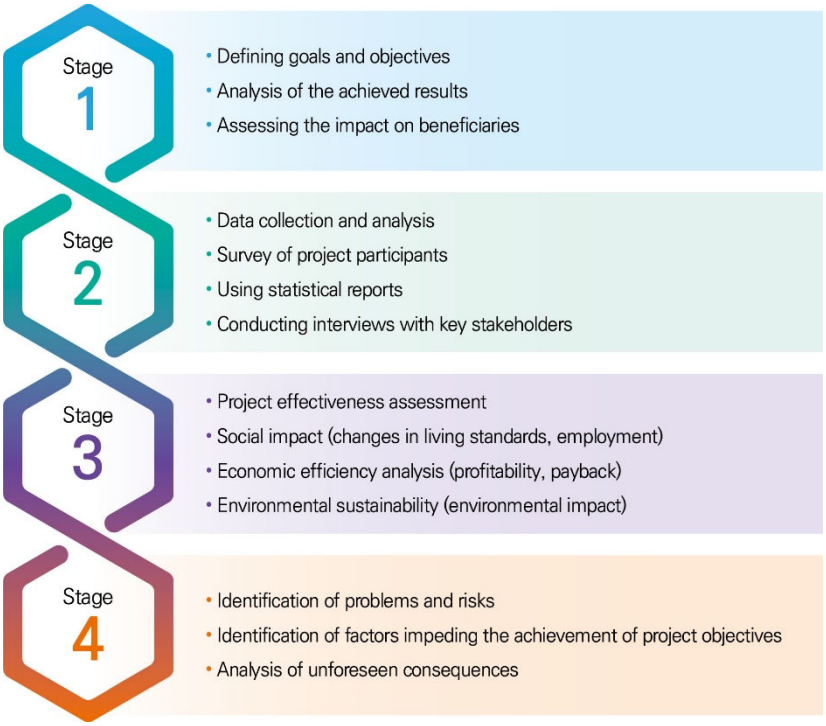
Ultimately, this report aims to support Kyrgyz policymakers in establishing a nationally managed evaluation culture that is sustainable, inclusive, and results-driven. Strengthening post-evaluation is not simply about measuring what was done but also about determining what works, for whom, and why, so that future projects can achieve better outcomes for the people of The Kyrgyz Republic.

2. Analysis of the Current Status of Post-Evaluation Methodologies for ODA Projects in the Kyrgyz Republic

2.1. Cases of Post-Monitoring and Evaluation in the Kyrgyz Republic

The Kyrgyz Republic's experience with post-project monitoring and evaluation of ODA-funded initiatives varies across sectors. The following subsections examine four key sectors – agriculture, energy, public health, and transportation. Each subsection outlines specific projects or programs and the extent of any post-completion monitoring, the methodologies or indicators applied, and the findings or lessons learned in each case.

[Figure 3-1] Main Stages of Post-Project Evaluation in the Kyrgyz Republic



Source: Author (2025).

2.1.1. Agriculture

In the agricultural sector, several major ODA-funded interventions have been implemented in the Kyrgyz Republic over the past two decades. However, post-project evaluation remains limited in both frequency and methodological rigor. Several projects serve to illustrate both the opportunities and recurring gaps that exist in current post-monitoring practices.

One major initiative is the Integrated Dairy Productivity Improvement Project (IDPIP), which was supported by the World Bank and implemented through the Ministry of Agriculture. The project aimed to enhance dairy sector productivity by improving genetic resources, establishing milk collection infrastructure, and strengthening the capacity of smallholder farmers. Output indicators were achieved, including the construction of milk collection points and the training of over 8,500 farmers. However, no structured post-project evaluation was conducted to assess medium- or long-term effects on farm-level productivity, rural income, or the sustainability of infrastructure.

Another illustrative example is the Market Access and Agricultural Competitiveness Project (MAACP), which aimed to strengthen value chains for perishable products, improve marketing, and reduce post-harvest losses. While project reports note improved logistics and producer participation, no follow-up evaluation was conducted to assess whether the gains continued or contributed to broader rural development outcomes. There is no analysis of whether the interventions led to long-term price stabilization, farmer cooperation, or export diversification.

A third case, the On-Farm Irrigation Project (OFIP), co-financed by international partners, aimed to rehabilitate irrigation infrastructure and enhance water-use efficiency at the farm level. The project met its immediate physical targets, but lacked a dedicated post-evaluation to examine whether irrigated land productivity improved over time or whether water user associations maintained infrastructure properly after donor withdrawal.

These cases indicate a broader pattern in the agricultural sector: a tendency to monitor physical and financial outputs during project implementation, without establishing frameworks for tracking outcomes and sustainability after completion. Additionally, fragmented data and limited analytical capacity within implementing agencies limit the scope and depth of evaluation efforts. Many projects are managed by semi-autonomous project implementation units (PIUs) with minimal integration into ministry structures, reducing institutional learning and continuity.

To address these challenges, the following improvements are recommended. First, all major agriculture-related ODA projects should include a standardized post-evaluation plan as part of the project lifecycle, to be implemented two to three years after completion. Second, evaluation frameworks should include both technical indicators (e.g., yield per hectare, milk production, irrigation efficiency) and socio-economic outcomes (e.g., household income, market access, gender equity). Lastly, the Ministry of Agriculture's data systems should be upgraded to support outcome monitoring and enable the reuse of project data for long-term analysis and evaluation.

2.1.2. Energy

The energy sector in the Kyrgyz Republic has received substantial donor funding, with multiple large-scale ODA projects implemented over the past two decades. These have included investments in power generation and distribution, transmission system upgrades, and rural electrification programs. Despite the sector’s strategic importance and high capital intensity, post-project evaluations have been limited or absent in most cases, restricting assessments of long-term sustainability and institutional learning.

One example is the At-Bashinskaya Hydropower Plant (HPP) modernization project. The project involved the rehabilitating of turbines and related infrastructure to improve energy output and operational reliability. Although project completion reports documented higher capacity utilization and short-term efficiency gains, no structured evaluation was conducted two to five years after completion to determine whether the improvements were maintained. In particular, there is no data on whether the rehabilitated facilities continued to operate at projected efficiency levels or whether the maintenance systems remained effective after donor support ended.

Another major intervention is the Arka–Batken 110 kV transmission line upgrade project, co-financed by international partners. The project's objective was to enhance energy reliability in the southern regions and reduce outages. Technical outputs were achieved; for instance, infrastructure was commissioned, and technical losses were reduced. However, no formal impact evaluation was conducted to determine whether household or industrial energy consumption improved, or whether service reliability resulted in measurable economic gains.

A recurring issue across energy projects is the absence of clearly defined post-project key performance indicators (KPIs) linked to user outcomes. Most evaluations, if conducted at all, focus on engineering benchmarks rather than end-user benefits or long-term cost efficiency. This limits the government's ability to assess whether infrastructure investments result in actual service improvements or economic productivity gains.

Additionally, the sector experiences fragmented project ownership and weak institutional follow-up. Many projects are managed through stand-alone project units without integration into the operational and evaluation frameworks of the Ministry of Energy or national utilities. As a result, project data and lessons learned are rarely incorporated into institutional processes, and decisions regarding replication or expansion are not based on verified impact.

To address these gaps, it is recommended that all energy-sector ODA projects include a post-completion evaluation plan, with dedicated funding and designated responsible institutions, from the design stage onwards. Evaluation frameworks should move beyond technical performance and include outcome indicators such as average daily service hours, customer satisfaction, tariff impacts, and gender-disaggregated access to electricity. Institutional mechanisms should also be established to ensure that lessons from completed energy projects are applied to future investment planning and sector reform strategies.

2.1.3. Public Health

In the public health sector, ODA-funded projects in the Kyrgyz Republic have concentrated on infrastructure improvement, equipment procurement, and the expansion of basic services. However, systematic post-project evaluation remains underdeveloped, limiting the country's ability to assess the sustainability, effectiveness, and equity of these investments.

One example is the Children's Emergency Hospital project in Bishkek. This project involved constructing a modern pediatric facility, with donor support covering infrastructure, initial medical equipment, and training. The hospital was completed, and operational indicators, such as patient volume and staff recruitment, were reported. However, no post-project evaluation has been

conducted to assess service quality, patient outcomes, or the cost-effectiveness of care delivery. The absence of such an assessment makes it difficult to determine whether the investment has produced measurable improvements in child health or reduced health disparities.

Another example is the Blood Service Modernization Project, which aimed to enhance blood storage and screening capabilities across regional hospitals. Although equipment was delivered and laboratories were upgraded, maintenance has been inconsistent. Without post-project monitoring, it remains unclear whether the intended improvements in blood safety and availability were achieved or maintained. Additionally, no data is available on whether trained personnel remained in their positions or whether clinical use of blood products increased as expected.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency medical equipment, including oxygen stations, mobile laboratories, and testing kits, was delivered under expedited donor arrangements. These interventions were essential during the peak crisis but lacked integrated mechanisms for tracking equipment use, maintenance, and post-pandemic incorporation into regular healthcare services. As a result, there is limited understanding of how this emergency support affected long-term public health capacity, preparedness, or institutional resilience.

Across the sector, the absence of established post-project evaluation has resulted in missed opportunities for learning and improvement. The Ministry of Health currently lacks dedicated M&E units with the technical capacity to conduct outcome evaluations. Evaluation responsibilities are often spread across donor-specific project implementation units (PIUs), which typically disband after project closure, resulting in fragmented data and a weakened institutional memory.

To strengthen post-evaluation in the health sector, several measures are proposed. First, all health sector ODA projects should include mandatory post-evaluation plans. These plans should define indicators aligned with sectoral goals, such as reductions in maternal and child mortality, improved emergency response capacity, and patient satisfaction. Second, the Ministry of Health should establish a centralized M&E unit or designate specialized focal points within existing departments. Third, all ODA health projects should integrate sustainability indicators, including maintenance, equipment usage rates, and staff retention, into evaluation frameworks. Ultimately, digital health information systems should be used to facilitate the long-term tracking of service delivery and outcomes across project cycles.

2.1.4. Transportation

The transportation sector has been a key focus of development cooperation in the Kyrgyz Republic, receiving substantial ODA support for road rehabilitation, regional connectivity, and border infrastructure. Despite the large scale of investments and their importance for trade and mobility, systematic post-project evaluations are uncommon. In particular, evaluations of usage outcomes, maintenance effectiveness, and broader socio-economic effects are often lacking.

One example is the Bishkek–Naryn–Torugart corridor improvement project, which was supported by multiple donors, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The project aimed to improve regional trade logistics and domestic connectivity by rehabilitating strategic road segments leading to the China border. The project achieved its immediate output targets, such as road resurfacing,

drainage installation, and signage. However, no structured post-completion evaluation has been conducted to determine whether road conditions were maintained or whether traffic volumes and trade throughput increased as expected. Local observers have reported premature degradation in some road sections, raising questions about the quality of construction supervision and the adequacy of maintenance funding after handover.

Another example is the rehabilitation of the Bishkek–Osh highway, a major north-south artery for both freight and passenger movement. The road was upgraded in several phases with international support; however, no unified post-project assessment was conducted across the phases to evaluate safety improvements, cost efficiency, or long-term sustainability. Moreover, available data on road usage remains fragmented, limiting the ability to analyze whether the project led to reduced travel times, vehicle operating cost savings, or improved regional equity.

