

M & E v. Impact Evaluation, and Role of Qualitative Methods

TAF – CEGA Impact
Evaluation Workshop Day 2

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[Outline]

- **M & E v. Impact evaluation**
- The role of qualitative methods
- An example
- Conclusions

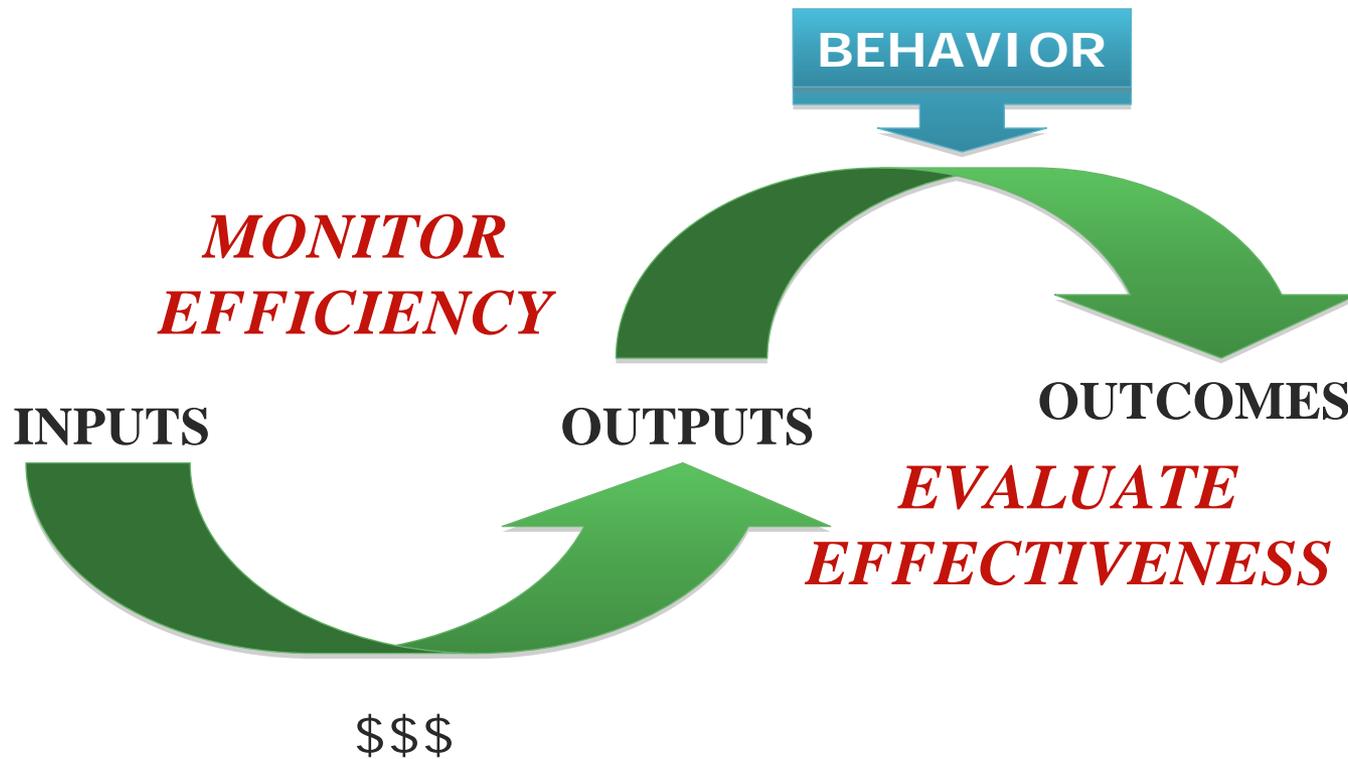
Definition: Monitoring and Evaluation

- Is the program being implemented as designed?
- Could the operations be more efficient?
- Are the benefits getting to those intended?
- Costing and accounting
- Monitoring trends in take-up and other proximate outcomes
- Are “indicators” moving in the right direction?
- No ability to infer causal effects

Definition: Impact Evaluation

- Application of the scientific method to understand and measure human behavior
- What is the effect of the intervention on the outcomes we sought to change?
 - Does the intervention have any unintended effects?
- How cost-effective is the intervention?

Monitoring v. Impact Evaluation



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Definition: Qualitative methods

- Quantitative impact evaluation often leaves us with “reduced form” results
 - Sometimes difficult to understand *what aspects* of the intervention worked and *why*
- Qualitative methods allow us to delve more deeply into select areas of impact through:
 - In-depth interviews
 - Focus groups / group discussion

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[An example]

- The intervention:
 - Increase involvement in local government for women using village-level focus group discussions
 - Eventually covering all districts of Rajasthan, India
- How would you design the roll-out?

[M & E activities]

- What are the main “process” variables, and how do we monitor them?

[M & E activities]

- What are the main “process” variables, and how do we monitor them?
 - Facilitator absenteeism
 - Frequency of meetings
 - Attendance at meetings
 - Coverage across target villages
 - Length of meetings
 - Topics of discussion

[M & E activities (continued)]

- Efficiency of program implementation:
 - Are the projected and realized costs equal?
 - Are the projected and realized coverage targets equal?
 - If not, why?
- Is the program targeting the right population?

[M & E activities (continued)]

- Are trends in outcomes moving in the “right” direction?

[M & E activities (continued)]

- Are trends in outcomes moving in the “right” direction?
 - Subjective involvement scale (“How much of a say do you believe you have in local government decisions?”)
 - Number of complaints filed
 - Interactions with elected officials
 - Voter turnout

[Impact Evaluation]

- Suppose we convinced the donor to do roll out the intervention phases, randomizing which villages get the program 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc
- What are the treatment and control groups in the first phase? In the second phase?...

[The role of qualitative methods]

- Find impacts of program, form hypotheses about the channels of impact
 - E.g. What *aspect* of focus group increased subjective involvement?
- In-depth interviews with a (smaller) random sample of women who attended focus group meetings
- Identify general trends from interview responses re: channel of impact

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[Conclusions]

- M & E, IE and qualitative methods have distinct, important roles in the roll-out of interventions
 - Monitoring/evaluation helps ensure intervention is proceeding according to design
 - IE allows for rigorous measurement of impacts
 - We use qualitative methods to *augment* our understanding of the impacts of the intervention