

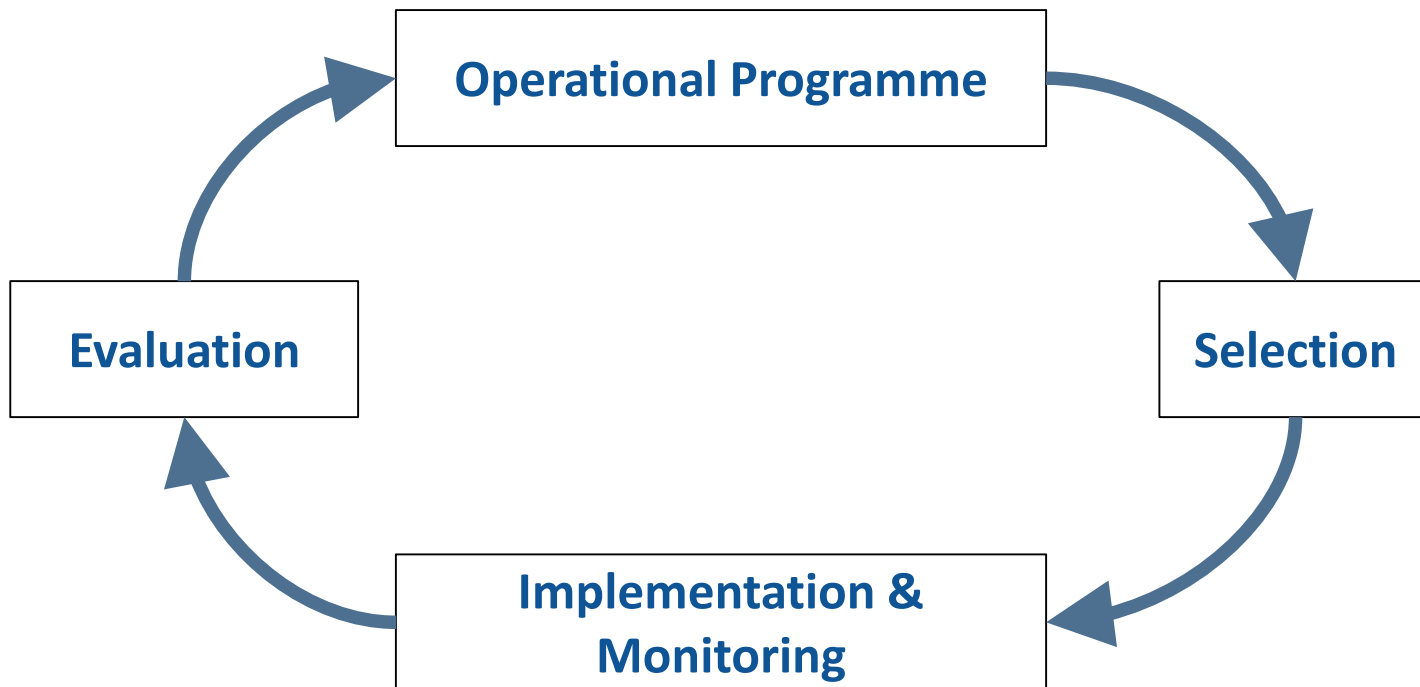


Practical Challenges for the evaluation plan: planning, resources, data collection, timing.

Trainer: Shaun Henry
Position: Director, Managing Authority, Special EU Programmes Body, Northern Ireland (UK) and former Twinning Adviser, Romania