Post-project evaluation has also been lacking in smaller, urban-level transport interventions, such as junction upgrades and bus terminal improvements. Although these projects are often completed successfully in physical terms, there is limited information on user satisfaction, access for vulnerable groups, or integration with other transport modes. Where data exist, they are not consistently used to inform future project design or municipal transportation planning.

A recurring challenge in the sector is the lack of a unified evaluation framework across agencies. While donor-funded feasibility studies and ex-ante appraisals are often rigorous, there is no corresponding post-project follow-up built into government systems. The Ministry of Transport does not currently operate a dedicated evaluation unit, and responsibilities for performance monitoring are dispersed among donor PIUs, regional offices, and maintenance units.

To address these gaps, it is recommended that all major transport infrastructure projects incorporate a post-evaluation plan, implemented two to four years after project completion. Evaluation should encompass not only physical conditions but also user-level indicators, such as average travel time, changes in traffic volume, road safety statistics, and maintenance costs. The government should consider establishing a central project tracking database and applying cost-efficiency benchmarks to future infrastructure planning. Improved coordination between the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Economy and Commerce in developing national evaluation standards would also improve coherence and institutional learning across the sector.

2.2. Key Issues and Areas for Improvement

Post-project evaluation remains underdeveloped within the Kyrgyz Republic's ODA project management system. Despite substantial investment across various sectors, including agriculture, energy, health, and transportation, there is no formal requirement to systematically assess the long-term outcomes or sustainability of completed projects. This limits institutional learning, constrains evidence-based policymaking, and increases the risk of inefficiency and repeated errors. Based on the cross-sector analysis, five core issues have been identified.

<Table 3-1> Summary of Key Issues in Post-Evaluation in the Kyrgyz Republic

Sector	Key Issues in Post-Evaluation	Example
Agriculture	Lack of post-evaluation planning	• Most projects end without a roadmap or timeline for post-completion evaluation (e.g., IDPIP, MAACP).
	Output-centric performance measurement	• Performance is measured only by outputs such as the number of dairy cows or milk collection facilities, without assessing outcomes like income, market access, or women's participation.
	Disconnected data management	• After project implementation by PIUs, data is not transferred to the relevant ministries, making long-term tracking impossible.
	No sustainability assessment	• No follow-up to determine whether trained farmers continue to apply knowledge or if collection centers are still operating effectively.
Energy	Engineering-focused evaluation	• Evaluations focus on technical indicators such as capacity and transmission length; user experience, household access, and energy equity are not assessed.
	Lack of user impact assessment	• There is no quantitative or qualitative evaluation of electricity demand changes, billing burdens, or reliability improvements.
	PIU-centered project management	• Project results are not institutionalized in ministries or utilities after PIUs are disbanded; implementation is treated in isolation.
	No information on post-project maintenance	• No data on the state of infrastructure maintenance, operational costs, or sustainability after equipment ages.
Health	No follow-up on service utilization	• After construction of hospitals or blood banks, no tracking of patient numbers, equipment usage rates, or infection control outcomes (e.g., Children's Emergency Hospital, Blood Bank).
	Failure to integrate emergency interventions	• Equipment introduced during COVID-19 response was not fully integrated into routine service systems.
	Unstable retention of trained personnel	• Staff trained under donor projects often leave or are reassigned after project closure, weakening sustainability.
	Lack of patient-centered indicators	• Indicators such as patient satisfaction, accessibility improvements, or benefits for vulnerable groups are not included in evaluations.
Transport	Physical output-only performance measurement	• Road rehabilitation is measured by kilometers improved or completion status, not by traffic flow, travel time savings, or accident reduction.
	Lack of maintenance status tracking	• Post-completion data on maintenance cycles, budget execution, or quality degradation is unavailable.
	Lack of evaluation for urban transport	• User-centered evaluations of terminals or intermodal projects are missing or anecdotal.
	Fragmented administrative responsibility	• Responsibility is split among ministries, local governments, and donors, making data collection inconsistent and ownership unclear.

Source: Author (2025).

To address the sector-specific gaps and limitations outlined above, this report provides specific examples of measurable performance indicators that can be used during post-evaluation. To support the development of a feasible and actionable post-evaluation framework, ministries and implementing agencies should be provided with sector-relevant examples of KPIs. These indicators form the basis for tracking not only physical outputs, but also project outcomes and long-term development effects.

<Table 3-2> presents illustrative KPIs across four sectors: agriculture, energy, health, and transportation, where many donor-financed projects have historically been concentrated in the Kyrgyz Republic. The indicators are organized according to a results chain: outputs (immediate deliverables), outcomes (short- to medium-term effects), and impacts (long-term changes).

These KPIs are not exhaustive, but they offer a practical starting point for ministries to integrate measurable indicators into project design, monitoring, and ex-post evaluation. Each project should include at least one KPI at the output, outcome, and impact levels. Qualitative indicators, such as beneficiary satisfaction or improvements in accessibility, can be used in conjunction with quantitative measures, particularly in projects with social objectives.

Each line ministry should compile an internal KPI library, reviewed annually by the Ministry of Economy's evaluation coordination team. These KPI sets should be standardized through sector-specific guideline annexes and submitted as part of annual performance reporting. Including such structured indicators will enable comparability across projects and provide a strong basis for evidence-based decision-making.

<Table 3-2> Sector-Specific Post-Evaluation KPI Examples

Sector	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators	Impact Indicators
Agriculture	• Number of farmers trained • Number of milk cooling centers built- Number of irrigation systems rehabilitated	• Adoption rate of improved techniques • Increased crop yield per hectare • Milk collection volume	• Increase in household agricultural income • Market access (travel time reduction) • Share of women-led farms with income gains
Energy	• Number of households newly connected • Transmission line length installed	• Increase in daily electricity usage- Reliability (frequency of outages) • User satisfaction with electricity service	• Decrease in energy expenditure per household- Share of rural electrified areas- Increase in evening productive activity
Health	• Number of clinics constructed or renovated • Number of staff trained • Medical equipment installed	• Increase in outpatient visits- Patient wait time • Use rate of new equipment • Staff retention	• Reduction in maternal or child mortality • Increased treatment rates for key conditions • Patient satisfaction (survey)
Transport	• Road length upgraded • Number of terminals built- Number of vehicles procured	• Change in average travel time to services (school, market) • Increase in daily road usage • Traffic safety signage installed	• Reduction in transport-related accidents • Increase in household access to market • Increase in school attendance in rural areas

Source: Author (2025).

2.2.1. Lack of Institutionalization and Evaluation Planning

A continuing challenge across all sectors is the absence of structured post-project evaluation planning. Most ODA-funded projects in the Kyrgyz Republic are implemented without a formal requirement or operational plan for post-completion review. In agriculture, projects such as the Dairy Productivity Improvement Project and the Market Access Project met their output milestones.

However, they were never evaluated after completion to assess their long-term effects on income, continued operation of milk collection centers, or adoption of improved practices.

In the health sector, hospitals and laboratories supported by donors remain operational. Still, no follow-up assessments have been conducted to determine whether patient outcomes have improved or whether the equipment has been properly maintained. Similarly, in transportation, large-scale corridor rehabilitation projects, such as the Bishkek–Naryn–Torugart and Bishkek–Osh corridors, lacked post-project tracking mechanisms to measure their impacts.

These examples show a consistent lack of post-evaluation integration into project life cycles. Evaluation units are often not integrated within implementing ministries, and donor-financed PIUs are typically disbanded upon project closure, resulting in the loss of institutional memory.

2.2.2. Output-Oriented Evaluation Bias

A second major issue is the predominant focus on physical and financial outputs, rather than on outcome and impact indicators. In most cases, evaluation focuses on counting what was built, delivered, or trained rather than on what changed. For example, agricultural programs typically report the number of dairy facilities built or farmers trained, without tracking whether productivity improved or markets expanded. In energy projects, infrastructure upgrades are typically documented in terms of the kilometers of transmission lines completed or substations refurbished; however, their effect on service reliability or user costs is not thoroughly examined.

Health sector evaluations similarly focus on equipment delivery and facility construction, without examining patient satisfaction, service access for vulnerable populations, or changes in health outcomes. Road projects count kilometers resurfaced, with minimal attention to traffic volumes, road safety improvements, or regional accessibility gains.

This output-centric mindset yields limited insight into how projects contribute to development goals, thereby undermining accountability and the learning process.

2.2.3. Absence of User-Centered Outcome Indicators

Closely linked to the output bias is the widespread lack of user-centered outcome measurement. Projects rarely include indicators that assess the experience and benefits received by end-users. In the health sector, for instance, no follow-up is conducted to assess patient satisfaction or affordability after hospital construction. In energy projects, post-project assessments often fail to evaluate whether households now experience fewer outages or whether their energy bills have become more manageable.

Similarly, transportation projects often lack evaluations of travel time reductions, safety improvements, or enhanced mobility for women, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities. This omission limits the relevance of evaluation findings and their utility for policymaking, since they fail to reflect the lived experiences of the populations these projects aim to serve.

2.2.4. Weak Sustainability and Maintenance Assessment

Another recurring issue is the lack of evaluation of whether project benefits are sustained after donor exit. In agriculture, for example, milk collection centers are established, and farmers are trained; however, no evaluations are conducted to check whether these initiatives are still operational or producing results three to five years later. In the continuing energy sector, there is no monitoring to confirm whether repaired hydropower plants or upgraded transmission lines remain functional or cost-effective over time.

In the health sector, emergency medical equipment delivered during the COVID-19 crisis is not tracked for integration into long-term service delivery. In transportation, the quality and maintenance of resurfaced roads are often not evaluated after completion. The absence of maintenance audits, budget tracking, or institutional performance reviews reduces long-term effectiveness and increases the risk of resource waste.

2.2.5. Poor Institutional Memory and Knowledge Use

Finally, evaluation findings are rarely retained or reused. Most evaluations, if conducted at all, follow donor requirements, and results are not systematically shared within the government. Ministries lack central databases or knowledge management systems to archive and analyze past evaluation data.

This problem is particularly evident in agriculture and energy, where project data remains with PIUs that are dismantled upon project closure. In health and transport, data are held in silos across separate regional authorities, project units, and donor platforms. As a result, lessons learned are not applied to new projects, and recurring problems persist across project cycles.

2.3. Policy Implications

2.3.1. Policy Lessons and Institutional Implications

The cross-sector issues identified in the Kyrgyz Republic's current post-project evaluation practices indicate a set of broader policy implications that extend beyond individual projects. These implications affect how public investments are designed, managed, and evaluated across ministries. Addressing them requires institutional, regulatory, and procedural changes at the national level. The following four policy domains are particularly relevant.

The absence of formal post-evaluation procedures highlights the need for a national framework that requires post-project assessment for ODA-funded and publicly financed projects. Ministries must be required to integrate post-evaluation plans into project design and allocate appropriate budgets and personnel for this purpose. A central coordination mechanism, either within the MOEC or as an inter-ministerial working group, should oversee post-evaluation standards and ensure that findings are consolidated at the national level. Legal or regulatory reform may be required to codify these responsibilities and establish a mandate for systematic follow-up evaluations.

