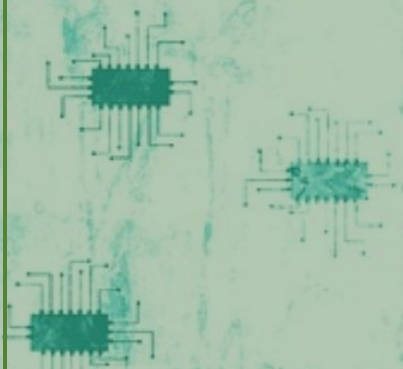




# **THE BEHAVIORAL INSIGHTS EVALUATION GUIDE**

**EDITION 2021**  
**WIPO Internal Oversight Division**



This guide results from a collaboration between iNudgeyou and the World Intellectual Property Organization, Evaluation Section. iNudgeyou is a pro-social company specializing in applied behavioral research. Its primary purpose is to develop and communicate evidence-based strategies with pro-social purposes.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>BE</b>	Behavioral Economics
<b>BI</b>	Behavioral Insights
<b>BIE</b>	Behavioral Insights Evaluation
<b>EoI</b>	Expression of Interest
<b>EQM</b>	Evaluation Question Matrix
<b>GE</b>	Gender Equality
<b>HR</b>	Human Rights
<b>IOD</b>	Internal Oversight Division
<b>IP</b>	Intellectual Property
<b>JIU</b>	Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System
<b>OIOS</b>	Office of Internal Oversight Services
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>OECD-DAC</b>	OECD – Development Assistance Committee
<b>SMART</b>	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNEG</b>	United Nations Evaluation Group
<b>UN SWAP</b>	UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
<b>WIPO</b>	World Intellectual Property Organization



# INTRODUCTION



## 1. INTRODUCTION

### WHY THIS GUIDE?

The assumption in a rationalistic organizational model is that the organization as a system always acts rationally to evaluation feedback (evidence-based findings, conclusions and recommendations). Individuals in the organization make rational decisions on behalf of their organizations.

These rational behaviors consist in the use of evidence from evaluations to maximize the benefit for the organization. However, if this is the case, why evaluation recommendations do not reach a 100 per cent rate of implementation? Why evaluation findings are not always taken into consideration when making decisions?

What is wrong? Why are managers, decision makers and other stakeholders not rationally using hard-earned evaluative evidence, findings, conclusions and recommendations for the benefit of the organization?

The answer to these questions comes from a new branch of economics - behavioral economics (BE) developed by Nobel Prize economists Daniel Kahneman and Richard Thaler.

The main assumptions of BE is that our rationality is bounded. The reasoning involved in human judgment and decision-making is constrained and moderated by the cognitive limitations as well as the finite amount of time and information available when making decisions.

It is a well-documented fact that individuals use typical heuristics “rules-of-thumb’ full of cognitive biases to make decisions whether professional or personal.

It is hard to recognize that human brains do not equal to perfect rational economic behavior. Managers and decision makers

accept findings and recommendations from evaluations but in the majority of occasions do not act rationally on them. Sometimes they use instead other heuristics and come back to what they already knew or were doing before the evaluation was conducted despite evidence showing the opposite.

While it is recognized across this guide that not all problems affecting evaluations arise from the failure of human behavior, it also acknowledges that individuals with different behaviors drive interventions and participate in evaluations.

The goal of this guide is to recognize, identify and address human bias when engaging in evaluation by using the knowledge produced by behavioral insights and “nudges” to increase the usefulness and impact of evaluations.

More specifically this guide aims at:

- (a) Assisting evaluators, evaluation commissioners, managers, and implementers of interventions in making evaluations more effective and impactful using behavioral insights (BI) tools;
- (b) Supporting decision-makers and implementers in enhancing the effectiveness and impact of their interventions through **behavioral changes**;
- (c) Positively impacting evaluation outcomes using a behavioral approach; and
- (d) Defining the behavioral insights evaluations using the ENABLE WIPO Evaluation Approach which has been designed by the IOD Evaluation Section to be performed when conducting evaluations with BI.

