



# ***EVALUATION APPROACHES***

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# *Aim of Today*

- Different **frameworks** for viewing evaluation approaches (M&E, formative/summative, Owen's forms, belief system), data collection type
- Different **approaches**: what are they, when to use them and why
- Questions

# *Evaluation and Monitoring*

**Evaluation** – a structured process of assessing the success of a project or program in meeting its goals and on lessons learnt.

**Monitoring** – setting targets and milestones to measure progress and achievements and whether inputs are producing planned outputs.

# *Formative and Summative Evaluation*

## **Formative (process)**

- Assesses the value of a project as it is being implemented, to check its implementation and to improve its design and performance.
- Uses both qualitative data (how participants felt about the process) as well as quantitative data.

## **Summative (impact/outcome)**

- Focuses on whether a project's goals have been achieved.
- More concerned with quantitative data.

# Evaluation Form (Owen)

| Form               | Use                         | Examples                               |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Proactive (Design) | Synthesis                   | Needs assessment, best practice review |
| Clarificative      | Clarification               | Program logic                          |
| Interactive        | Improvement, implementation | Action research, developmental         |
| Monitoring         | Justification, fine tuning  | PI, systems analysis                   |
| Impact             | Accountability              | Performance audit                      |

John M. Owen, *Program evaluation – forms and approaches*

# *Belief About The World*

| Positivism                              | Realism | Interpretivism /<br>Constructivism  |
|---|---------|---|
| Random trials<br>SMART<br>Program Logic | Realist | Participatory evaluation<br>Action research<br>Needs assessment<br>Focus Groups |

By methodology:

- Document analysis
- Program data
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Descriptive and inferential statistics
- Observation

# *Data Collection - Qualitative*

Descriptions of problems, behaviours or events, people's thoughts and opinions about their experiences, attitudes, and beliefs.

- Pros – more depth and insights as to the “why” and “how” of attitudes and behaviours, clarifies quantitative data.
- Cons - time consuming to capture and analyse, more subjective and difficult to summarize and compare systematically. Generally viewed as less reliable because it is more subjective than quantitative methods, and may yield smaller sample sizes.

# *Data Collection - Quantitative*

Counts or frequencies, rates or percentages, or other statistics.

- Pros - easy to administer, can have large number of questions, can yield large samples, easier to summarize, more widely accepted as a form of evidence.
- Cons - not as rich or as detailed as qualitative methods, survey/written questionnaires may be difficult for some participants, may not be able to be interpreted, and large amounts of data may require more sophisticated analysis approaches.

# *Data collection - Mixed Methods*

Combines quantitative and qualitative data.

Maximizes the strengths and minimizes the weaknesses of both.

- Pros – Can improve research results. Complement each other and addresses a broader range of questions. Provides insights that don't appear when using a single method.
- Cons – Need to be experienced in both types. Different methods need to be combined appropriately, which requires more time and money.

# Approaches

- Literature review
- Program Logic
- Case Studies
- SMART
- Outcome Mapping (OM)
- Action Learning/Research
- Realist
- Mixed Methods
- Appreciative Enquiry
- Most Significant Change (MSC)
- Participatory Evaluation
- Performance Indicators
- Social Return on Investment (SROI)

Overview of the theory and the research literature.

- Seeks to describe, summarise, evaluate, clarify and/or integrate the content of primary reports.
- Useful for:
  - design
  - identifying key issues/factors
  - justifying questions or framework & method
  - understanding the study

Describes how a program is intended to work.

- Pros - Clarifies the theory of action, assumptions, builds
- Cons – May not be appropriate for complex cases, may restrict improvement

Focuses on a particular unit - a person, a site, a project.

- Often uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative data.
- Particularly useful for:
  - understanding how different elements fit together and
  - how different elements (implementation, context and other factors) have produced the observed impacts.

Defined as Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound

- Outcome or Summative approach and useful in program evaluations.
- Records the achieved outcomes or consequences of a program.
- Measures program effectiveness, cost effectiveness, appropriateness and efficiency.

# *Outcome Mapping - OM*

Measures behavioural change of stakeholders.

- Collects data on immediate, basic changes that lead to longer, more transformative change.
- Useful for programs which use a development/influence rather than direct service model

# *Action Learning/Research*

A learning-by-doing process. Analysis of actions feeds into a reflective process leading to improvements.

- Gathers and shares information about what works and what doesn't work as the project/program operates.
- Makes improvements along the way rather than waiting until the end.

What works, for whom, in what respects, to what extent, in what contexts, and how?

- Four key linked concepts - mechanism, context, outcome pattern, and context-mechanism-outcome pattern configuration.
- Data collection includes interviews, focus groups, questionnaires.

Combines a number of approaches in one evaluation study.

- Pros - Different types of data complement and support each other
- Cons – Carried out ad hoc, not matched to rationale

# *Appreciative Enquiry*

Focuses on strengths rather than on weaknesses. Identifies what is working well and seeks to improve performance and conditions.

- Pros – encourages people to produce their best
- Cons – may lead to ignoring problems

# *Most Significant Change - MSC*

Generating and analysing personal accounts of change and deciding which of these accounts is the most significant – and why.

- Pros - Useful for HOW change comes about & WHEN – in what situations & context.  
Compelling stories.
- Cons – Expensive in resourcing and time, only answers contribution to outcomes, not cost effectiveness or appropriateness.

# *Participatory Evaluation*

Why is evaluation being done, how evaluation is done, who evaluates, what is being evaluated, and for whom is it being done.

- Pros – more useful, more fair, more valid
- Cons – expensive in time and resources, difficult, open to bias, intervention rather than evaluation

# *What to choose when*

- Evaluation question
- Program stage
- Resources available
- Skills of the evaluator
- Personal philosophical view

# Thank you

- Any Questions?