Evaluation 101 for Human Rights Organization: Designing Evaluation Studies

May 15, 2017

A project of the AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition
Evaluation 101: A Webinar and Workshop Series

Presenting foundational information on program evaluation for human rights organizations, emphasizing low cost approaches useful for small projects and limited budgets. Each will take place at 2pm EST.

- April 20 - Frameworks and measures of change
- May 15 – Study designs
- October 3 – Data collection and analysis, Part I
- November 2 – Data collection and analysis, Part II
Overview of the webinar

- Topics will include:
  - Defining the purpose and utility of evaluation
  - The relationship between evaluation questions and evaluation designs
  - Different approaches to designing evaluations
Submit your questions into the Questions box at anytime throughout the webinar.
Presenter
Kelly Skeith
Senior Design, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist
Freedom House

Moderator
Linda Stern
Director of Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning
National Democratic Institute

Introduction
Gary Shapiro
Chair, New Client Acquisition Committee
Statistics Without Borders
# Review and Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monitoring</th>
<th>Evaluations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What</strong></td>
<td>Assessing whether results are being achieved as planned</td>
<td>Evaluating why, how results are being achieved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>When</strong></td>
<td>On-going routine process for management decision-making and accountability purposes</td>
<td>Planned at specific times to answer management questions and for learning and accountability purposes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Why</strong></td>
<td>Used to assess whether desired results are occurring and whether performance is on track</td>
<td>Used to inform thinking about what our program has done, how it being implemented, whether expected results are occurring and other highly relevant management and design related questions</td>
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Step 1: Defining Your Evaluation Purpose

- Clearly state your evaluation USE and USERs
- Ensure there is consensus amongst key stakeholders
Step 2: Defining Your Evaluation Questions

- Does this fit the stated purpose of the evaluation?
- Who would use the information for what decision?
- Does the question focus on a critical or major issue, or is the question merely of passing interest?
- Is it feasible to adequately answer the question, given time and budget constraints?
A sound balance between evaluation questions and the time and resources available to answer them is essential.
What Types of Questions Can Evaluations Answer?

- Impact
- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Sustainability
Step 3: Evaluation Designs

Evaluation design is the structure that provides the information needed to answer each of your evaluation questions.

Your intended evaluation design should be based on and aligned with the following:

▪ Your program’s theory of change and logic model
▪ Primary purpose of the evaluation and key research questions
▪ Resources available for the evaluation
▪ Funder’s evaluation requirements, as applicable
Increasing Statistical Rigor

Evaluation Design Continuum

Non experimental designs

Weaker QEDs

Stronger QEDs

Experimental designs

Designs without comparison groups or randomized assignment

Designs with comparison groups – but not randomized assignment

Designs with randomized assignment (inclusion of a control group) to definitively answer cause-effect questions

QED = quasi-experimental design

Increasing Statistical Rigor

Source of continuum: USAID
Commonly Used Designs for Human Rights Evaluations
Point in time

- Looks at a group receiving an intervention at one point in time during or after the intervention
- Example: examining how beneficiaries view the quality of the assistance they received
- Cost: Low

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ease and practicality</td>
<td>Relatively weak design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid and low cost</td>
<td>Many threats to validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best when combined with monitoring data</td>
<td>Weak ability to generalize findings to other subgroups</td>
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Before and After Design (w/o comparison group)

- Aggregate measure of outcomes for a group before and after the intervention
- Example: baseline and end-of-project comparison of the security of human rights defenders and their ability to do their work.
- Cost: Low-medium

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<td>Practical, context must be considered</td>
<td>Testing and instrumentation threats to validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible and can apply to a wide range of program types</td>
<td>Requires quality baseline info</td>
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Panel Design

- Repeated measurements from the same individuals over time

- Example: follow-up on graduates of a training program – to learn what knowledge was retained; how it has been applied; and what long term effects it had on individuals and institutions.

- Cost: Low-medium

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<td>Practical, context must be considered</td>
<td>Testing and instrumentation threats to validity</td>
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<td>In-depth info about KAPB</td>
<td>Requires quality baseline info</td>
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Case Study Design

- Used to gain in-depth understanding of a process event or situation and explain why results occurred – from the perspective of a “case.”
- Can be used to explore project extremes or typical cases
- Example: To explore how different govn’t agencies adopted a new policy
- Cost: Medium

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<tr>
<td>In-depth contextual information</td>
<td>Time consuming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-depth understanding to aid survey design and/or to interpret survey findings</td>
<td>Little external validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich perspective on dynamics of change</td>
<td>Limited ability to generalize beyond cases</td>
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Four Types of Case Study Designs

- Illustrative
- Exploratory
- Critical Instance
- Explanatory
Developmental Evaluation Design

- Supports innovation and adaptation. Feedback is timely and rapid.
- Evaluator is a part of the team, working with implementers.
- Can be used in complex or pilot programs, where the intervention isn’t perfectly defined yet. Feedback is fed back into the project immediately.
- Cost: Medium - High

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<td>Highly adaptive and flexible</td>
<td>Time consuming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be used in volatile, emergent, and complex situations</td>
<td>Difficult to manage contractually, high cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich perspective on dynamics of change</td>
<td>Limited external validity; perceptions of credibility</td>
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QUESTIONS?
Resources for Project Evaluation

On-call Scientists and Human Rights
MAKING AN IMPACT

Oncallscientists.aaas.org

g.shapiro4@live.com
community.amstat.org/
statisticswithoutborders/home
Further Resources

- Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation for Peace
- Monitoring and Evaluation for Human Rights Organizations: Three Case Studies
- Preparing an Evaluation Statement of Work, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation TIPS, USAID
- International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS)

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