## WHOM IS THIS WORKSHOP FOR?

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Evaluation Section has designed this Behavioral Insights guide and the ENABLE WIPO Evaluation Approach as a practical resource for a wide range of stakeholders interested in integrating BI to their evaluation or aiming to strengthen the impact of evaluations by identifying strategies to address behavioral challenges affecting evaluations. This guide could be used in particular by:

- (a) Evaluation commissioners, practitioners, and evaluation consultants;
- (b) Interventions' stakeholders, including staff involved in an evaluation process;
- (c) Evaluation users interested in using BI; and

- (d) Behavioral insights evaluations to improve interventions.


This guide is structured in three parts with its corresponding annexes. The first part is of introductory nature and describes key notions of the evaluation in the institutional context. It also justifies why BI is important to improve evaluation.

The second part of the guide covers key considerations to produce evaluations that integrate gender and human rights.

The third part of the guide is devoted to explaining how to integrate BI through the evaluation process in a step-by-step fashion.

Finally, the guide is completed with annexes and useful templates supplementing and operationalizing the guidance contained in the document.

**Please note that this paper has been reduced in its form to allow for a short introduction in the European Evaluation Society Workshop. We will be sharing the paper with participants and provide the link to the full guidance document for further reading.**

A horizontal band at the top of the page features a bokeh light effect with soft, out-of-focus circles in warm yellow and orange tones against a dark teal background.

# **EVALUATION THROUGH BEHAVIORAL INSIGHTS LENSES**

## 2. THE EVALUATION PROCESS INTEGRATING BEHAVIORAL INSIGHTS

This part of the guide describes the key steps in conducting an evaluation integrating BI.

This Behavioral Insights Evaluation guide using the ENABLE WIPO Evaluation Approach has been divided into three

phases described below, along with the objective of each phase. Phase one - Commitment (steps 1 to 2); Phase two - Diagnostic (steps 3 and 4); and Phase three - Impact (steps 5 and 6). Each phase and stage has been designed to address specific behavioral challenges evaluators face during the evaluation process. The ENABLE WIPO Evaluation Approach which factors behavioral insights strategies has been designed to address those challenges.



An extensive list of additional resources and tools is provided in the appendices.

A quality checklist may be used to ensure the completeness of an evaluation is also included in the annexes. The checklist includes additional administrative procedures that are specific to Organization and/or the IOD Evaluation Section.



# PHASE 1 COMMITMENT

## PHASE 1: COMMITMENT

When working towards long-term goals such as the ones included in programs and evaluations, individuals often have difficulty staying motivated without guidance, support, or feedback.

It is hard to stick to some of the goals set for various internal and external reasons: willpower, self-regulation and self-control or external choice architectures that distract our attention.

Determination challenges can also create mental exhaustion, which decreases decision-making abilities leading to self-directed blame.

People not engaging and not acting according to their intentions (so-called

intention-action gap) share behavioral problems related to commitment issues. Supporting the evaluation process might not be a significant challenge, yet maintaining that support over time requires repeated mobilization of motivation in the face of issues posed by competing goals and priorities.

Factoring BIs at this early stage helps evaluation practitioners be better aware of commitment biases by focusing on designing pre-commitment devices and long-term commitment behavior strategies.

Some of the guiding questions to identify commitment biases include:



What are the **points of friction** vis a vis the desired behavior?



Is it too easy to **overlook** important information or miss key recommendations in the evaluation reports?



Are key stakeholders, who read the reports, given enough time to provide relevant **inputs to the reports**?



- How do recommendations affect (+/-) the context and key stakeholders' groups?
- Do people **commit** to recommendations resulting from evaluations privately or publicly?






# PHASE 2 DIAGNOSTIC

## PHASE 2: DIAGNOSTIC

According to a standard theory of rational decision-making, individuals form their beliefs according to the rules of logic and probability. However, in reality, people rely on shortcuts (rules of thumb) and often overestimate or underestimate the outcomes and possibilities when making decisions. The so-called confirmation bias.

Individuals need to rely on a coherent worldview to make predictions and decisions. In doing so, they ignore relevant information that is against their views or in other cases, only accept information that confirms those beliefs.

