Evaluative Thinking

Taking Action

ET WORKSHOP CULMINATING CONFERENCE

ROUND 3 • ALL GROUPS
Introductions

Please share:

• Your name
• Your role on this project
• Give a recent example of when you used evidence to make a decision at work or at home
# ET Workshop Series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target audience</th>
<th>Round 1 Identifying Assumptions</th>
<th>Round 2 Seeking Evidence</th>
<th>Round 3 Taking Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1: Field-based staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group 2: Senior program staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group 3: Country leadership</td>
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</tbody>
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ET Workshop Series

NINE WORKSHOPS IN ALL: 1 PER GROUP PER ROUND

GROUP 1
FIELD-BASED STAFF

GROUP 2
SENIOR PROGRAM STAFF

GROUP 3
COUNTRY LEADERSHIP

ROUND 1
• Introduction to evaluative thinking
• Identifying assumptions
• Multiple perspectives
• Theory of Change (ToC) Pathway Models

ROUND 2
• Using the ToC Pathway Models to determine learning plan scope
• Developing learning questions
• Components of a learning plan
• Learning plan alignment

ROUND 3
• Making meaning from results
• Participatory analysis
• Making informed decisions (utilization)
• Communicating results
A little housekeeping…

- Shared norms for the workshop
- Consent form and pre-workshop survey
- Post-workshop survey
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Task</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00am</td>
<td>Introductions and goals, consent form, pre-workshop survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30am</td>
<td>Introduction to utilization and decision making and the role of ET therein</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>Participatory interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45am</td>
<td>Action planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15am</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30am</td>
<td>ET review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00pm</td>
<td>Lunch/close</td>
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</table>
Goals for the Day

• Learn about the role of utilization and decision-making in MEAL work
• Summarize and interpret your project’s real-life evidence
• Develop possible action plans based on that evidence
• Learn about participatory analysis, and how to facilitate and actively support it
• Celebrate the culmination of 3 years of ET workshops!
How Today’s Workshop will Work

We will do “real” work
  • Real data, real interpretations, real action plans

We will use a participatory approach that:
  • Mixes groups
  • Values all perspectives
  • Depends on true engagement
Utilization

Using evidence to inform decisions and report to stakeholders.
1. **Summarize results** – Put data into an unbiased, interpretable form

2. **Interpretation** – Make meaning from and/or explain results, and determine their significance

3. **Action planning** – Make careful decisions and thoughtful plans about what to do with any new information

**The 3 Steps in Utilization**
Participatory Utilization

• Key program stakeholders (program staff, beneficiaries and others) work together to make meaning from new information (including MEAL results)

• Participation
• Open-mindedness
• Respect
• A common goal
Participatory Utilization

Interpretations and explanations differ depending on perspective, interest and personal knowledge. By equitably considering all perspectives, we give ourselves the best chance of making the “right” decision and propelling the program forward.
Participatory Utilization

Who’s “right”?

- Lack of access
- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of interest
- Lack of resources
- Low attendance
What are the strengths and weaknesses of each person’s evidence?

How could you (objectively) take these all into account?
Organizational Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture and Leadership</th>
<th>Skills and Capabilities</th>
<th>Tools and Systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning as a strategic</td>
<td>Engagement and commitment</td>
<td>Evidence-based decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>investment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder involvement</td>
<td>Making it safe to learn</td>
<td>Learning is embedded in the delivery process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership role modelling</td>
<td>Learning in connected networks</td>
<td>Systems for capturing and sharing lessons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from a slide presented by Chris Collison at the Organisational Learning and Knowledge Management Masterclass, DFID, December 15, 2015
Summarizing Results

How many different ways could we summarize the “data” about who is in the room today?
Summarizing Results

Putting results in a readable, unbiased form in preparation for interpretation
Prepare for Interpretation ("OCTEVE")

Organize – Sort, list, or tabulate the data

Clean – Address missing and/or erroneous data

Translate – Score, code, or otherwise convert the data

Enumerate – Count up the data when appropriate

Visualize – Display data in a way that allows for interpretation
Interpreting Results

Make meaning from and/or explain results, and determine their significance in preparation for decision-making

Photo of: Gender Analysis- CRS Ethiopia
Interpreting Results

- **Handwashing**
  - 41% Adopted
  - 11% Didn’t adopt
  - 48% Partially adopted

- Is this result positive? Negative? Neutral? Why?
- Does this result surprise you? Why or why not?
- Is there some other information you would want before you attempt to explain or more deeply interpret this?
Handwashing

- How was this data collected? Do we consider it to be credible?
- What is the historical context? Do we know if these numbers are similar to last year’s?
Plausible Alternative Explanations

Handwashing

- 48% Adopted
- 41% Didn’t adopt
- 11% Partially adopted

Handwashing - Why?

