

Centre for Evaluation and Research

Introducing Evaluation

November 2017



Objectives

Aim: By 12.30 you will have...

Ideas for incorporating evaluative elements into program operations and reporting

A new contact or group who can help you progress evaluation aims

Topics we will cover...

- What is program evaluation?
- Types of evaluation
- Program logic
- Evaluation questions
- Measurement principles
- Evaluative thinking

Your expertise, your role, your motivation?

Imagine success...

Good ideas don't always have good outcomes so... How will you know if your project works?

Activity – identifying our expertise

What is Program Evaluation?

“The systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgements about the program, to improve program effectiveness and/or inform decisions about future program development”

Types of evaluation

Evaluation type				
Needs assessment	Process evaluation	Developmental evaluation	Outcome evaluation	Impact evaluation
Formative		Developmental	Summative	
Pre-program	New program	Continuous throughout program	Completed or ongoing program	Established program
Program phase				

Types of evaluation

Process Evaluation

- Investigates how a program is delivered, describes operations, helps determine if a program was implemented as expected. Findings can be used to adjust program delivery to inform continuous improvement, or provide early indicators that programs are on track.

Outcomes Evaluation

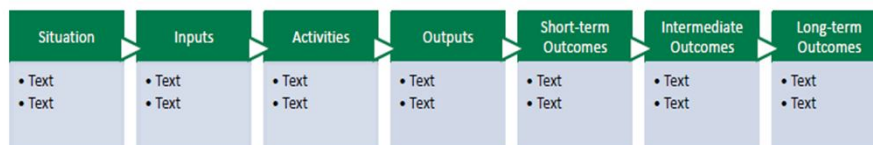
- Measures to what extent the program produced the expected outcomes

Monitoring

- Continuous collection and analysis of program data to measure program progress

Evaluation tools: Program Logic

Program title: <The name of the program to be evaluated>
Program goal: <The overarching goal of the program to be evaluated>
Program objectives: <The objectives of the program. These should link with an action or activity completed by the program>



Assumptions: <List and describe the assumptions associated with the 'theory of change.' A theory of change is a conceptual representation of how change will occur. It is often based on well-known theories from literature, research and practical experience.>
External factors: <List and describe the areas of influence external to the organisation that effect outcomes, for e.g. the social, economic and political factors.>

Evaluation tools: Program Logic

Why use program logic

Shared definition of what is to be done, identify data needs, point of comparison (ideal>real)

Design and planning phase

- Check logical glitches/gaps
- Plan measurement
- Clear articulation of what plan to do and achieve.

Implementation phase

- Yardstick for implementation progress and early outcomes

Evaluation Tools: Key Evaluation Questions (KEQ's)

Ideally 7 (+/-2)

Ask important and relevant questions then actually answer them e.g.

- Did the activities achieve the outcomes sought? (reduce the number of arrests, increase skills etc...)
- What elements of the activities had a positive or negative impact on client experience?
- Can factors that either impeded or supported (a) implementation fidelity (b) effective operation be identified?
- What lessons were learnt by providers and government during implementation and what changes or improvements are required?

What do you need to know to understand if your program works? - activity

Evaluation Tools: Key Evaluation Questions (KEQ's)

Appropriateness – extent to which the program... was suited for population and context

Effectiveness - ...achieved what it set out to

Efficiency – ...achieved results in a cost effective way

Impact – ...is on track or has achieved its goal

Sustainability – ... has the capacity to keep going in to the future

Evaluation Tools 2: KEQ's (continued)

Another way to break down evaluation questions:

Need – understanding the need/problem it aimed to address

Process - quality of content, design and delivery/implementation

Outcomes – outcomes achieved, value of outcomes

Learnings – barriers and enablers (and explanations)

Forward/outward focussed – sustainability, threats, opportunities, transferability

Measurement / data collection

Systematic measurement based on program Logic or evaluation questions

Question or PL element	Data needed	Who from ? When ?
Attendance at coaching sessions	<i>[range of things including..]</i> Number of registrations compared to targets	Attendee list from each event, collated monthly.

Mixed methods - Quantitative & Qualitative, range of informants from different perspectives.

Comparison data - (Baseline, other programs, over time, national surveys, existing literature)

Think evaluatively

“evaluative thinking” i.e. systematic and critical thinking

Describe and question your processes, findings.

e.g.

“All mentors have been recruited and have a caseload of 2”

- was this enough/ not enough/or overkill?
- was this in line with what was intended?
- how does this compare to other programs?

Description v's evaluation

Top tips

1. Involve the right people in evaluation design
2. Have a clear and measurable statement of objectives
3. Prioritise what to measure – use logic and/or KEQ's
4. Keep it simple
5. Align evaluation measurement with everyday processes
6. Use monitoring data
7. Think critically about program data to learn as you go
8. Triangulate different perspectives (time, place, person)
9. To measure impact, need a baseline or comparison group
10. Plan how to use your results

Reflection & next steps activity

- One thing you will do differently after today?
- One idea or action to follow up?

Further resources

Centre for Evaluation and Research (intranet)

Our evaluation guide and templates

Use the department's evaluation guide and templates to help scope, plan, design, commission and report on evaluation findings.

- [Evaluation guide \(PDF\)](#)
- [Evaluation guide \(Word\)](#)

- [Evaluation plan template \(Word\)](#)
- [Evaluation report template \(Word\)](#)
- [Program logic template \(Word\)](#)
- [Tips for commissioning evaluations factsheet \(Word\)](#)

www.betterevaluation.org - evaluation methods and approaches, explore options by evaluation phase, examples and guides