Utility Standards

Summary of the Standards

U  Utility Standards  The utility standards are intended to ensure that an evaluation will serve the information needs of intended users. These standards are as follows:

U1  Stakeholder Identification  Persons involved in or affected by the evaluation should be identified, so that their needs can be addressed.

U2  Evaluator Credibility  The persons conducting the evaluation should be both trustworthy and competent to perform the evaluation, so that the evaluation findings achieve maximum credibility and acceptance.

U3  Information Scope and Selection  Information collected should be broadly selected to address pertinent questions about the program and be responsive to the needs and interests of clients and other specified stakeholders.

U4  Values Identification  The perspectives, procedures, and rationale used to interpret the findings should be carefully described, so that the bases for value judgments are clear.
U5 Report Clarity  Evaluation reports should clearly describe the program being evaluated, including its context, and the purposes, procedures, and findings of the evaluation, so that essential information is provided and easily understood.

U6 Report Timeliness and Dissemination  Significant interim findings and evaluation reports should be disseminated to intended users, so that they can be used in a timely fashion.

U7 Evaluation Impact  Evaluations should be planned, conducted, and reported in ways that encourage follow-through by stakeholders, so that the likelihood that the evaluation will be used is increased.
Summary of the Standards

F  Feasibility Standards  The feasibility standards are intended to ensure that an evaluation will be realistic, prudent, diplomatic, and frugal. The standards are as follows:

F1 Practical Procedures  The evaluation procedures should be practical, to keep disruption to a minimum while needed information is obtained.

F2 Political Viability  The evaluation should be planned and conducted with anticipation of the different positions of various interest groups, so that their cooperation may be obtained, and so that possible attempts by any of these groups to curtail evaluation operations or to bias or misapply the results can be averted or counteracted.

F3 Cost Effectiveness  The evaluation should be efficient and produce information of sufficient value, so that the resources expended can be justified.
Propriety Standards

Summary of the Standards

P Propriety Standards The propriety standards are intended to ensure that an evaluation will be conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of those involved in the evaluation, as well as those affected by its results. These standards are as follows:

P1 Service Orientation Evaluations should be designed to assist organizations to address and effectively serve the needs of the full range of targeted participants.

P2 Formal Agreements Obligations of the formal parties to an evaluation (what is to be done, how, by whom, when) should be agreed to in writing, so that these parties are obligated to adhere to all conditions of the agreement or formally to renegotiate it.

P3 Rights of Human Subjects Evaluations should be designed and conducted to respect and protect the rights and welfare of human subjects.

P4 Human Interactions Evaluators should respect human dignity and worth in their interactions with other persons associated with an evaluation, so that participants are not threatened or harmed.
P5 Complete and Fair Assessment  The evaluation should be complete and fair in its examination and recording of strengths and weaknesses of the program being evaluated, so that strengths can be built upon and problem areas addressed.

P6 Disclosure of Findings  The formal parties to an evaluation should ensure that the full set of evaluation findings along with pertinent limitations are made accessible to the persons affected by the evaluation, and any others with expressed legal rights to receive the results.

P7 Conflict of Interest  Conflict of interest should be dealt with openly and honestly, so that it does not compromise the evaluation processes and results.

P8 Fiscal Responsibility  The evaluator's allocation and expenditure of resources should reflect sound accountability procedures and otherwise be prudent and ethically responsible, so that expenditures are accounted for and appropriate.
Accuracy Standards

Summary of the Standards

A Accuracy Standards  The accuracy standards are intended to ensure that an evaluation will reveal and convey technically adequate information about the features that determine worth or merit of the program being evaluated. The standards are as follows:

A1 Program Documentation  The program being evaluated should be described and documented clearly and accurately, so that the program is clearly identified.

A2 Context Analysis  The context in which the program exists should be examined in enough detail, so that its likely influences on the program can be identified.

A3 Described Purposes and Procedures  The purposes and procedures of the evaluation should be monitored and described in enough detail, so that they can be identified and assessed.

A4 Defensible Information Sources  The sources of information used in a program evaluation should be described in enough detail, so that the adequacy of the information can be assessed.
A5 **Valid Information** The information gathering procedures should be chosen or developed and then implemented so that they will assure that the interpretation arrived at is valid for the intended use.

A6 **Reliable Information** The information gathering procedures should be chosen or developed and then implemented so that they will assure that the information obtained is sufficiently reliable for the intended use.

A7 **Systematic Information** The information collected, processed, and reported in an evaluation should be systematically reviewed and any errors found should be corrected.

A8 **Analysis of Quantitative Information** Quantitative information in an evaluation should be appropriately and systematically analyzed so that evaluation questions are effectively answered.

A9 **Analysis of Qualitative Information** Qualitative information in an evaluation should be appropriately and systematically analyzed so that evaluation questions are effectively answered.

A10 **Justified Conclusions** The conclusions reached in an evaluation should be explicitly justified, so that stakeholders can assess them.

A11 **Impartial Reporting** Reporting procedures should guard against distortion caused by personal feelings and biases of any party to the evaluation, so that evaluation reports fairly reflect the evaluation findings.

A12 **Metaevaluation** The evaluation itself should be formatively and summatively evaluated against these and other pertinent standards, so that its conduct is appropriately guided and, on completion, stakeholders can closely examine its strengths and weaknesses.