The consequence can be an overestimation or underestimation of outcomes, missing relevant information, and relying too much on heuristics to make decisions, i.e., mental shortcuts or intuitive judgments, for instance, when we believe that an intervention is not successful according to our beliefs despite evidence showing the opposite or vice versa. Bias can affect the evaluation outcomes and the effectiveness of recommendations. Therefore, it is crucial to work on the implementation of debiasing strategies for each bias identify. This can be done as follows:

	BIAS	DEFINITION	DEBIASING TECHNIQUES
	<b>AVAILABILITY BIAS</b>	Information that appears more frequently is usually recalled by stakeholders better than less frequently occurring information (Kahneman, 2011:418)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question the source of information</li> <li>• Ask for additional examples</li> <li>• Use checklist</li> </ul> (Kahneman, Lovallo & Sibony, 2011)
	<b>CONFIRMATION BIAS</b>	Stakeholders might search or interpret evidence in support of an opinion or pre-existing beliefs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the opposite</li> <li>• Reduce ambiguity (McKenzie, 2004:207)</li> <li>• Take an outside view (Koller &amp; Lovallo, 2018).</li> <li>• Ask for additional examples (Kahneman, Lovallo &amp; Sibony, 2011).</li> </ul>
	<b>ANCHORING BIAS</b>	This bias emerges when stakeholders engage in narrow thinking while problem solving by focusing too much on a starting point.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question the motivation for using the anchor (Fasolo, n.d.=</li> <li>• Re-anchor (Kahneman, Lovallo &amp; Sibony, 2011:56).</li> <li>• Consider the opposite (Larrick, 2004:323)</li> </ul>

Source: The London School of Economics and Political Science: Decision-making, biases and nudges. London 2021

Some other guiding questions at this diagnostic stage could help reducing existing bias and are as follows:



### Beliefs about the method

What are key stakeholders' pre-existing beliefs about evaluations and recommendations included in them?



### Beliefs about the intervention

What are relevant stakeholders' attitudes towards the intervention to be evaluated?



### Interaction

How do elements from the context in which relevant stakeholders are immersed interact with belief formation for the uptake of the evaluation report?



# PHASE 3 IMPACT

### PHASE 3: IMPACT

During this stage, evaluators will report on their findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Once the report is accepted and decision-makers have agreed to the recommendations, the follow-up process of recommendations will start. While this process looks pretty straightforward and linear, reality shows different landscape. Limited evaluation reports are used for decision-making purposes or to influence change, and a limited number of recommendations are converted into actions that could potentially have a positive impact.

The limited use of evaluation reports, could be justified for a variety of reasons:

- (a) Evaluations are used as a compliance tool, for instance, when evaluations are conducted to be accountable to a specific donor (the resources have been utilized as planned);
- (b) Evaluations are conducted for institutional use, for instance, a decision about an intervention has already been made, and the evaluation is just a confirmation of the decision adopted; and
- (c) Other reasons for limited use might be of behavioral nature, such as the commitment of stakeholders, time of the evaluation, attention, and beliefs, among other behavioral issues.

This guide will focus on evaluation reports which have not addressed behavioral challenges when preparing for the last phase of the evaluation (impact). As with any interventions, evaluators and commissioners need to plan for the impact of the evaluation. Many evaluation reports do not get the expected attention, as this is often scarce, easily distracted, and quickly overwhelmed.

Decision-makers have a hard time making choices based on relevant information and aligning their decisions with their intrinsic

preferences. Common examples of inattention are as follows: (i) forgetting the implementation of recommendations; (ii) multitasking; and (iii) overlooking non-obvious information. Evaluators and commissioners need to design evaluations assuming that people can not focus on everything. Behavioral problems in the evaluation process are often partially caused by attention issues in the broader definition of the behavioral principle. To strategically leverage this domain, relevant evaluation stakeholders should focus on the most critical aspects of the evaluation assignment in light of defined priorities for the office. The following questions could guide commissioners and evaluators during this phase:

What is seizing people's attention in the evaluation process context?



What happens if people are inattentive at the decision point when reading a report? Is there a default safety mechanism in place for potentially overlooked areas in the reports?

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