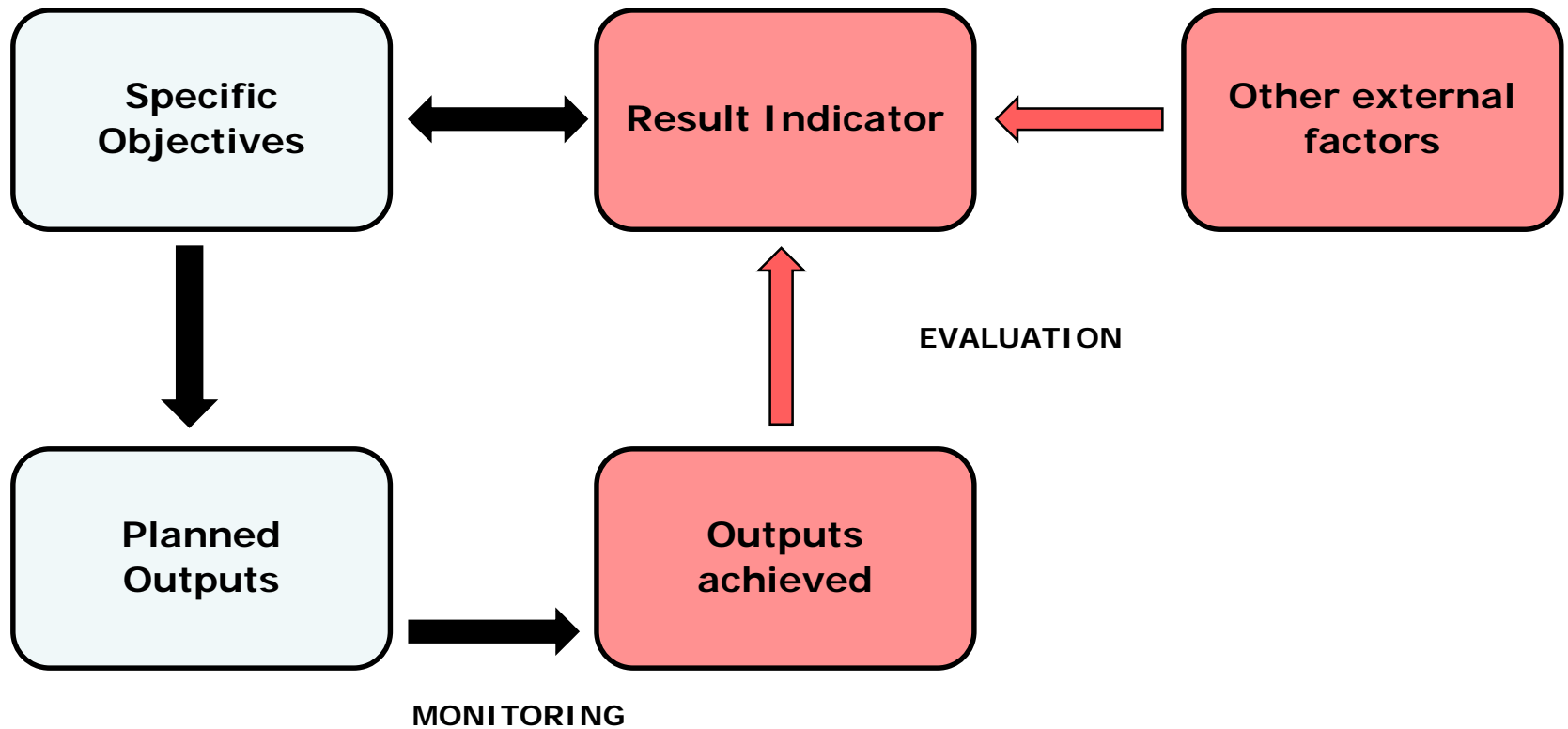
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Programme Planning - the theory





Simplified Intervention Logic



Remember...

- Good well designed programmes do not always translate into good projects
- Good projects, do not always mean a successful programme



The evaluation plan – the basic requirements **(Article, 56 and 114, 1303/2013)**

- Within one year of programme approval;
- Evaluate each priority axis at least once during the programme period;
- x 2 for ESF / YEI (2015, 2018)
- Assess, effectiveness, efficiency and impact.
- Provide summary by 31st December 2022
- Annual review by PMC

LOTS OF FLEXIBILITY

The evaluation plan – change in focus



Implementation

Are we doing what we said we would do?

Impact

Are we making a difference?

Evaluation – a number of purposes

- Assess and improve **performance**
- Being **accountable** for public investment
- As a basis for decision making and **planning**
- Developing **knowledge** and understanding
- Building institutional **capacity**

Evaluation **Plan** – a number of purposes

- Improve quality
- Ensure timeliness
- Input into AIR and Progress reports
- Sharing Information and Learning
- Contribute to meta level evaluations
- Secure resources

Attitude and motivation is key

- Is it about learning ?
- or
- Is it about obligation ?

