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Institutionalizing the Use of Impact Evaluation

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Why Evaluate?

- Improve quality of programs
  - Use evaluation to test alternatives & inform program design in real time
  - Increase program effectiveness over time & secure success

- Build government institutions for evidence-based policy-making
  - Change the way we work
  - Contingent planning
  - Find customized solutions
  - Adopt better way of taking decisions
Taking the right decisions plays a key role for development effectiveness

Rigorous testing of policy alternatives can transform the way decisions are being made

Institutional change for evidence-base policy making is a long and arduous process

- much overlooked
- requires longer-term commitment
Impact evaluation contributes if

- Policy relevant
  - address the important issues policy makers face

- Operationally driven
  - reflect the learning priorities of programs and policies

- Institutionalized
  - there is a process to produce and feed results back into the policy process
Levels at which decisions are taken

- **Programs**
  - What works best?
  - Does the program deliver results?

- **Ministries/Departments**
  - Choosing between alternative policies and programs

- **Ministry of Finance**
  - Allocating resources across agencies and programs

- **Presidency**
  - Managing constituencies
Long-term process... from programs...

- We start from programs with innovative teams
  - Developing new way of doing things
  - Demonstrating that it is possible and valuable
  - Learning how to do it well
  - Communicating on an ongoing manner
  - Improving results
...to line ministries...  

- Learning collaboratively  
- Harmonizing measurement to facilitate comparisons across programs to inform the Ministry’s decisions  
- Building the data systems to reduce the costs of iterative evaluations across several programs  
- Communicating externally
Institutionalizing reporting mechanisms
Using impact evaluation results to inform the budget process
Identifying knowledge gaps
Harmonizing measurement across programs to facilitate comparisons
Improving budget allocations
Communicating with constituencies
...to a national institutional framework for impact evaluation

- Develop capacity for impact evaluation
- Institute yearly cycle of evaluation
- Evaluate programs
- Improve programs
- Report results
- Request budget

National impact evaluation council

- Establish common metric and evaluation guidelines
- Collect and catalogue evaluation results
- Analyze results and improvements
- Prepare matrix of results across government programs

Agencies & programs

Planning & Finance

- Feed matrix of results into budget process and MTEF
- Consider trade-offs
- Improve budget allocations to meet national objectives
- Identify knowledge gaps
Every program has its specific objectives against which a program is evaluated.

To evaluate a program against a national framework of analysis, need a vector of indicators.

Agree on common national indicators against which individual programs can be benchmarked.

Evaluate specific programs against own objectives and relevant common indicators.
Getting a good start: ingredients

- Capacity development
  - Empower teams
- Technical quality & external validation
  - Maintain reputation
- Participation
  - Relevance
- Multiple products and ongoing communication
  - Management support and sustainability
- Reward systems for learning & change
  - Work for success
Capacity to run an iterative learning process integrated with our program

1. Be informed users of evaluation
2. Set policy learning agendas
3. Incorporate evaluation guidance into program design
4. Test policy & implementation alternatives
5. Measure results rigorously

Start over
You are doing it

It is the teams that design & implement programs that need to acquire the skills

Appreciation of senior management must be secured
A few big decisions are taken during design but many more decisions are taken during roll out & implementation.
School based prevention

- Information
  - Incentives to 15-18 yr olds to stay negative
  - NGO delivered student training
  - Teacher HIV training
  - Monetary
  - Scholarship
  - Rapid results approach (100 days)
  - All year round meetings and activities

- Peer student groups

- Abstinence and condoms
  - Same cohort sex
  - Training only
  - Training plus instructional material
  - Fixed
  - Increasing with age
  - Girls only
  - All students
  - Students only
  - Students and teachers
  - Students only
  - Students and teachers

- Scholarship
  - Girls only
  - All students

- Rapid results approach (100 days)
  - Students only
  - Students and teachers

- All year round meetings and activities
  - Students only
  - Students and teachers
How to select between plausible alternatives?

- Scientifically test critical nodes of the decisions tree over time
- Start with what you need to know most
- Move along the decision tree as more results comes in and options are sorted out
- Cannot learn everything at once
- Select carefully what you want to test by involving all relevant partners
Walking along the decision tree

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Fear of failure?

- When we compare and adopt better alternatives, we cannot fail, we can only get closer to success
- Reward systems need to recognize trial and error as part of the learning process
  - Managerial incentives a good place to start
Keep it useful and cost effective: get a whole sequence of products

Baseline and targeting analyses to inform intervention design

Feedback into quality of administrative data systems

Doing impact evaluation is not a one off but a series of exercises to inform the decision process

Testing operational alternatives against short term outcomes (take-up rates and adoption) and improve programs

Testing programs against higher level outcomes (welfare, health status or income) and chose better programs
Make sure your constituencies are with you: participation and communication

- Keep key actors involved in the doing through active participation in the evaluation
- Submit early drafts—not final designs—to internal discussion and validation
- Get management buy-in
- Let other partners know what you are doing
- Communicate results as they come out and decisions as they are taken internally and externally
Thank you