Current reporting practices overemphasize the physical and financial completion of projects, which does not adequately reflect policy effectiveness or public value. Shifting to an outcome-oriented accountability system would require ministries and implementing agencies to define clear impact pathways and result indicators during project planning and implementation. Evaluation criteria should focus not only on what was delivered (outputs), but also on what changed as a result (outcomes and long-term effects). Performance frameworks and budget planning tools should be adjusted to reflect these expectations and encourage long-term value creation.

A major implication of the current system is its detachment from the citizen experience. Evaluation systems must be redesigned to systematically capture user-level indicators such as accessibility, quality of service, satisfaction, affordability, and equity. This requires collecting beneficiary-level data and incorporating qualitative tools such as focus groups or scorecards. Including user perspectives in evaluation frameworks will improve the policy relevance of findings and align public investments more closely with the needs of diverse population groups.

Ultimately, effective post-evaluation necessitates robust data systems, institutional memory, and mechanisms for applying policy lessons. Ministries need interoperable Management Information Systems (MIS) that retain project documentation, monitoring data, and evaluation findings over time. Evaluation results should be shared across departments and used in planning future projects. Establishing formal feedback loops, whereby lessons learned inform project design, budgeting, and scaling decisions, will enable adaptive management and promote efficient use of resources. Without such systems, evaluation will remain a procedural formality rather than a strategic tool for public sector management.

2.3.2. Practical Recommendations for the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic

To enhance the long-term effectiveness, sustainability, and accountability of public investment and development assistance, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic should institutionalize post-evaluation systems through five mutually reinforcing actions.

The first action is to establish a legal and institutional framework for post-evaluation. The government should develop a national policy that mandates post-evaluation for major projects, especially those funded through ODA and public budgets. Ministries must be required to integrate evaluation plans at the design stage and allocate budgets for follow-up reviews. A central coordination unit, within the Ministry of Economy and Commerce or a cross-ministerial task force, should oversee implementation and enforce minimum standards.

The second action is to transition from an output-based reporting system to one that focuses on outcomes and long-term effects. Under current practices, many projects report only physical or financial completion, such as the number of kilometers of roads built or equipment delivered, without assessing whether those outputs have produced meaningful changes for citizens or the economy. To address this, ministries should be required to develop a results framework that links project inputs to intended outcomes and impacts. KPIs should be standardized and aligned with national development goals, enabling consistent and transparent assessment across sectors.

The third action is to integrate user-centered metrics and participatory methods into post-evaluation processes. Most evaluations currently overlook the perspectives of citizens and service users. As a result, evaluations overlook essential feedback on accessibility, affordability, and satisfaction. To close this gap, ministries should collect both quantitative and qualitative data directly from beneficiaries through structured surveys, focus groups, and community-based tools such as citizen scorecards. These methods can enhance policy relevance and ensure that diverse perspectives are incorporated into future project planning and implementation.

The fourth action is to strengthen the evaluation of sustainability and maintenance outcomes. Many projects experience performance declines after external funding ends, particularly in infrastructure sectors. Post-evaluation should assess whether services and assets continue to function effectively over time, whether clinics remain staffed, roads are well-maintained, and whether water systems are operational. Ministries should be required to include sustainability indicators in evaluation plans, such as operational cost coverage, asset utilization rates, or maintenance audits. These findings can inform reinvestment decisions and help reduce long-term inefficiencies.

The fifth action is to establish knowledge management and feedback mechanisms across government. Evaluation findings are often lost or remain underused because they are fragmented across agencies or not systematically reviewed. To address this, the government should establish a centralized digital repository for evaluation results and ensure that all major findings are summarized and shared. Moreover, evaluation findings should directly inform future project design, annual planning, and budgeting. Ministries should convene periodic learning forums or inter-ministerial workshops to review evidence and apply lessons systematically.

Taken together, these recommendations are not intended to overhaul the Kyrgyz Republic's public administration system but rather to strengthen it by embedding a culture of learning and results-based governance. By institutionalizing post-project evaluation, the government will improve the long-term value of development assistance, increase transparency, strengthen citizen trust, and align external aid with national priorities.

2.4. Application Plan for Post-Evaluation of ODA Projects

To implement the recommendations proposed in the previous section, this application plan outlines a phased and practical approach to introducing post-evaluation practices for ODA projects in the Kyrgyz Republic. The plan emphasizes institutional feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and gradual capacity-building. It is structured around four key elements: pilot implementation, capacity development, integration with existing systems, and institutionalization.

2.4.1. Phase 1: Pilot Evaluations in Selected Sectors

As a first step, pilot post-evaluations should be conducted in two or three priority sectors where project data are relatively available and sectoral ministries have shown readiness for evaluation reform. Agriculture and energy are suitable initial candidates, given their project volume and policy importance.

These pilot evaluations should be selected from recently completed ODA projects that are large-scale, have measurable effects, or are strategically important. Each evaluation should be designed using a simplified results framework that includes outcome-level and sustainability indicators. The pilot should test methods for low-cost data collection, such as rapid assessments, structured interviews, and focus groups, as well as simple quasi-experimental designs where applicable. Initial external technical support may be required to guide the evaluation design and ensure quality.

The findings from these pilots will serve as demonstration cases to inform the broader institutional design, illustrate challenges in field implementation, and test practical data tools.

2.4.2. Phase 2: Development of National Guidelines and Indicator Sets

Based on pilot experiences, the government should develop national post-evaluation guidelines that can be applied across all ministries and sectors. These guidelines should include standardized procedures for planning, executing, and reporting post-project evaluations, including timing (such as two to three years after project closure), minimum data requirements, and defined roles and responsibilities.

Additionally, the government should issue sector-specific indicator sets that combine core outcome measures (such as user access, cost efficiency, and equity) with tailored metrics relevant to each sector. For example, in the transportation sector, indicators include reductions in average travel time and improvements in road safety. In contrast, in the health sector, indicators focus on patient satisfaction and service utilization. These indicators should align with the national development strategy and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Innovative digital and institutional approaches being tested in individual sectors, such as the post-evaluation digital dashboard and the focal team in the Ministry of Health, as described in Phase 3, can serve as practical models for broader implementation. The national guidelines should provide space for such sector-led experimentation to be scaled and incorporated into institutional practice over time.

2.4.3. Phase 3: Development of Evaluation Tools and Digital Systems

The practical needs of each sector should drive the development of evaluation tools and digital systems. In this regard, the health sector offers a particularly relevant case for demonstrating how institutional and digital reforms can be introduced in tandem.

Given the health sector's central role in the Kyrgyz Republic's national development agenda, it is essential to establish a dedicated institutional structure for monitoring and post-evaluation of major health investments. Currently, data on service utilization, patient outcomes, and infrastructure performance are fragmented across facilities or unavailable altogether, limiting the government's capacity to determine whether new hospitals or clinics are achieving their intended objectives.

To address this, a dedicated post-evaluation focal team should be established within the Ministry of Health (MoH). This team, embedded in the Ministry's strategic planning or quality assurance unit,

would be responsible for overseeing post-evaluation activities for externally funded and large-scale infrastructure projects. Its core functions should include (1) designing project-specific evaluation plans and indicators during the project approval stage, (2) coordinating with regional health authorities and facility-level managers to collect standardized performance data, (3) conducting post-completion evaluations at one to two years after project closure, and (4) integrating evaluation findings into policy updates and annual planning reviews within the MoH.

To support these institutional functions, the Ministry should develop or expand a digital project performance dashboard. This system could be developed using existing platforms such as MedStat or District Health Information Software 2 (DHIS2) modules. It should include (1) facility-level indicators (such as patient visits, staff availability, and equipment usage), (2) outcome data (such as treatment success rates, referral rates, and waiting times), (3) links to project design documents, budget execution reports, and prior evaluations, and (4) simple reporting interface for frontline managers.

A centralized digital dashboard would allow the MoH to monitor not only infrastructure outputs but also service delivery outcomes over time. Moreover, integrating this system with the Ministry of Economy and Commerce's public investment registry or donor aid platforms (such as Aidstat) would help improve cross-sector accountability and data harmonization.

In the early stages, this system can be piloted in one to two regions, focusing on recently completed hospital or blood center projects. Data collection protocols and evaluation templates should remain streamlined and consistent with the evaluation worksheet proposed in this report. Over time, this approach could be scaled to form a sector-wide post-evaluation framework, strengthening the evidence base for policy decisions and resource allocation.

2.4.4. Phase 4: Capacity Building and Institutional Support

As post-evaluation frameworks are gradually adopted and digital systems are introduced, a parallel focus on human and institutional capacity will be essential for sustained implementation. Evaluation systems, regardless of how well designed, depend on skilled personnel, clear mandates, and institutional incentives to function effectively.

Each line ministry should designate at least one evaluation focal point who is equipped to coordinate sector-specific evaluations and to act as a liaison between the central coordinating body (such as MOEC) and field-level implementers. These focal points should receive targeted training in results-based evaluation, cost-benefit analysis, qualitative data collection, and the ethical handling of evaluation data.

Beyond individual roles, ministries should be encouraged to establish or strengthen small M&E units where feasible. These units can serve as hubs for planning, storing, and analyzing evaluation information. Where resources are limited, shared evaluation teams or pooled technical assistance across ministries may be a viable option.

Capacity-building efforts should also include the development and dissemination of standard tools, such as evaluation worksheets, reporting templates, and indicator libraries, that frontline officials can

use without requiring extensive methodological expertise. To this end, the national guidelines introduced in Phase 2 should be converted into operational toolkits for use at the project level.

Partnerships with universities, national research institutions, and regional experts can further strengthen evaluation capacity through co-designed training, research collaborations, and evaluation internships. These activities should be coordinated with support from development partners to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity.

Ultimately, investing in people and systems simultaneously will be key to ensuring that evaluation practices become an institutionalized routine, rather than an occasional exercise.

3. Sharing Korea's Methodologies for Post-M&E Evaluation

The preceding sections have outlined the structural limitations and practical needs related to post-project evaluation in the Kyrgyz Republic. While the proposed recommendations offer a roadmap for institutional and procedural reform, their implementation requires both political will and applied technical knowledge. In this context, international experiences, particularly from countries that have institutionalized evaluation systems within their public sectors, can provide lessons and adaptable models.

The Republic of Korea presents a notable example where post-evaluation has become a routine and strategic component of national budget management and development policy. Korea's experience demonstrates how the systematic application of rigorous evaluation methodologies can enhance accountability, optimize resource allocation, and foster learning across sectors. The following chapter presents Korea's primary methodologies and tools for post-M&E, including case studies that may guide the Kyrgyz Republic's efforts to build its national evaluation system.

