### Focusing the evaluation design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Planning in advance where the evaluation is headed and what steps will be taken; process is iterative (i.e., it continues until a focused approach is found to answer evaluation questions with methods that stakeholders agree will be useful, feasible, ethical, and accurate); evaluation questions and methods might be adjusted to achieve an optimal match that facilitates use by primary users.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Provides investment in quality; increases the chances that the evaluation will succeed by identifying procedures that are practical, politically viable, and cost-effective; failure to plan thoroughly can be self-defeating, leading to an evaluation that might become impractical or useless; when stakeholders agree on a design focus, it is used throughout the evaluation process to keep the project on track.</td>
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| Activities | • Meeting with stakeholders to clarify the real intent or purpose of the evaluation;  
• Learning which persons are in a position to actually use the findings, then orienting the plan to meet their needs;  
• Understanding how the evaluation results are to be used;  
• Writing explicit evaluation questions to be answered;  
• Describing practical methods for sampling, data collection, data analysis, interpretation, and judgment;  
• Preparing a written protocol or agreement that summarizes the evaluation procedures, with clear roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders; and  
• Revising parts or all of the evaluation plan when critical circumstances change. |