

TEMPLATE

Evaluation Question Builder

A worksheet for moving from program curiosity to decision-ready evaluation questions.

Designed for adult professionals and curious learners. Original AdriaMont Institute material, adapted from expert teaching, research, and professional practice.

Use this before choosing indicators, methods, dashboards, or report formats.

BEST USED FOR	Programs, pilots, institutional learning, donor-funded work, course improvement
OUTPUT	A focused set of evaluation questions and evidence needs
LENGTH	Planning workbook

Source and privacy note: Designed from applied evaluation and evidence-use principles used across education, skills, and institutional learning contexts.

From curiosity to evaluation

Good evaluation questions are not just interesting questions. They are questions that can improve a decision, strengthen a program, test a mechanism, or support learning among people who will actually use the findings.

This template helps you move from broad curiosity to a question that has a user, a purpose, a feasible evidence plan, and a clear reporting route.

Question types

QUESTION TYPE	USE IT TO ASK	EVIDENCE IMPLICATION
Descriptive	What happened and for whom?	Monitoring data, participation records, outputs, survey results.
Implementation	Was the program delivered as intended?	Process evidence, fidelity checks, observation, interviews.
Outcome	What changed after participation?	Pre-post data, follow-up evidence, comparison where possible.
Causal	Did the program contribute to change?	Design logic, comparison strategy, theory, triangulation.
Equity	Who benefits, who is missed, and why?	Disaggregated evidence, access data, context information.
Use	How will findings inform action?	Decision mapping and stakeholder review.

Worksheet 1: decision need

DECISION NEED	What decision, improvement, or learning need should the evaluation support?
STAKEHOLDERS	Who will use the findings and what do they need to know?
TIMING	When must evidence be available to be useful?
PROGRAM LOGIC	What activities, mechanisms, outputs, and outcomes are assumed?
CONTEXT	What constraints, risks, or implementation realities matter?

Worksheet 2: build the questions

MAIN QUESTION	What is the most important evaluation question?
SUB-QUESTION 1	What must be answered first to make the main question useful?
SUB-QUESTION 2	What second angle would improve interpretation?
EVIDENCE NEEDED	What data, observations, documents, or feedback could answer the questions?
INDICATOR QUALITY	Are indicators meaningful, feasible, timely, and interpretable?

Worksheet 3: reporting for use

AUDIENCE	Who needs the findings first?
FORMAT	Briefing, dashboard, report, slide deck, learning session, or decision memo?
DECISION LINK	How will the answer change action?
LIMITATIONS	What should readers not conclude from the evidence?
FOLLOW-UP	What question will remain after this evaluation?

Use this before building an evaluation framework or commissioning a report.