3.1. Major Concepts and Frameworks of Post-Evaluation

3.1.1. The Role of Post-Evaluation in Sustainability and Impact Assessment

Post-evaluation (also known as ex-post evaluation) is the systematic assessment of a project or program after its completion, typically a few years after implementation ends (JICA, 2004). Unlike mid-term or final evaluations, which focus on immediate outputs, post-evaluation examines long-term outcomes and socio-economic effects with the advantage of hindsight (FAO, 2010). It asks whether the project's benefits have materialized as intended and whether they are sustained over time. A central purpose is to determine why a project's succeeded or failed in achieving lasting results. In practice, this involves confirming whether the positive changes brought about by an intervention (including higher incomes, improved health, and strengthened infrastructure) continue to benefit the target population and remain stable after external support is withdrawn (JICA, 2004).

Sustainability and socio-economic impact are key concerns following the evaluation. According to international evaluation frameworks, ex-post studies focus especially on impact, meaning the broader, long-term effects on society or the economy, and sustainability, which refers to the likelihood that project outcomes will persist into the future (Park and Park, 2023). For example, a rural development project's impact could include increased household income or a reduction in poverty in the region. At the same time, sustainability would consider whether local institutions and finances can maintain project services after donor funding ends (JICA, 2004). Post-evaluation thus extends the usual performance criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability) to a forward-looking question: are the benefits lasting and transformative for the community or sector? It also feeds lessons back into the policy cycle, allowing future projects to learn from what worked well and to avoid pitfalls (KfW Development Bank, 2023).

Government officials in the Kyrgyz Republic can use post-evaluation to ensure that public investments deliver enduring value. By conducting evaluations a few years after project completion (often three to five years later), policymakers can assess actual outcomes against the original goals, determine if projects have truly improved socio-economic conditions, and verify if those improvements have been sustained. This is critical for national priorities such as sustainable rural livelihoods, energy access, healthcare reform, and transportation infrastructure, which are areas where long-term benefits and maintenance are essential. In summary, post-evaluation provides accountability for results and actionable insights on how to maximize the sustainability and development impact of government programs.

3.2. Practical and Resource-Efficient Evaluation Methodologies

Implementing post-evaluation in a resource-constrained context requires practical methodologies that strike a balance between rigor and cost-effectiveness. While randomized controlled trials are ideal for attributing impact, they are often impractical for governments to execute after the fact. Instead, officials can employ quasi-experimental and non-experimental designs to evaluation outcomes:

3.2.1. Quasi-Experimental Approaches

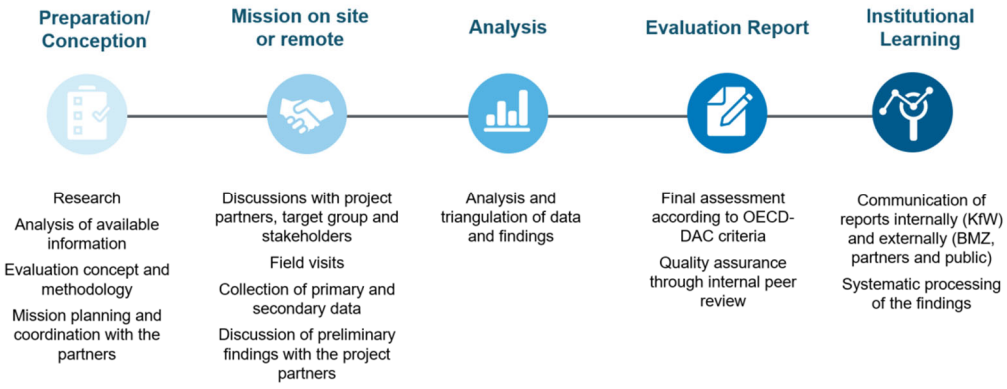
These methods approximate an experimental comparison by identifying a control or counterfactual after the project is completed. In a quasi-experimental design, evaluators do not randomly assign beneficiaries; instead, they construct a comparison using criteria such as eligibility cutoffs or matching techniques (Park and Park, 2023). For example, a health initiative in one region might be assessed by comparing key indicators with those of a similar region that did not receive the intervention. In one case, evaluators of a maternal and child health project compared pilot districts to non-pilot districts on measures such as prenatal care visits and infant checkups. Stronger outcomes in the pilot areas were considered evidence of the project, representing a quasi-experimental inference.

There are three common quasi-experimental methods (Park and Park, 2023). First, matching designs, such as propensity score (PS) matching, pair beneficiaries with non-beneficiaries of similar characteristics. Second, difference-in-differences (DiD) uses baseline and post-project data from both participant and non-participant groups to isolate changes attributable to the project. Third, regression discontinuity applies a cutoff, such as an income threshold for program eligibility, to compare those just above and below the cutoff. These approaches enhance the causal attribution of socio-economic impacts without incurring the cost of a randomized trial. They require data such as baseline surveys, control group records, or statistical datasets, so early investment in data collection pays off at the post-evaluation stage.

3.2.2. Non-Experimental and Qualitative Approaches

If creating a control group or baseline is not feasible, evaluators can still assess performance through observational and qualitative methods. Reflexive, or before-and-after, comparisons measure how indicators changed in the project area from pre-project to post-project (Park and Park, 2023). For instance, officials can compare a community's livelihood statistics or service access before a project with those a few years later to gauge improvement. While this simple pre- and post-comparison cannot establish causality (since other factors may affect outcomes), it is a resource-efficient way to check whether targeted conditions moved in the desired direction. Additionally, qualitative evaluations, such as stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and case studies, provide evidence into how and why changes occurred. Non-experimental research relies on observation and interpretation rather than controlled comparison. Although it cannot definitively separate the project's effects from other influences, it often yields high external validity, meaning real-world relevance, and provides a rich contextual understanding. For example, beneficiaries' testimonies can reveal whether they perceive improvements in their quality of life and attribute these to the project, offering feedback for policymakers.

[Figure 3-2] Process of a Typical Post-Evaluation



Note: Simplified and rapid approaches can be used to save time and costs while maintaining rigor.
Source: KfW Development Bank (2025).

Many post-evaluations use a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis with qualitative field observations. This triangulation improves confidence in the findings (Park and Park, 2023). The KfW Development Bank, for example, employs a "Rapid Appraisal" methodology that combines survey data, official statistics, and on-site interviews to rapidly assess a project's long-term effects (KfW Development Bank, 2025). The key for the Kyrgyz Republic is to select methods that are suited to the project's scale and available data. Smaller projects or pilot initiatives may rely on simpler surveys and community feedback, while larger programs can justify quasi-experimental studies or engage local research institutions to perform econometric analyses. In all cases, it is essential to maintain a proportionate and cost-conscious evaluation design. This ensures that post-evaluations remain feasible within budget and that the process itself does not divert undue resources from project implementation.

3.2.3. Measuring Social Outcomes

Measuring social outcomes in post-evaluation involves capturing the broader benefits of projects for people and communities, beyond traditional economic metrics. In sectors such as agriculture, energy, health, and transportation, this means evaluating how an intervention improves quality of life, equity, or social well-being. By quantifying social value, policymakers can understand the full return on public investments and design future projects for maximum social impact. For example, a child welfare program in Bishkek generated over EUR 3 in benefits to society for every EUR 1 invested (a Social Return on Investment (SROI) of approximately 203%) (SOS Children's Villages, 2020). Such analysis revealed long-term social payoffs (such as healthier, better-educated children) that traditional financial evaluations might overlook. Incorporating social outcome measures into evaluation ensures that government decisions account for inclusive growth and citizens' well-being, not just cost or output targets. Quantitative or qualitative KPIs used to track progress toward specific project objectives serve as the foundation for evaluating whether these outcomes are achieved.

There are two primary approaches to measuring social outcomes in post-evaluation: monetary quantification and qualitative or non-monetary methods. The following subsections examine these methods in turn, highlighting their practical application and their relevance to policy decisions in the Kyrgyz Republic.

3.2.3.1 Monetary Quantification Methods

Several tools are now available to **monetize social outcomes,** allowing them to be compared alongside financial returns. First, SROI is a framework for assigning monetary value to social and environmental outcomes and calculating a "return" relative to costs. It builds on cost–benefit analysis but also includes outcomes such as improved health, education, or empowerment, which are often omitted from financial evaluations (WHO, 2017). The result is typically expressed as a ratio (e.g., 3:1, indicating USD 3 of social value for every USD 1 of cost) or as a percentage return. For instance, preventive health and education programs typically show high SROIs. A UNDP analysis of HIV prevention services in Eastern Europe/Central Asia found that for every USD 1 spent, USD 2 to USD 3 in social benefits is achieved through infections averted and improved quality of life (UNDP, 2021). In an agricultural livelihoods project, SROI analysis calculated a social value of approximately USD 3.30 per USD 1 invested; when including wider community effects (indirect beneficiaries), the social return rose to USD 4.63 per USD 1. These figures illustrate, in dollar terms, the societal benefits (such as improved incomes and health) relative to the costs. By using SROI in post-evaluations, Kyrgyz officials can quantify outcomes, such as poverty reduction, health improvements, or gender empowerment, in monetary terms, making it easier to justify socially beneficial projects. Notably, SROI is not just about the final ratio, but also about the process: it requires engaging stakeholders to map out all significant changes a project causes and to assign reasonable monetary values (proxies) to those changes. This approach ensures a comprehensive look at who benefits and how. In the Kyrgyz Republic, while SROI is not yet routine in government evaluations, it has been applied by NGOs. For example, an SOS Children's Villages program calculated an overall SROI of around 3:1 in improving child and family welfare. Such evidence-based quantification can help government and donors alike to prioritize interventions that deliver the greatest social value.

Second, Social Progress Credit (SPC) is an innovative pay-for-success model developed in Korea that translates social outcomes into financial value. Launched as a pilot in 2015 by SK Group in partnership with the government, the SPC scheme rewards organizations—initially social enterprises—for achieving measurable social impact. Outcomes, such as job creation for disadvantaged groups, improvements in environmental conditions, or health benefits, are evaluated using pre-agreed-upon indicators and then quantified in monetary terms. Based on the verified results, organizations receive financial credits (e.g., subsidies, tax reductions) in proportion to their social value creation (GSEF, 2018; Kim, Kang, and Hong, 2019).

The Korean experience highlights that defining indicators was not a one-size-fits-all approach. Each participating organization collaborated with evaluators to develop tailored metrics, often requiring significant time and iteration. This collaborative approach enhanced the accuracy and relevance of the measurement, ensuring that financial incentives were closely tied to mission-aligned outcomes. Over 190 enterprises from various sectors, including health, energy, and education, have participated.

For Kyrgyz policymakers, the SPC model offers a practical blueprint for performance-based grants or social outcome bonuses. For example, a farming cooperative or renewable energy project that demonstrates its contribution to employment, income growth, or improvements in public health could be eligible for a results-based incentive. Importantly, while SPC originated from the private sector, it succeeded because the government provided official recognition (e.g., tax status for the credits), thereby anchoring social performance in fiscal systems. Alongside SROI and other monetization tools, SPC demonstrates how governments can integrate social objectives into their public budgeting and accountability processes.

3.2.3.2 Qualitative and Non-Monetary Approaches

Not all-important social outcomes can be easily captured in financial terms – aspects such as community cohesion, empowerment of women, quality of life, or institutional trust may defy dollar-and-cents valuation. Hence, qualitative methods and mixed approaches are vital in post-evaluation.

