Fundamentals of Program Evaluation
Course 380.611

Development of Indicators and Participatory Evaluation Methods
Topics to cover

- Characteristics of a good indicator
- How to select indicators
- In class exercise on indicators
- Discussion of assignment #2
- Break
- Overview of participatory methods
- Examples of their use
What is an indicator?

- A numeric value
  - Percentage
  - Mean value
  - Ranking
  - Absolute number

- A yes/no score
  - Presence/absence
Characteristics of good indicators

- Valid, reliable
- Clear, concise wording
- Non-directional
  - Correct: # of condoms sold
  - Incorrect: increased # of condoms sold
- Timely/appropriate to program period
Development of Indicators: 4 steps (Compendium, B-462)

- State (or formulate) the objectives of the program
- Review the activities to be carried out in pursuit of the objective(s)
- Develop a conceptual framework to show how the program will work
- Select indicators that measure progress for each (or some) of the concepts
Factors that influence the selection of indicators

- Availability of data needed to measure the indicator
- Amount of time allotted for evaluation
- Financial support available for evaluation
- Donor agency requirements
Challenges of operationalizing the indicators

- Subjective aspect of measurement
  - Quality of program leadership
- Presence/absence (how much=presence?)
  - Absence of unwarranted eligibility restrictions (e.g., for teens)
- Concept clear, but yardstick is not
  - Cost of one month of contraception
Overview of participatory methods
“Radical”

■ Conventional:
  ■ Use outside experts to measure performance against preset indicators
  ■ Uses standardized procedures and tools

■ Participatory:
  ■ Uses “everyday experts”
  ■ Transfers power to beneficiaries
Areas for participation

- Defining the research question
- Defining the methods to use
- Defining the populations to study
- Conducting the research
- Processing the data
- Analyzing and interpreting the results
- Reporting the results to other stakeholders
4 underlying principles to participatory evaluation

- Participation:
  - Opens process to include those most affected

- Negotiation:
  - Required to agreement on all aspects

- Learning from the process:
  - Because basis for subsequent improvements

- Flexibility:
  - Given constantly changing environment
Who plans and manages?

- Conventional
  - Senior managers, outside experts

- Participatory
  - Local people, project staff, managers, other stakeholders
  - Often assisted by a facilitator
Role of intended beneficiaries

- Conventional
  - Provide information only

- Participatory
  - Design and adapt methodology
  - Collect and analyze data
  - Link results to action
How success is measured?

- Conventional
  - Externally defined
  - Mainly quantitative indicators

- Participatory
  - Internally defined indicators
  - Qualitative judgments
Approach

- Conventional:
  - Predetermined

- Participatory:
  - Adaptive
Tools

- Generally seek to compare the situation “before and after”

- Include:
  - Homemade questionnaires
  - Scientific measurement techniques – adapted to local situation
  - Oral histories, photos, videos, theatre
Uses of participatory evaluation

- Becoming more accountable to intended beneficiaries
  - Giving them a voice re real “impact”
- Motivates community to sustain initiative and manage conflict
- Businesses can use it to assess their ethical/environmental performance
Common errors in participatory evaluation

- Assuming all stakeholders will be interested in participating
- Imposing inappropriate indicators and methods to standardize, save time
- Being unclear: how info will be used, by whom; collecting unnecessary data
- Starting too big, too soon
How does participatory evaluation actually work???

- Two cases studies:
  - Mental health in East Baltimore
    - Presented by Amy Templeton
  - Utilization of HIV Testing and Care Services in Rural Maharashtra, India
    - Presented by Gita Sinha