



IPDET

Module 11: Evaluating Complex Interventions



Introduction

- Big Picture Views of Development Evaluation
- Joint Evaluations
- Country Program Evaluations
- Sector Program Evaluations
- Thematic Evaluations
- Evaluation of Global and Regional Partnership Programs

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Viewing the Big Picture

- Reorientation of focus to overall experience and impact
- Looking beyond one intervention to the effects of all/multiple interventions on:
 - the entire country, region, or world
 - one sector
 - one theme, such as gender
 - global or regional public goods in one sector or theme (biodiversity)

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More Comprehensive Agenda

- Increasingly addressing:
 - country policy reforms
 - Country or regional capacity building
 - global concerns
- Evaluation must expand to:
 - reorient the focus of evaluation from the project level to the country, thematic, or global levels
 - seek replicability at a higher level and applicability at the system level

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Joint Evaluations

- Evaluations in which different donors and/or partners participate
 - donor + donor
 - donor + donor country
 - multidonor + multipartner
 - partner + partner

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Planning and Managing

- Allow sufficient time at the beginning of the process to develop and agree upon process and framework
- Management systems
 - simple: meet regularly and share, all equally involved, one is leader
 - delegate management to one organization, others review key outputs
 - two-tier: steering committee and smaller management group

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Agreements for Joint Evaluations

- Ground rules for managing the evaluation
- Terms of Reference (TOR) for evaluation team
- Means of selecting the evaluation team
- Budgeting, costing, and financing
- Reporting findings, including disclosure rules

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Country Program Evaluations

- Focuses on an organization's entire aid program to a country
- Largely a normative study that compares what is being done to what was planned

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Other Uses for Country Program Evaluations

- Assess the strategic relevance of the country assistance program relative to the country's needs
- Identify the success and failures in different sectors or approaches and identify the factors contributing to performance
- Assess the effectiveness of the donor's aid to a given country

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Focus of Country Program Evaluations

- DAC criteria of impact, relevance, or efficiency
 - impact evaluations can be resource intensive
 - relevance and efficiency can be less resource intensive (fewer issues)

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Challenges to Country Program Evaluations

- Lack of coherent goals in place
- If funded by several sources, there may be confusion, unnecessary duplication, and different information kept for each intervention
- No mapping of in-country assistance makes it difficult to know what others are doing
- Program and/or government officials may be fearful of consequences of the evaluation-- may threatened morale and commitment

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Recommendations for Country Program Evaluations

- A greater proportion of evaluations should be undertaken jointly, with full and active participation of the aid recipients and other partners
- Developing countries should be encouraged to show greater initiative in taking the lead in planning, coordinating, and scheduling evaluations
- Developing countries should be supported to build their institutional capacity for initiating and leading joint evaluations

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Recommendations for Country Program Evaluations (cont.)

- Better coordination and knowledge sharing is needed amongst the various partners within aid recipient countries. National M&E networks and professional associations need to be built and expanded
- When a large joint evaluation is undertaken with the participation of several developing countries, the developing countries should be facilitated to meet together to coordinate their views and inputs.

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TOR for Country Program Evaluations

- Need clearly defined TOR
 - clearly stated purpose, evaluation criteria, and way in which the findings will be used
 - clearly specified goals of the country program
 - clearly specified reporting, dissemination, and follow-up procedures

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Sector Program Evaluations

- Evaluations on major program sectors
- A sector covers a specific area activities, such as: education, health, industry, housing, transportation, or agriculture
- Focus more on questions of institutional performance, processes, changes, and interrelationships
- An evaluation of a variety of aid actions all of which are located in the same sector, either in one country or cross-country

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Challenges of Sector Program Evaluations

- Look at many projects with different objectives and different donors – therefore more complex
- Key issues:
 - donor's concern is to improve the delivery of aid and accountability
 - partner institution's concern is with improving development in the sector
- Need to be coordinated as joint evaluations

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Thematic Evaluations

- Evaluate selected aspects or themes in a number of development activities
- Themes emerge from policy statements
- Look at different kinds of evaluative information and extract aggregate information from these sources

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Gender in Development: A Thematic Approach

- Recognizing the complexity of women's and men's social roles
- Bring a gender focus explicitly into the design of the evaluation
- Policy-making, planning, and investments must become gender-sensitive

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Gender in Development Evaluation

- Allows evaluators to look at many development activities and their effect on gender development
- Most evaluations do not systematically examine different impacts for men and women
- Evaluations addressing the theme of gender are a way to look at the role of gender in development

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Importance of Gender in Development Evaluation

- Gender inequality reduces economic growth and limits access to public services
- Because men and women have different economic roles and responsibilities they:
 - experience poverty differently
 - have different priorities
 - face different constraints
 - are effected differently by development programs

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Gender Sensitivity and Tools

- Many tools used in evaluation are not gender sensitive
 - surveys collect information from the "household head" who is usually a man
 - when women are interviewed, other family members may be present, women may not speak freely
 - women may only speak the local language
 - women may not attend community meetings, be allowed to speak, or may be expected to agree with male relatives
 - many studies may use male interviewers, who may not be able to speak to women

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Data and Gender

- Ensure data collection methods generate information on both women and men, and that key gender issues are addressed
- Ensure information is collected about, and from, different household members - not just the "household head"
- Use gender-inclusive methods to collect data

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Data and Gender (cont.)

- Ensure research team includes a balance of men and women
- Ensure stakeholders are consulted during design, analysis, and dissemination of the evaluation and that consultations include groups that represent both men and women

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Evaluation of Global and Regional Partnership Program (GRPP)

- An increasingly important modality for channeling and delivering development assistance
- Most are specific to a sector or theme
- Programmatic partnerships in which:
 - partners contribute and pool resources to achieve agreed upon objectives over time
 - are global, regional, or multi-country in scope
 - partners establish a new organization with a governance structure and management unit
 - often focus on global public goods

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Examples of GRPPs

- Global Programs
 - Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (provides research and improved seed on open-source basis)
 - Global Environmental Facility (supports conservation of biodiversity and actions to assess and mitigate climate change impacts)
- Regional Programs
 - Nile Basin Initiative (manages joint resources)
 - West Africa HIV/AIDS and Transport Program (manages joint strategy to prevent spread of communicable disease at border transport points)

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Complexities of GRPP Evaluation

- Partnership dimension and the need to consider different stakeholder perspectives; need to assess governance mechanisms
- Open-ended time-frame: Objectives and strategies evolve over time, giving rise to medium-term issues like devolution, or exit, which may need evaluation coverage
- Cost are incurred and benefits accrued at different levels (results chain complex)
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Complexities of GRPP Evaluation (cont.)

- Global and regional dimension means there is a divergence between costs and benefits (evaluation of cost-effectiveness becomes complex)
- Because of open-ended and longer timeframe, evaluators are often asked to consider progress toward complex medium-term strategic goals

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Concluding Comments

- Development evaluators face a unique set of complex economic, political, and social factors as they strive to conduct high quality evaluations that meet the needs of diverse stakeholders
- These evaluations need to be well-designed and conducted in an ethical manner that is sensitive to local conditions, development issues (i.e., gender and poverty reduction)

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A Final Note...

*"Sometimes the world puts a spin on life.
When our equilibrium returns to us, we understand
more because we've seen the whole picture."
--Davis Barton*



Questions?

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