One approach is to develop indicators or indices for social outcomes and track them over time, without necessarily converting them to monetary values. For example, a transportation project might use indicators such as travel time for villagers to reach a hospital. In contrast, a health project might track patient satisfaction and improvements in health status. In Korea, public agencies have adopted structured frameworks to measure social performance. Since 2018, all state-run companies have been required to report on their social value performance as part of evaluating success (Kim, Kang, and Hong, 2019). Korea Land & Housing Corporation, for instance, uses a framework covering 12 social issue areas (including human rights, environmental sustainability, and public safety). Each area has qualitative or quantitative indicators to assess how the organization's projects benefit society (e.g., measuring the improvement in resident satisfaction or community safety resulting from a housing project). These indicators are scored and factored into the organization's evaluation and management decisions. The key lesson is that governments can set clear social outcome criteria, even if not in monetary terms, and require projects to report against them. In the Kyrgyz Republic, sectors could establish their outcome matrices. For example, the Ministry of Health tracks

improvements in patient trust or disease awareness after an intervention, and the Ministry of Transport tracks connectivity for remote communities. Over time, consistent tracking builds a data baseline to inform policy adjustments.

Another qualitative approach is to directly gather input from beneficiaries and communities about the changes a project has brought. Methods like Most Significant Change (MSC) involve collecting personal stories from project participants about the most important change they experienced (McDonald, Stevens, and Nabben, 2024). Similarly, focus group discussions, interviews, and beneficiary surveys in post-evaluations can reveal unanticipated outcomes or provide context to the numbers. For instance, in a rural road project, statistics might show an increase in traffic and trade, but community interviews could highlight improvements in social interaction; for example, villagers can visit relatives more easily or feel less isolated. In a Kyrgyz rural development initiative, community members might report greater trust and cooperation as a result of working together on project committees. A social cohesion outcome would not appear in cost-benefit calculations. Documenting such qualitative outcomes is crucial, as it provides policymakers with a richer understanding of the impact (the human side of results) and can explain why certain quantitative targets were met or not. Case studies are a useful format here; an evaluation report might include a one-page story of how a farming family's income and livelihoods changed due to an irrigation project, illustrating social impact in concrete terms. These narrative and participatory evaluations complement quantitative data, ensuring that the voices of the affected populations inform the assessment of success.

Some evaluations combine multiple social indicators into a score or rating. A project could be rated on criteria such as inclusiveness, community satisfaction, gender equity achieved, etc., often using a mix of data sources (surveys, administrative data, expert judgment). While more subjective, these scorecards enable comparative assessment across projects or regions in terms of social performance. For example, a health facility upgrade could be evaluated based on improvements in patient wait times, staff attitudes (as measured by surveys), and health outcomes, resulting in an overall "social improvement score." The Kyrgyz government could incorporate such scorecards into its project completion reports, alongside financial and technical ratings. This aligns with global best practices of balanced evaluation, where success is judged not only by the economic rate of return but also by the social outcomes achieved.

3.2.3.3 Methods in Evaluation

To capture the full scope of development project effects, particularly in sectors involving citizen well-being, health, or education, it is essential to combine both quantitative and qualitative evaluation techniques. A mixed-methods approach enhances the reliability of evaluation findings by triangulating statistical evidence with user perceptions and field-based observations.

In resource-constrained settings, such as the Kyrgyz Republic, a combined approach does not necessarily require large budgets or sophisticated tools. Instead, it should focus on a limited set of targeted questions, using practical and easy-to-administer instruments.

Recommended design options include: (1) quantitative surveys using simple indicators such as changes in household travel time, average income, or service use, (2) short qualitative interviews or

small focus group discussions to explore user experiences, service access, and behavioral changes, (3) triangulation of administrative data (e.g., clinic visits, school attendance) with qualitative evidence on barriers to service uptake, and (4) inclusion of beneficiary accounts or field diaries to document lived experiences of change.

For example, when evaluating a rural health center project, quantitative metrics might include patient volumes or changes in referral rates. At the same time, qualitative data would focus on how patients perceive improvements in dignity, cleanliness, or staff responsiveness.

To support implementation, evaluation teams may utilize a simple framework that links each evaluation question to both a quantitative indicator and a corresponding qualitative method. This linkage allows for clearer analysis of causality, unintended effects, and policy relevance.

Post-evaluation guidance issued by the government—or its implementing agencies—should include at least one qualitative component, particularly when evaluating projects aimed at improving service quality, citizen participation, or empowerment. Over time, ministries could develop internal capacity for qualitative methods through partnerships with local universities or research institutions.

3.3. Designing Post-Evaluation: From Planning to Implementation

Designing a post-evaluation (ex-post evaluation) requires a structured approach from the initial planning stage through implementation. International practice and Korea's recent fiscal project evaluation guidelines (2021 and 2023) highlight several key steps and principles (Park and Park, 2023). These include developing a clear logic model, setting practical indicators, planning reliable data collection, engaging stakeholders, and ensuring that findings inform policy decisions. This section outlines each step conceptually, drawing on international practice from Korea's frameworks, to guide Kyrgyz policymakers in embedding post-evaluation into their governance processes.

3.3.1. Developing a Logic Model and Evaluation Plan

A logic model is the foundation of a well-structured post-evaluation. It outlines how inputs and activities are expected to generate outputs, outcomes, and ultimately impacts (Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth, 2021). In other words, a logic model or theory of change sets out the program's objectives and the cause-and-effect links between resources, actions, and results. Defining this results chain at the planning stage helps evaluators determine what to examine in a post-evaluation. It clarifies which outcomes the project aims to achieve and what constitutes success. Best practice recommends developing the logic model in consultation with stakeholders and grounding it in evidence (Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth, 2021). By involving program managers, field staff, and subject experts in this step, the evaluation plan reflects a shared view of the program's design and implementation. In Korea's fiscal project evaluation framework, for example, evaluators routinely use an "input–output–outcome" results framework similar to a logic model to structure post-evaluations. This upfront planning aligns the evaluation with project objectives and sets the stage for subsequent steps in the evaluation design.

3.3.2. Setting Indicators and Performance Metrics

Clear and measurable indicators are the foundation of effective post-evaluation. Once the logic model defines expected outcomes, specific indicators must be chosen to track progress toward those outcomes. Global experience shows that indicators should be defined early and aligned with the program's objectives (Park and Park, 2023). Effective indicators are often described as "SMART," which stands for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound, to ensure they capture the performance. In practice, this means selecting a mix of output indicators (e.g., the number of trainings delivered) and outcome indicators (e.g., improvement in skills or income) that reflect both short-term and long-term results. It is essential to establish baseline values and targets for these indicators during project planning, allowing for post-evaluation comparisons of change. Indicator setting can be demanding; some specialists consider it one of the most difficult steps in designing an evaluation (Lennie et al., 2011). To address this, many countries issue detailed guidelines on performance measurement. Korea's 2021 and 2023 evaluation guidelines, for instance, stress the importance of identifying key performance indicators for each fiscal project and collecting data on them throughout implementation. By carefully selecting and documenting indicators, evaluators in the Kyrgyz Republic can later objectively assess whether a project met its commitments.

3.3.3. Planning Data Collection Strategies

A sound data collection strategy is crucial for generating credible evidence for the post-evaluation. This step involves deciding what data are needed, from which sources, and how to collect them. Evaluators should plan to use both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a complete view of performance. For example, administrative data and monitoring reports can provide quantitative measures of outputs and outcomes (e.g., budget spent, number of beneficiaries served). At the same time, surveys, interviews, or focus groups with participants can produce qualitative evidence on how and why outcomes were achieved or not. Using mixed methods, which draw on multiple data sources, is considered best practice because it allows for the triangulation of findings, thereby strengthening reliability (Tessera, 2022). Global evaluation standards encourage evaluators to anticipate data needs early. If possible, baseline data should be established before a project begins, and follow-up data should be collected after completion to identify changes.

It is also important to ensure data quality and integrity, for instance, by training data collectors, piloting survey instruments, and using independent verification where feasible. Korea's post-evaluation frameworks emphasize the importance of utilizing reliable data systems. By 2023, the government had expanded a performance information database and linked ministry-level data systems to support evaluations (Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2024). This type of infrastructure helps evaluators implement systematic data collection and analysis. In the Kyrgyz Republic, preparing a clear plan (and ensuring the necessary capacity) for data collection, including which indicators will be tracked, how often, and by whom, will help make post-evaluations both efficient and reliable once the project concludes.

3.3.4. Engaging Stakeholders in the Evaluation Process

Stakeholder engagement is a cornerstone of effective post-evaluation design. It involves including those who have an interest in the project or its results, such as implementing agencies, frontline staff, beneficiaries, funders, and independent experts, at different stages of the evaluation. In practice, stakeholder engagement improves both the quality and the usefulness of an evaluation. First, involving stakeholders in planning the evaluation (for instance, in developing the logic model and key questions) helps ensure that the evaluation focuses on issues that matter and that the methodology is context-appropriate (Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, 2021). Stakeholders can provide input on what outcomes are most significant or what data can realistically be collected. Second, engagement builds ownership of the findings. When stakeholders are consulted and kept informed, they are more likely to trust the results and act on recommendations. International practice suggests mapping stakeholders and defining how to involve them through advisory committees, workshops, or feedback sessions (Park and Park, 2023). Korea's experience provides a practical example: recent guidelines call for gathering "on-site opinions" by including beneficiaries (e.g., citizens such as people with disabilities or youth) and field experts in evaluation task forces for major projects (Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2024). This approach ensures that the perspectives of those affected by a project inform the evaluation judgments. For Kyrgyz policymakers, establishing participatory practices, such as stakeholder meetings to review preliminary findings or inviting independent experts to examine the evaluation plan, can increase the credibility and acceptance of post-evaluation results.

3.3.5. Using Post-Evaluation Findings for Policy and Program Improvement

Designing a post-evaluation is only as the application of its findings. A key consideration in transitioning from planning to implementation is ensuring that the evaluation informs decisions once it is completed. International practice emphasizes the importance of incorporating a "feedback loop" from evaluation to policymaking. This can be achieved by requiring that evaluation reports include clear recommendations and by instituting formal processes for follow-up. For example, many governments and organizations develop a management response to evaluation recommendations and track the implementation of agreed actions. Following up on an organization's response to evaluation findings is an essential part of promoting use, and this typically falls to a management responsibility (Better Evaluation Knowledge, 2025). In practice, this might involve assigning action items to specific agencies, revising guidelines, or reallocating resources based on the findings of the post-evaluation. Presenting results in an accessible format, through concise reports, policy briefs, or presentations, also helps decision-makers absorb them. Importantly, linking evaluation results to budgeting and planning cycles secures their influence.

Korea provides a strong example of institutionalizing the use of evaluation results. Under its fiscal project evaluation framework, projects with weak performance (for instance, those involving misuse of funds) may be penalized or not renewed. In contrast, well-performing ones receive reinforcement (Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2024). Moreover, Korea has expanded public disclosure of evaluation information through its Open Fiscal Data system, improving transparency and accountability. These measures ensure that post-evaluation is not a procedural formality but a tool for continuous improvement. For the Kyrgyz Republic, adopting similar practices, such as

incorporating post-evaluation results into the next budget cycle or requiring new project proposals to address lessons from past evaluations, will help turn evaluation findings into governance improvements (Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, 2021). Ultimately, a well-designed post-evaluation process creates a cycle of learning: policymakers gain evidence on what works and what does not, and they use this knowledge to refine policies and programs, leading to stronger public outcomes.