Reasons:
1. They did not understand importance
2. Don’t see value
3. Level of understanding varies b/w groups
4. Poor presentation of messages/communication
5. Prior knowledge varies
6. Level of education varies
7. Lack of resources - water/soap
8. Why do this when my hands are clean?
9. Hard to change habits / people resistant to change
10. People expecting material handouts
11. People are risk averse or recognise risk
12. Adoption theory
Weighing Alternative Interpretations

• Which of our interpretations and/or explanations have evidence to support them? How reliable, accurate, and credible is that evidence?

• Are there any that we can eliminate right away? Why?

• Can we agree on a few (3 or fewer), that seem most likely and could serve as the basis for our action plan?
Interpret Summarized Results
Explain and Defend Interpretation of Results
Decision Making

Diverge

New information

Converge

Idea generation

Agreed-upon action
Action Plan

Make thoughtful decisions and plans about what to do with new information
Action Options

Key result

- Strategic plan modification
- Program plan modification
- Immediate adaptation
- Collect more information
- Review ToC Pathway Model and MEAL plan
- Do nothing (for good reason)

Do nothing (for good reason)
# Action Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do nothing</th>
<th>Immediate adaptation</th>
<th>Program plan modification</th>
<th>Strategic plan modification</th>
<th>Collect more information*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence suggests that you are on the right track.</td>
<td>There is sufficient evidence to make a (small) change.</td>
<td>There is sufficient evidence to make a plan modification.</td>
<td>There is significant evidence that the current program plan is ineffective.</td>
<td>Your results are unreliable (do again).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no evidence to support any change.</td>
<td>The suggested change is low-risk.</td>
<td>There is evidence to support the suggested change.</td>
<td>There is evidence to support an alternative strategic plan.</td>
<td>Your results lead you to a new question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You need to wait until you have more information before you decide to make a change.</td>
<td>The suggested change does not significantly interfere with current (or planned) MEAL work.</td>
<td>The need for change justifies interference with current MEAL work / MEAL plan modification.</td>
<td>Continuing with the current strategy would be a waste of resources.</td>
<td>You are ready to “move to the right” on your Pathway Model.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
* Always do this
Action Options

Your action plan should include:

✓ A description of the part(s) of the program you are addressing
✓ The change (or no change) you are suggesting
✓ The evidence you have to support your decision
✓ The evidence if any) you have to support your suggested alternative
✓ A description of the MEAL work you suggest

NOTE: You may suggest different actions for different parts/aspects of the program
Action Plan
Connecting back to ET

Evaluative thinking is critical thinking applied in the context of evaluation (or MEAL), motivated by an attitude of inquisitiveness and a belief in the value of evidence, that involves:

1. Identifying assumptions
2. Posing thoughtful questions
3. Pursuing deeper understanding through reflection and multiple perspective taking
4. Making informed decisions in preparation for action

(BUCKLEY, ARCHIBALD, HARGRAVES & TROCHIM, 2015)
Workshop Review

Thinking back, what stands out from the three rounds of ET workshops?
Activity Report

What have you done to promote ET so far?
Learning-to-Action Plan

What will you do to promote ET in the future?
Organizing your ET notebook
## Organizing your ET notebook

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<tr>
<td>Interpret summarized results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explain and defend interpretation of results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action plan</td>
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<td>ET workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity report guidance</td>
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<td>Learning-to-action plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-workshop survey</td>
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</table>
Post-Workshop Survey

• Please fill out the Post-Workshop Survey
Thank You!
References


Brookfield, Teaching for critical thinking: Tools and techniques to help students question their assumptions.


