Module 1: Introducing Development Evaluation

Introduction

- Evaluation, What is it?
- The Origin and History of the Evaluation Discipline
- The Development Evaluation Context
- Principles and Standards for Development Evaluation
How Do You Define Evaluation?

OECD definition of evaluation:
• the process of determining the worth or significance of an activity, policy, or program
• an assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of a planned, ongoing, or completed intervention

Kinds of Evaluations
• Formative
  - focus on improved performance before and during implementation (project, program or policy)
• Summative
  - focus on outcomes (results, consequences)
• Prospective
  - assess the likely outcomes of proposed interventions
    • Is this program/project/policy worth evaluating?
    • Will the gains be worth the effort/resources expended?
Uses of Evaluations

• Help make resource allocation decisions
• Help rethink the causes of a problem
• Identify emerging problems
• Support decision making on competing or best alternatives
• Support public sector reform and innovation
• Build consensus on the causes of a problem and how to respond

Evaluation Provides Information on:

• Strategy -
  - Are the right things being done?
• Operations -
  - Are things being done right?
• Learning -
  - What are we learning?
  - Are there better ways?
Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Monitoring**
  - routine, ongoing, and internal activity of tracking key indicators
  - internal activity
  - used to collect information on a program’s activities, outputs, and outcomes to measure performance of the program

- **Evaluation**
  - periodic and time bound
  - can be internal, external, or participatory
  - periodic feedback to key stakeholders

Who Conducts the Evaluation

- Internal evaluators
- External evaluators
- Participatory evaluators
- Each has advantages and disadvantages
Evaluation and Independence

- Independent evaluation (OECD glossary):
  - an evaluation carried out by entities and persons free of the control of those responsible for the design and implementation of the evaluation
  - the credibility of an evaluation depends in part on how independently it has been carried out

Criteria of Evaluation Independence

- Organizational independence
- Behavioral independence
- Protection from external influence
- Avoidance of conflicts of interest
Evaluator Activities

- Consult with main client and all key stakeholders
- Reconstruct or construct theory of change
- Design the evaluation
- Manage evaluation budgets
- Perform or conduct the evaluation (or contract staff to perform the evaluation)
- Identify standards for effectiveness
- Collect, analyze, interpret, and report on data and findings

Development Evaluation:

- A sub-discipline of classical evaluation
- Uses a variety of methodologies and practices
- Mixed methodologies work best
Origins of Development Evaluation

- Audit tradition
- Social science tradition

Growth of Professional Evaluation Associations

- As of 2009, 35 associations
- Organizations create a support system and allow for professionalism
- International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS)
Why Principles and Standards?

- Promote accountability
- Facilitate comparability
- Enhance reliability and quality of services provided

Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance

- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Impact
- Sustainability
DAC Evaluation Quality Standards (test phase)

- Rationale, purpose, and objectives
- Evaluation scope
- Context
- Evaluation methodology
- Information sources
- Independence
- Evaluation ethics
- Quality assurance
- Relevance of the evaluation results
- Completeness

Other Evaluation Standards

- American Evaluation Association:
  - Standards
    http://www.eval.org/EvaluationDocuments/progeval.html
  - AEA Guiding Principles
    http://www.eval.org/Publications/GuidingPrinciples.asp

- African Evaluation Association:
  - African Evaluation Guidelines
    http://www.geocities.com/afreval/documents/aeg.htm

- Australasian Evaluation Society
  - Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluation
Evaluation Standards (cont.)

• Norms for Evaluation in the UN System

• Standards for Evaluation in the UN System

A Final Note....

“Evaluation of the past is the first step towards vision for the future.”
-- Chris Widener, motivational speaker and author

Questions?