3.3.6. Summary of Key Steps

In summary, designing a post-evaluation from planning to implementation involves: (1) logic model development to establish a clear results framework, (2) indicator setting to define how success will be measured, (3) data collection planning to gather the necessary evidence, (4) stakeholder engagement to strengthen the evaluation and build ownership, and (5) mechanisms to apply the findings in decision-making. Each step supports the others: a clear logic model leads to better indicators, reliable data enables meaningful analysis, stakeholder input improves relevance, and strong follow-up ensures use. By applying these steps, drawing on international practice and learning from Korea's experience, Kyrgyz officials can integrate systematic post-evaluations into their governance processes. This will strengthen accountability, support evidence-based policy adjustments, and improve the effectiveness of public programs over time.

4. Case Studies of Post-Evaluations of Fiscal Projects by the Public Sector in Korea

To illustrate how Korea conducts post-evaluations of fiscal projects in practice, this section presents several case studies. Each case highlights the impact measurement methodologies used, combining qualitative techniques (surveys, interviews) with quantitative analyses (cost-benefit calculations, statistical evaluations). The focus is on how these methods were applied in Korea's context and how similar approaches could be adapted for the Kyrgyz Republic.

The analysis in section 4.1 ("SME and Startup Support Programs: Mixed-Method Impact Evaluation") draws on the findings and evaluation methodologies detailed in the 2022 In-depth Evaluation of Fiscal Programs for Supporting SMEs and the Self-Employed. Section 4.2 ("Public Job Creation Program: Evaluating Employment and Social Outcomes") references methodologies and insights presented in the report titled 2021 In-depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects: Public Employment Programs. Finally, the discussion in section 4.3 ("Infrastructure Project (Sewage Management): Cost-Benefit and Efficiency Analysis") is informed by evaluation methods and results from the 2023 In-depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects: Sewage Management report.

4.1. SME and Startup Support Programs: Mixed-Method Impact Evaluation

4.1.1. Context

The Korean government has implemented numerous support programs for small businesses and startups (e.g., business incubation grants, entrepreneurship training). Post-evaluation of these programs examines whether they achieved outcomes like increased business survival, revenue growth, and beneficiary satisfaction. In one evaluation, a program called the "New Business Startup Academy," an incubator for first-time entrepreneurs, was assessed as part of a broader group evaluation. covering multiple SME support initiatives.

4.1.2. Methodologies and Impact Measurement

The evaluators employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the program's impact.

First, program participants and stakeholders were surveyed to gather feedback on satisfaction and perceived benefits. The implementing agency conducted regular satisfaction surveys, and in some cases, focus group interviews (FGIs) were held to facilitate open-ended discussions. These qualitative tools helped capture outcomes, such as improvements in business skills or networking, that are not directly reflected in financial data. For instance, survey data revealed differences in overall satisfaction between individuals who received specific support services and those who did not, indicating which support was most valued.

Next, to quantitatively estimate the program's impact on business performance, analysts linked program databases with administrative business data. A fixed-effects panel regression was conducted, comparing supported firms with a group of non-supported but eligible firms. The model controlled for baseline differences and time-invariant factors through fixed effects. In simplified form, the estimation model was:

$$Y_i = \beta_1(Support\_Received)_i + \beta_2(Eligible\_But\_Not\_Supported)_i + \gamma X_i + \delta_{cohort} + \delta_{industry} + \delta_{size} + \epsilon_i$$

where Y_i is the outcome for firm *i* (such as survival over one to five years or revenue growth), and the binary variables indicate if the firm received the support or was an eligible non-recipient. Covariate X_i include the firm's first-year sales (used as a control to account for initial scale), and "δ" terms represent fixed effects for the startup cohort year, industry, and firm size category. The use of a control group of firms that applied or qualified but did not receive support helped establish a counterfactual. This regression measured the difference in outcomes attributable to the program after adjusting for other factors. The evaluation found that firms receiving Startup Academy support exhibited higher survival rates and stronger revenue performance than comparable firms without support. By controlling for each firm's first-year revenue, the analysis ensured a like-for-like comparison, since supported startups tended to start with smaller revenues. This approach isolated the program's effect on subsequent growth.

Finally, evaluators examined how the impact varied under different conditions. They segmented the data by cohort year to determine whether the program's effectiveness differed for startups across startup groups. They also used quantile regression analysis (analyzing medians and other percentiles) to assess distributional effects. For example, quantile regression results revealed that in the first year, sales of supported startups averaged about 15% of the control group's sales (since many new firms start with low revenue). By the second year, however, sales of supported firms grew at a much faster pace—nearly 199 percentage points above that of the control group. This indicated the program's impact became more pronounced as businesses grew. The analysis further suggested that the support was particularly effective in boosting high-growth potential firms, while even the lower-performing startups saw gains over time.

By combining these methods, the post-evaluation provided a balanced view: surveys and interviews explained how the program helped entrepreneurs (e.g., through networking opportunities or satisfaction with mentorship). At the same time, regression analysis quantified the extent to which the support improved measurable outcomes (survival and sales) relative to a comparison group. The fixed-effects model, with a control group, approximated an experimental design, thereby strengthening the credibility of the impact attribution to the program.

4.2. Public Job Creation Program: Evaluating Employment and Social Outcomes

4.2.1. Context

Korea's public sector operates direct job creation programs, such as subsidized employment for vulnerable groups (e.g., seniors, low-income individuals, and people with disabilities). One example

is the Senior Employment Program, which provides part-time jobs to the elderly to supplement income and encourage social participation. Post-evaluations of these programs focus on outcomes such as participants' employment status after completing the program, changes in income, and broader social effects (e.g., poverty reduction). Another example is a regional employment subsidy program implemented to aid a struggling "shipbuilding city." This section examines how Korean evaluators measure the impact of such interventions.

4.2.2. Methodologies and Impact Measurement

Evaluating job programs requires tracking outcomes for individuals, which Korea approaches through the analysis of administrative data, complemented by surveys and econometric techniques.

Evaluators use administrative records (from employment databases, pension systems, and other relevant sources) to track participants' outcomes. Key indicators include transition rates to unsubsidized jobs (i.e., the share of participants who secure regular employment or start a business after the public job ends), duration of post-program employment, and income levels. For the Senior Employment Program, one important metric was the effect on participants' household income and poverty status. The evaluation calculated the reduction in poverty effects by comparing participants' income before and after receiving the job stipends. They found that the additional income significantly reduced the incidence of relative poverty among elderly participants. Tables in the evaluation report documented measurable declines in the poverty rate and the poverty gap for seniors who participated, indicating the program helped lift some above the poverty line or closer to it. These calculations were done by adding the wage benefit to the household income and observing changes in poverty indicators. Where available, evaluators also compared these outcomes against a baseline or a control group of non-participants to gauge net effects.

Because administrative data may not capture all dimensions (such as well-being or skill development), surveys and interviews were used to gather qualitative evidence. Participants were asked to assess their satisfaction with the program, skills acquired, and any changes in their quality of life that resulted from participating in the program. In Korea, focus group discussions with participants and program managers were conducted to contextualize the quantitative findings. For example, senior workers might be interviewed about whether the program's part-time work improved their mental health or community involvement. In one evaluation, feedback from such interviews revealed that many seniors valued the social aspect of the jobs (meeting peers, feeling useful), which is an important outcome not captured by income data alone. These findings informed policymakers about the full range of program effects and any implementation issues (such as tasks not matching participants' expertise, or suggestions to improve program scheduling).

When feasible, Korean evaluations apply quasi-experimental designs to isolate the impact of programs. One widely used method is the DiD method, which was applied, for example, to evaluate an employment subsidy program in a recession-hit region. In that study, the employment outcomes in the city receiving subsidies were compared with those in similar cities without the program, both before and after the intervention. By examining the differential change over time between the "treated" group (with the subsidy) and the control group (without the subsidy), evaluators were able to attribute changes in employment rates to the program. Formally, the evaluation used an equation of the form:

$$\Delta Y^{(treated)} - \Delta Y^{(control)}$$

i.e., the difference in employment rate before vs. after in the target city minus the same difference in other cities. This DiD approach controlled for common economic trends (e.g., general improvements or downturns affecting all regions) and isolated the policy's effect. In Korea, the results showed that the employment subsidies preserved jobs that would have otherwise been lost. Although not every program can identify a perfect control group, Korea's experience demonstrates that even non-random program rollouts (across regions or over time) can serve as natural experiments.

In addition to measuring outcomes, Korean post-evaluations often assess whether programs were cost-effective. This involves calculating the cost per outcome (e.g., cost per job placement or cost per percentage point reduction in poverty). In the Senior Employment Program evaluation, analysts calculate the government cost for each senior lifted out of poverty or the annual cost of employment provided. When direct effectiveness measures are uncertain (for example, if long-term employment gains are uncertain), evaluators apply cost-benefit analysis as a proxy. They quantify all benefits (including intangible ones, such as improved health or reduced reliance on social assistance) and compare them to program costs. A simple formula applied is the benefit-cost ratio:

$$BCR = \frac{\sum_t \text{Benefits}_t/(1+r)^t}{\sum_t \text{Costs}_t/(1+r)^t},$$

where r is an appropriate discount rate. If BCR > 1, benefits exceed costs, indicating a program is economically justified. For instance, if seniors' increased consumption and well-being (benefits) are valued higher than the subsidy and administrative costs (costs), the program is justified economically. Such analysis in Korea has shown that some job programs yield high social returns (through reduced healthcare costs and stronger community engagement), even when their direct employment effects are modest.

Through these methods, Korea's post-evaluation provides a balanced view, including quantified impacts on employment and income, as well as qualitative evidence of social value. In the Senior Employment case, the evaluation not only reported how many participants found jobs or moved out of poverty, but also documented their personal experiences and the program's contribution to active aging, which is important for refining policy.

4.3. Infrastructure Project (Sewage Management): Cost-Benefit and Efficiency Analysis

4.3.1. Context

Infrastructure investments, such as water and sewage systems, are capital-intensive and have long-term impacts. Korea has institutionalized ex-post evaluations for large public works to ensure they deliver expected benefits. A representative case is the National Sewage Management Program,

which involved building and upgrading wastewater treatment facilities nationwide. The post-evaluation for this program assessed outcomes, including environmental improvements (water quality and sanitation coverage), operational efficiency, and economic returns on investment. This case study illustrates how Korea employs detailed cost-benefit analysis and performance benchmarking in the context of infrastructure.

4.3.2. Methodologies and Impact Measurement

The sewage program evaluation relied on quantitative analysis supported by qualitative evidence.

4.3.2.1 Before-and-After Outcome Assessment

Evaluators collected technical data from before and after project implementation to measure improvements. Key outcome indicators included the volume of sewage treated, pollutant concentrations in water bodies, and the incidence of waterborne problems. For example, the evaluation compared inflow volumes and effluent water quality at treatment plants before and after construction or upgrades. At several project sites (e.g., Jincheon, Cheongju, and Gangjin counties), they found that after new facilities were built, sewage flows were handled more effectively and effluent water met higher standards. This pre-post comparison quantified the environmental impact, attributing improvements (such as reduced contaminants in rivers) to the project. While the underlying measurements draw on environmental science techniques, in evaluation reporting, it is presented as evidence of meeting objectives (cleaner water and improved public health prospects).

