THE USE AND USABILITY OF EVALUATION
Demonstrating and improving the usefulness of evaluation

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HOLIDAY INN REGENT’S PARK, LONDON
GLOBAL INNOVATIONS IN MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION
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CHOOSING THE INNOVATIONS

• Interviews with expert stakeholders from around the world

• Input from advisory group and project partners

How different approaches contribute to better evaluation by:

• overcoming previous barriers to good evaluation practice, eg through new technologies or skills
• providing more meaningful or robust data
• using data to support decision-making, learning and improving practice
• increasing equality between users, service deliverers and funders, offering new contexts for collaboration that improve the utility of data
EIGHT TRENDS IDENTIFIED

- User centric evaluation
- Shared measurement and evaluation
- Theory based evaluation
- Impact management
- Data linkage
- Big data
- Remote sensing
- Data visualisation
USER CENTRIC EVALUATION

• Involving service users meaningfully in evaluation

• Adds legitimacy to evaluation, demonstrates accountability to users (not just funders)

• New tools and technology are making this easier (eg text analytics)

• Examples: Oxfam's Humanitarian Informal Feedback, LIFT
SHARED MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

• Organisations working collectively to measure their own and their combined impact

• Can be driven by interest in systems change and collective impact initiatives

• Includes building shared measurement approaches, benchmarking and pooling findings

• Examples: JET framework, SafeLives, 3ie’s Evidence Gap Maps, PCOC
THEORY-BASED EVALUATION

• Testing not only *if* a programme works, but understanding *why* it works (or not)
• Typically starts with a theory of change
• Realist evaluation focuses on the interaction of contexts and mechanisms to generate outcomes
• Helps us understand what conditions are needed to replicate a programme successfully
• Examples: BCURE (DfID)
IMPACT MANAGEMENT

• Integrating impact assessment into strategy and performance management
• Regular collection and analysis of data
• Acting on evaluation findings during the life cycle of the intervention
• Rapid survey methods (eg mobile) can help
• Examples: Acumen Lean Data
DATA LINKAGE

• Bringing together different but relevant data from several organisations about a (group of) users
• Creates a richer picture of users’ needs, outcomes and contexts
• Often involves data from public services
• Examples: Troubled Families programme evaluation, Justice Data Lab, Blackpool Better Start
BIG DATA

- Data generated as a by-product of digital transactions and interactions
- Often unstructured and constantly changing
- Technology and analytical techniques (e.g., machine learning, predictive analytics) are getting better at spotting patterns and making predictions
- Examples: Flowminder, UN Global Pulse
REMOTE SENSING

• Uses technology to remotely gather information that could not be (easily) collected conventionally
• Eg, information from isolated or disparate locations
• Accurate, real time data
• Examples: Clean Cook-stoves, WellDone International, Global Environmental Facility
DATA VISUALISATION

• Can make it easier to spot trends and be used as a tool for analysis

• Helps communicate complex findings and make information more accessible to audiences

• New tools are making this much easier

• Examples: Centre for Cities Data Tool, Trussel Trust Mapping Hunger