

Abstracts for workshops on Mon 1 Dec 2003

UKES Annual conference

Workshop 1. Programme Logic Modelling

Workshop convener: Bill Fear, Research Manager, Investing in Change Project, Wales Funders Forum

The logic model is an increasingly accepted component of evaluation practice. On the one hand they can be used to describe programs, clarify objectives and intended outcomes, and improve the relationship between program activities and those objectives/outcomes. On the other hand the model is only a model and the emergent program theory needs to be tested against the evidence.

Based on the WK Kellogg Foundation's *Logic Model Development Guidebook* this workshop will cover the use of program logic as a simple discipline, and the construction of logic models – both as explanatory and as planning tools. We will use small groups to develop logic models relating to our own experience. Following this we will drill down into the logic model showing how theories of change and organization theory can be incorporated into the model. Finally we will examine some of the attendant issues around logic modeling and address the question of whether logic modeling can be seen as a valid project management tool.

Workshop 2. Economic Evaluation

Workshop Convener: Steve Hill, Professor of Regional and Local Economic Development, University of Glamorgan

This workshop will cover key principles and applications of economic evaluation, including cost effectiveness and impact assessment, and relate these to concepts and measures such as multipliers, deadweight and displacement as well as performance indicators such as return on investment (ROI) and cost/benefit analysis. These tools and concepts play a significant role in all aspects of investment, social and environmental development, education, and social programs in both the public and private sectors.

Real-world examples, including the impacts of higher education and the relationship between economy and environment, will be used to illustrate how these tools can be used to improve understanding of the relationships between resources used, processes enacted, and outcomes produced. We will look at sustainability, costs/ benefits, cost-effectiveness, & impacts; strategies for analyzing multiplier effects, deadweight, & displacement; and methods to convert program effects to monetary value. We will also consider the key nature of the counterfactual, and which aspects are most important for evaluation.

Workshop 3. How evaluation can reflect the nature of community development

Workshop convener: Helen Bushell, Programme evaluator, Insight Social Research Ltd.

Helen will share her experience and insights into evaluating community regeneration programs. This workshop will cover the difficulties of engaging with the politics of community regeneration and how to manage these difficulties while at the same time undertaking objective evaluations.

There will be a focus on the issues that are faced by stakeholders in community regeneration when evaluation of local level projects is required. It will also explore the ways in which evaluation at the level of the community can contribute to the personal and collective capacity of those involved. The session will draw on methods that can be used to work beyond the initial aspirational evaluation by stakeholders towards robust evaluation techniques that contribute to the community development process. The session will explore other participants' experiences in relation to this area.

Workshop 4. Practitioner perspectives on development evaluation: The International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS)

Workshop convener: Sulley Gariba, President of IDEAS, Director of the Policy Alternatives Institute in Ghana

This is a practitioner training workshop on participatory development evaluation techniques appropriate for evaluators working the context of developing countries. This session will explore a range of evaluation principles, frameworks and techniques appropriate in the context of evaluating development projects and programmes. The session is for those evaluators who are working in, or wish to work in developing countries and who want to ensure that their approach to evaluation is appropriate for developing country contexts.

The workshop will also explore how IDEAS is seeking to help strengthen the 'development' dimension of existing evaluation associations; to address the evaluation needs of developing countries and countries in transition, and to support emerging country evaluation associations. Participants will consider the ideas, challenges, issues and problems in development evaluation, and some of the innovative research and advancement of methods in development evaluation.

Workshop 5. Communicating research to practice: skills and techniques

Workshop convener: William Solesbury (ESRC UK Centre for Evidence Based Policy and Practice, Queen Mary, University of London)

This is one of the most heavily subscribed workshops so early booking is advised. The workshop will provide a mix of presentations, discussions of participants' experiences, and exercises. It will be extremely practical in its focus. It should appeal to researchers and evaluators seeking to extend the range of their communication skills and techniques and thereby enhance their impact on policymaking and practice.

Participants will: learn how to develop relationships between the researcher/evaluator and their practitioner client which can maximise the influence of evidence from the former on the work of the latter; explore the potential of different media for communicating messages, covering the pros and cons of speech, print and electronic media in all their variety, ranging from the traditional written report, through oral presentations to the latest web formats; and hone skills in using words, numbers and graphics effectively to capture attention and improve understanding.