4.3.2.2 Economic Cost-Benefit Analysis (Ex-Post)

A central part of the evaluation was calculating the realized benefits and costs to determine whether the project was economically justified in hindsight. Unlike a preliminary cost-benefit analysis (conducted before project approval), the ex-post CBA uses actual data, including actual construction and maintenance costs, as well as observed benefits such as improved water quality, savings from flood prevention, and increases in land values nearby. Evaluators computed the Net Present Value (NPV) of the project by discounting the stream of benefits and costs over the project's lifespan. In formula terms:

$$NPV = \sum_{t=0}^{T} \frac{Benefit_t - Cost_t}{(1+r)^t},$$

with r as the discount rate. Evaluators calculated the Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) to summarize the results. A BCR greater than 1.0 indicated that the benefits outweighed the costs, while a BCR below 1 would signal that the project delivered less value than it consumed. In the sewage project case, benefits considered included both direct operational gains (such as clean water and expanded household service) and externalities – for instance, improved public health (reduced disease), environmental gains to ecosystems, and compliance with regulations (avoiding penalties). The ex-

post analysis found that many sewage projects achieved strong BCRs, confirming the justification for the investments.

In contrast, a few projects had lower-than-expected returns, leading to recommendations for improving design or scale in future projects. Notably, Korean guidelines encourage the use of cost-effectiveness analysis when monetizing certain benefits is difficult. In this evaluation, if the exact monetary value of environmental improvement was difficult to determine, the team considered cost-effectiveness measures, such as "cost per unit of pollution reduction," to gauge performance.

4.3.2.3 Operational Efficiency and Regression Analysis

Beyond overall benefits, the evaluation examined how efficiently the infrastructure operated. This included a benchmarking study of treatment plant performance. Using operational data from multiple facilities, analysts estimated a cost function for wastewater treatment plants. They applied Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression and Stochastic Frontier Analysis (SFA) to model the relationship between operating costs and output (volume of sewage treated), controlling for factors such as plant capacity and technology. By dividing the sample into small plants (with a capacity of below 500 m^3 per day) and large plants (with a capacity of 500 m^3 or more), they obtained separate cost function estimates. The results showed clear differences: small facilities had much higher and more variable unit costs, whereas larger plants benefited from economies of scale (lower cost per volume) up to a point. SFA identified the efficiency frontier—the best performance achievable—and measured how far each plant was from it. The analysis indicated that many small rural plants were operating at only a fraction of their capacity and incurred high costs, signaling inefficiency.

In contrast, larger regional plants were closer to optimal efficiency. The evaluation quantified economies of scale, for instance, by estimating how consolidating smaller plants could reduce average costs by a given percentage. One figure illustrated the optimal consolidation level for small facilities to minimize cost per ton of sewage treated.

4.3.2.4 Policy Simulation – Consolidation Scenario

Using the cost function analysis, evaluators conducted scenario modeling. They simulated what would happen if several under-utilized small treatment plants nearby were merged or jointly operated. The benefit was the reduced operating cost due to higher volume at a larger consolidated facility (capturing economies of scale), against the cost of building connecting pipelines and other integration expenses. The post-evaluation explicitly weighed these factors: "the benefit of economies of scale from consolidation and the additional costs of connecting pipelines must be considered together for a rational policy choice." By comparing these, the study recommended specific regions where merging facilities would yield net savings and improved performance. This type of quantitative modeling is a characteristic of Korea's evaluations; it not only assesses past performance but also applies data to guide future policy adjustments.

4.3.2.5 Qualitative Observation and Stakeholder Input

While data-intensive, the evaluation also incorporated perspectives from local governments and facility operators. Interviews with municipal officials provided insight into the reasons for underutilization (e.g., population decline in some rural areas, or delays in connecting households to new sewer lines). Community feedback was also reviewed, including complaints or praise related to the sewage facilities. In some areas, residents noted improved river conditions and fewer foul odors, which is qualitative evidence of success. In others, there were concerns about frequent plant breakdowns. By documenting these alongside the quantitative findings, the evaluators gave policymakers a grounded understanding. For example, one facility appeared inefficient on paper, but interviews revealed it was intentionally built with excess capacity to accommodate future growth—a factor essential for interpreting results. Thus, the post-evaluation report combined statistical analysis with on-the-ground context to form its conclusions.

Overall, the post-evaluation of the sewage project in Korea showed that infrastructure assessments must address both macro-level outcomes (benefits versus costs) and micro-level performance (operational efficiency). Regression models and cost-benefit equations provided quantitative evidence, while stakeholder engagement ensured that the findings were practical for policymaking.

5. Lessons Learned and Implications for the Kyrgyz Republic

Drawing on Korea's experience with In-depth Evaluation on Fiscal Projects, this section distills practical, sector-specific lessons for the Kyrgyz Republic. These focus on improving project selection, data-driven decision-making, infrastructure efficiency, and integrating iterative evaluation practices. Each lesson is illustrated with a Korean case and followed by recommendations relevant to the Kyrgyz Republic's development challenges.

5.1. Institutionalizing Post-Evaluation: Governance, Law, and Learning

A key lesson from Korea is that post-project evaluation cannot operate in isolation—it must be embedded in an institutional and legal framework. In Korea, evaluations are conducted routinely, under the National Finance Act and overseen by dedicated organizations such as the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the National Assembly Budget Office. These arrangements ensure that evaluations are not only carried out regularly but also used to inform budget allocation and policy design.

The Kyrgyz Republic lacks such an institutional framework. Post-project evaluations, when conducted, are usually donor-driven and implemented outside of government systems. This limits their relevance, continuity, and policy impact. To address this, the Kyrgyz government should establish a formal mandate requiring post-project evaluations for all major public and externally supported investments. This mandate could be introduced through a government resolution or integrated into existing budget and procurement regulations. Legal provisions should specify the timing, scope, responsible entities, and reporting format for post-project evaluations.

In parallel, a central coordination body—possibly within the Ministry of Economy and Commerce or a cross-ministerial task force—should oversee planning, build evaluation capacity, and ensure methodological consistency. This unit would also be responsible for publishing annual evaluation priorities, validating evaluation reports, and ensuring that findings are reviewed at the policy level. At the line ministry level, dedicated evaluation focal points or M&E units should be designated in key ministries (e.g., infrastructure, agriculture, health, and energy), to conduct sector-specific evaluations and coordinate with the central coordination entity.

Moreover, Korea's experience highlights the value of structured evaluation cycles. For example, Korea conducts annual in-depth evaluations of about ten strategic programs, often selected based on fiscal weight, risk, or alignment with national priorities. These evaluations are not just technical—they directly inform budget adjustments, program redesign, and regulatory change. The Kyrgyz Republic could adopt a similar practice by creating a rolling three-year evaluation plan, selecting a small number of high-impact or high-risk projects for deep review each year.

To support institutional learning and knowledge sharing, the government should establish a centralized digital platform for post-evaluation. This platform would serve as a repository for evaluation reports, project data, and follow-up actions. It would also enable cross-ministerial access to findings, reduce duplication, and increase transparency for domestic stakeholders and development partners.

Sustained improvement also requires political leadership. The Cabinet Secretariat could consider hosting an annual "National Evaluation Forum," where key findings are presented to senior decision-makers, Parliament, civil society, and donors. Such visibility would raise the profile of evaluation in national discourse and encourage ministries to take action based on the results.

By establishing legal mandates, creating dedicated units, digitizing knowledge systems, and promoting evaluation as a learning tool, the Kyrgyz Republic can transform post-evaluation from a procedural requirement into a driver of stronger investment and governance.

5.2. Improving Project Planning and Selection

A key lesson from Korea's experience is that the success or failure of development projects is often determined before implementation, during the planning and selection stage. Evaluations of Korea's small business and employment support programs have shown that even technically sound projects can fail when selection criteria are unclear, coordination is weak, or programs are duplicated across different agencies. These findings led Korean authorities to strengthen project appraisal, strategic alignment, and consolidation of overlapping initiatives.

For The Kyrgyz Republic, strengthening project planning and selection is a foundational step toward more effective public investment and post-evaluation. First, the government should introduce rigorous eligibility and appraisal criteria for all new development projects, particularly those seeking public or donor financing. Criteria should include alignment with national development priorities, demonstrable cost-effectiveness, potential impact, and absence of duplication with existing programs. For instance, new SME support initiatives should be screened not only for economic rationale but also for market saturation risks and complementarities with existing services. Similarly, public job creation programs should be required to show pathways to sustainable employment, rather than relying on short-term placements.

Second, the Kyrgyz Republic should reinforce inter-agency coordination to reduce project fragmentation. In Korea, evaluations repeatedly found that dispersed, uncoordinated interventions diluted results and strained administrative capacity. In response, Korea established centralized platforms and inter-ministerial committees to harmonize project objectives, streamline delivery, and focus resources on the most promising interventions. The Kyrgyz Republic could apply similar tools, such as sector steering groups or an integrated project review board, to vet proposals across ministries and development partners.

Third, project appraisal should rest on rigorous technical and financial analysis. While many Kyrgyz projects undergo donor-led feasibility reviews, national systems for project screening and ranking remain underdeveloped. The government should adopt a standardized pre-feasibility

checklist that includes financial, environmental, social, and institutional readiness indicators. Additionally, independent technical panels could also review high-value or high-risk proposals before approval, ensuring objectivity and limiting political influence in the project selection process.

Another practice from Korea is the use of performance-based continuation criteria. Projects are reviewed at mid-term or predefined milestones, and continuation is contingent on demonstrated progress toward outcomes. If a project fails to meet critical targets, such as employment generation, service uptake, or budget execution efficiency, it may be scaled down, redesigned, or discontinued. This stop-go mechanism ensures that funds are allocated dynamically, favoring strong performers and minimizing waste. The Kyrgyz Republic could pilot such mechanisms in sectors where performance tracking is already underway, such as education, social protection, or infrastructure.

Ultimately, effective planning relies on having accurate and up-to-date data. Project proposals should be based on needs assessments that reflect current service gaps and citizen demand. Korea's experience demonstrates that mismatches between planned infrastructure and actual usage often result from insufficient demand analysis. To prevent similar outcomes, the Kyrgyz Republic should integrate field-based diagnostics and community consultations into the planning process, particularly in rural or underserved areas.

By adopting these principles (e.g., clear selection criteria, inter-agency coordination, rigorous appraisal, performance-based continuation, and demand-informed planning), the Kyrgyz Republic can make better investment decisions and ensure that its project portfolio consistently delivers value for money and public benefit.

5.3. Managing for Results with Data

An essential condition for effective evaluation is the availability and use of reliable data. Korea's experience shows that without systematically collected and analyzed data, even well-intentioned evaluations fail to produce actionable findings. By contrast, when robust indicators and data systems are in place, evaluation becomes a strategic tool for decision-making, effective resource allocation, and accountability.