Common obstacles to evaluation

- Need to focus on implementation /absorption
- Programme is going well - no value in evaluation
- Do not want to expose problems - wait until things are better

Common obstacles to evaluation

- Austerity - should not “waste” money on evaluation - fund projects instead
- The programme cannot be changed - so what is the point?
- The programme is not considered to be important

Evaluation Plan - basic questions

- What to evaluate?
- How to evaluate?
- When to evaluate?
- Who to involve ?



The plan:

1. Objectives, coverage, and coordination

Which programmes are covered?

Analysis of existing information?

Where is the focus / concentration?

Links with other evaluations?

The plan: **2. Evaluation Framework**

- *Who is responsible for evaluation?*
- *The process, use of steering groups?*
- *Involvement of partners?*
- *The expertise?*
- *Training?*
- *Arrangements for dissemination and use*
- *Timetable*
- *Budget*
- *Quality*

The plan:

3. Planned evaluations

- *List and timetable for evaluations*
- *Balance between detail and flexibility*
- *For each evaluation:*

Subject;

Methods and data

Duration and date

Estimated budget

Features of a good evaluation plan....

- Flexible -responsive to difficulties and monitoring;
- Proportionate – focus on key questions;
- Independence
- Partnership
- Usefulness
- Transparency



The audience....

- Internal - to learn and improve
- External - accountable to the wider public

Steering Group

- *To oversee the evaluation plan*
- *To oversee individual evaluations*

Functions of steering group

- *Approve the TOR*
- *Monitor implementation*
- *Facilitate access to information*
- *Support the evaluators*
- *Assess quality*
- *Discuss findings*
- *Present to PMC*
- *Review implementation of recommendations*

Stakeholders

- *Which stakeholders are most affected by the evaluation and its findings/*
- *How do we involve them?*

Minimum role - *provide information, take part in surveys, discussion groups*

Substantive role - *part of steering group*

The evaluators?

- Internal evaluators? – independence?
- External evaluators?– framework contracts or single contracts
- Technical Experts or generic evaluators?

Timing

- To improve current programme
- To improve future programmes
- Need enough data for meaningful evaluation

On time is better than perfection!

Types of evaluation

- Impact
- Implementation

*Focus on what is important to your
programme*

Impact evaluations

Theory based: Why does the intervention work? How does it work? Who benefits? What conditions are necessary?

Counterfactual: Does it work? Is there a causal link?

Terms of Reference for evaluation

1. *Objectives and scope*
2. *Stakeholders and Users*
3. *Evaluation questions*
4. *Available information*
5. *Methodology*
6. *Time scales and reporting*
7. *Indicative Budget*
8. *Qualifications of team*

Evaluation questions ?????

Accountability: How successful has the programme been? Has it met its targets?

Implementation: Is the management systems working effectively?

Evaluation questions ???????

Planning: Is this the best use of public money? Could money have been spent differently?

Knowledge: What have we learnt about what works? How and why does it work?

Institutional Strengthening: How are stakeholders involved in programme management

Evaluation questions ????????

What change can be observed?

Can the change be attributed to the intervention?

Are there unintended impacts?

What mechanism delivered the impact?

Impact on different sub groups?

Short term or long terms impacts?

Managing quality

Clear and focused Terms of Reference

Be clear about data availability

Appointment of evaluator

Steering group

Inception report is key

Regular interim reports

Review final report

Example of implementation evaluation: Reducing the administrative burden

Common complaints

- Difficult hard to follow information
- Long application forms
- Long processing times for applications
- Complex rules that change mid-programme
- “Overly zealous” financial verification
- Focus on inputs not outputs
- Slow payments
- Overly detailed contracts, hard to change



Some questions?

- What are the processing times? Are targets being met?
- Are contracts kept to a minimum?
- Are simplified costs being promoted and adopted?
- Is there the necessary support in place for beneficiaries?
- Are intermediary bodies performing well?

Some techniques?

- Quantitative review of processing times
- Qualitative review of successful/ unsuccessful applicants
- Qualitative review of projects about implementation (survey / focus group)
- Quantitative assessment of absorption

Timing ?

- Commission in 2016
- Report 2016 and 2017
- Follow up in 2018 on implementation of recommendations



End



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