In Korea, many evaluation advances emerged only after evaluators gained access to comprehensive datasets. For example, in small business support programs, evaluators were able to detect unintended consequences, such as market overcrowding, because detailed outcome data, including revenue growth, employment numbers, and business survival rates, had been collected over time. Similarly, infrastructure and utility programs benefited from cost-efficiency analyses based on reliable performance benchmarks. These findings prompted policy adjustments and program redesigns that would not have occurred otherwise.

For the Kyrgyz Republic, the first step toward managing for results is to establish a centralized and interoperable project information system. This system should capture basic project metadata (sector, budget, location), output data (infrastructure delivered, services provided), and outcome indicators (usage, access, socio-economic impact). It should be accessible across ministries and linked to both budget planning and monitoring functions. Over time, it can also integrate donor-financed project data to reduce fragmentation and improve harmonization across agencies.

Second, all development projects, those above a defined budget or strategic threshold, should include clearly defined KPIs at the design stage. These KPIs should go beyond physical outputs to include metrics such as travel time savings, disease incidence reduction, enrollment rates, job placements, or beneficiary satisfaction. Standardizing such indicators across similar project types would enhance comparability and simplify the evaluation process.

Third, the government should ensure that the collected data is actively used. Ministries and project teams should be trained to interpret performance data, identify trends, and adjust course where needed. For example, suppose mid-year data shows that a rural road project is completed, but traffic volumes remain low. In that case, this should trigger an investigation into route selection, community engagement, or integration with local economic activity. A results-based approach requires this kind of real-time learning and adjustment.

Additionally, the Kyrgyz Republic should invest in developing analytical capacity within the public sector. While some ministries have staff responsible for monitoring or statistics, few are trained in evaluation-specific methods such as cost-benefit analysis (CBA), cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA), or Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA). Training programs, delivered through partnerships with universities, regional institutions, or donor-supported technical assistance, can help build this expertise. In turn, ministries will be better positioned to conduct their evaluations and reduce reliance on external consultants.

Lastly, public reporting of evaluation results should be institutionalized. Publishing project performance dashboards or annual outcome reviews not only promotes transparency but also builds trust among citizens and development partners. Korea's Ministry of Economy and Finance regularly publishes evaluation findings, which both executive and legislative bodies use to review sectoral performance and prioritize reforms.

By integrating data systems, setting measurable indicators, building analytical capacity, and applying findings to decision-making, the Kyrgyz Republic can shift from an input-based investment system to a culture of managing for results.

5.4. Ensuring Efficiency and Sustainability in Infrastructure Investments

Infrastructure accounts for one of the largest categories of public and donor-funded investment in the Kyrgyz Republic. Roads, water and sewage systems, schools, clinics, and public buildings are crucial to inclusive development, but they also carry substantial financial, operational, and maintenance costs. Korea's experience underscores a key lesson: more infrastructure does not automatically generate stronger development outcomes. Efficiency, alignment with demand, and long-term sustainability are equally important.

In Korea, post-evaluations of public infrastructure projects identified several sources of inefficiency. For instance, an evaluation of local sewerage facilities revealed that many were constructed at suboptimal scales. Some were too small to benefit from economies of scale, while others were oversized relative to actual usage, leading to high unit operating costs. Additionally, some facilities faced overstaffing and excessive maintenance spending that performance data could not justify.

These findings led Korean authorities to adopt stricter demand-forecasting practices, improved sizing standards, and clearer integration of operational costs into project planning.

For the Kyrgyz Republic, the first step is to systematically conduct needs assessments and scale analyses during the planning of infrastructure projects. Before launching new projects, planners should assess both actual and projected demand, considering whether fewer, regionalized facilities may be more efficient than multiple small ones. For example, a single well-equipped regional laboratory can be more cost-effective and sustainable than three underused local facilities. Applying such analysis from the outset helps prevent mismatches between infrastructure supply and community needs.

Second, maintenance and operational costs must be factored into project budgeting from the start. Too often, infrastructure investments receive funding for construction but not for long-term operation. As a result, facilities deteriorate prematurely or operate at below-capacity levels. All infrastructure project proposals should include lifecycle cost estimates, covering maintenance, staffing, utilities, and equipment replacement. Ministries should be required to submit maintenance plans as part of the project approval process, and donors should align funding frameworks to support post-construction operations when necessary.

Third, the government should develop and apply performance benchmarks for operations. For example, roads may be evaluated by the cost per kilometer maintained, travel time reductions, or accident reduction rates. Water utilities can be assessed using unit costs per household served, service continuity hours, or water quality compliance. If actual performance falls below benchmarks, targeted measures, such as adopting more cost-efficient technology, training operational staff, or outsourcing to qualified private operators, should be considered. Korea's practice of combining cost analysis with quality metrics offers a model for such efficiency-enhancing strategies.

Ultimately, the Kyrgyz Republic should enhance its capacity to prioritize infrastructure projects based on their expected impact on development. With limited fiscal space, resources should be directed first to projects that reduce growth bottlenecks, service gaps, or high public demand. Korea's evaluators often recommended focusing on projects with the clearest and most measurable returns, such as upgrading major regional highways instead of constructing redundant roads, or expanding irrigation systems that demonstrably increase farm productivity. The Kyrgyz Republic should adopt similar prioritization criteria, guided by ex-ante cost-benefit analysis, stakeholder consultation, and alignment with national development goals.

To further reinforce the long-term sustainability of infrastructure investments, the Kyrgyz Republic should institutionalize a structured maintenance performance monitoring system within its post-evaluation framework. In many cases, initial project success is undermined during the post-construction phase due to a weak oversight of maintenance funding, technical reliability, or service continuity. Even well-constructed facilities can fall into disrepair or underutilization if dedicated follow-up mechanisms are not in place.

A practical option is to introduce simplified maintenance audits or follow-up assessments one to three years after project completion. These should draw on a core set of performance indicators, including: (1) an annual review of operating and maintenance (O&M) budgets against actual expenditures; (2) the frequency of technical failures or service interruptions (e.g., pump breakdowns,

road surface degradation); (3) the application of unit cost benchmarks by asset type, such as cost per kilometer of road maintained; (4) the use of local inspection protocols, potentially incorporating geo-tagged photographs or mobile-based reporting tools; and (5) beneficiary feedback on the reliability and responsiveness of the service.

These indicators should be integrated into digital performance dashboards and incorporated in project design templates, particularly for roads, water systems, public buildings, and health facilities. A pilot approach can be initiated in rural infrastructure projects where maintenance issues are highly visible. Over time, consistent tracking of O&M performance will enable policymakers to prioritize reinvestment, design better-performing projects, and link evaluation findings to maintenance budget allocations. In this way, post-evaluation shifts from a static review into a forward-looking tool for sustaining service delivery and protecting development gains.

By applying these lessons, demand-based planning, lifecycle cost budgeting, operational benchmarking, and impact-based prioritization, the Kyrgyz Republic can ensure that its infrastructure investments are not only technically successful but also fiscally sustainable and socially valuable in the long term.

These sector-specific lessons from Korea's post-evaluation evaluations provide both operational entry points for the Kyrgyz Republic. The appendix applies these lessons to a phased, practical roadmap tailored to the Kyrgyz Republic's institutional context and policy priorities. It outlines how post-evaluation systems can be gradually piloted, institutionalized, and scaled across sectors in a resource-efficient manner.

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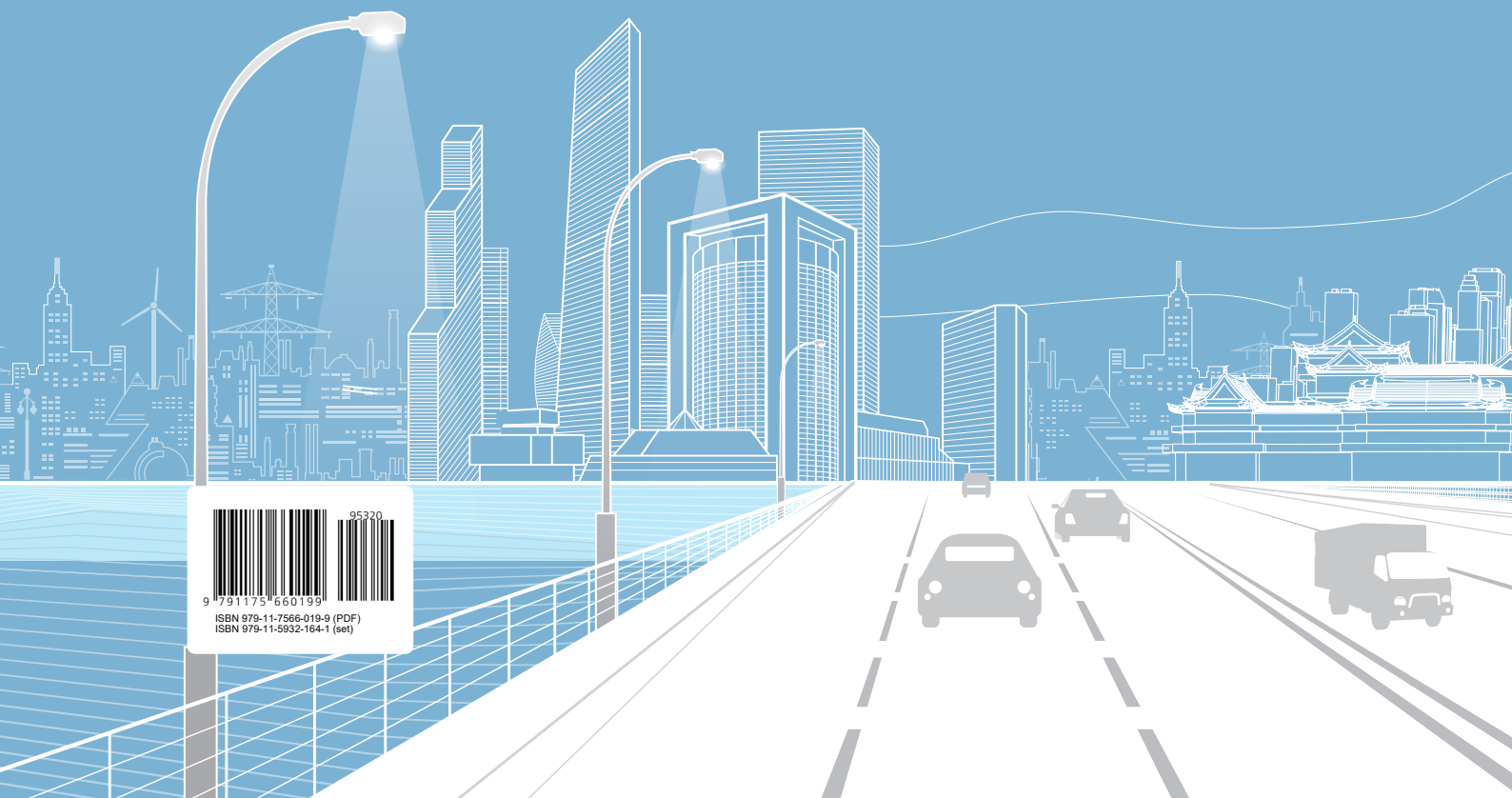

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