



Implementation
Science Program

Program evaluation

History, overview and why it matters for your program

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Objectives

After this lecture, you should be able to...

- Define program evaluation.
- Describe why and how program evaluation emerged.
- Differentiate and explain common concepts and terms used in program evaluation.
- Gain an appreciation for why evaluation matters for programs and is worth doing!

First, defining Program Evaluation

- Evaluation is the systematic collection of information about a program in order to enable stakeholders:
 - to better understand the program,
 - to improve program effectiveness, and/or
 - to make decisions about future programming.
- “Evaluation is the *systematic assessment* of the *operation* and/or *outcomes* of a program or policy, compared to a set of *explicit* or *implicit standards*, as a means of contributing to the *improvement* of the program or policy.” --Carol Weiss

Why evaluate?

- Ensure program effectiveness and appropriateness
- Demonstrate accountability
- Contribute to public health knowledge base
- Improve program operations and service delivery

All of the reasons reflect different perspectives...

	Accountability Perspective	Knowledge Perspective	Developmental Perspective
Purpose	Measure results Assess efficiency	Generate new insights and methods	Build capacity, strengthen institutions
Typical Uses	Policy, government, public use	Contribution to research base, education	Institutional use, public and policy use
Role of the evaluator	Distant/objective	Distant or close, depending on design	Close, evaluator as “critical friend”
Objectivity	High	High	Uncertain

History of (Modern) Evaluation



- Began in education and health
- Some done in the 30s and 40s, but it really took off in the 50s.
- \$23 billion in 1950; \$428 billion in 1979.
- War on Poverty (1964)

American Evaluation Association: Guiding Principles for Evaluators

- A. **Systematic Inquiry**: Evaluators conduct systematic, data-based inquiries about whatever is being evaluated.
- B. **Competence**: Evaluators provide competent performance to stakeholders.
- C. **Integrity**: Evaluators ensure the honesty and integrity of the entire evaluation process.
- D. **Respect for People**: Evaluators respect the security, dignity and self-worth of the respondents, program participants, clients, and other stakeholders with whom they interact.
- E. **Common Good and Equity**: Evaluators strive to contribute to the common good and advancement of an equitable and just society.

Planning and evaluation go hand in hand:

Program planners typically describe goals, objectives and activities...different types of evaluation can assess whether the program as achieved each:

Program planners
typically define:

Evaluation can be
conducted at each level:

Goals



Impact

Objectives



Outcome

Activities



Process



The Ryan White Program

- RWP provides care for the most vulnerable people living with HIV.
- Serves more than half a million people annually
- First authorized in 1990, the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program is currently funded at \$2.4 billion (2020)
- Payer of “last resort”
- [The AIDS Education and Training Centers Program](#) supports a network of 11 regional centers and several National centers that conduct targeted, multidisciplinary education and training programs for health care providers treating people living with HIV/AIDS.

AETC Goals, Objectives, Outcomes

- Goal: To improve delivery of high quality, state of the art care and treatment to people living with HIV seen in publicly funded settings.
- Objectives (examples):
 - To deliver HIV-specific didactic trainings to 1,000 trainers over FY19-20
 - To deliver high quality capacity building assistance (CBA) to clinics aiming to improve their capacity to see and treat HIV patients.
- Activities
 - Identify trainers, train trainers, register participants, design curricula
 - Identify clinics, conduct needs assessments, design tailored CBA plan

AETC Goals, Objectives, Outcomes

- Goal: To improve delivery of care to people living with HIV seen at

Impact Indicator: Percent of patients whose HIV viral load becomes undetectable

- Objectives (examples):

- To deliver HIV-specific didactic training
- To delivery high quality care aiming to improve their care

Outcome Indicators:

- Percent of providers trained who score 90% or more on tests and say they will be able to apply what they learned.
- Percent of clinics receiving CBA in accord with their CBA plan.

- Activities

- Identify trainers, train trainers
- Identify clinics, conduct needs

Process/Implementation Indicators:

- Number of trainers trained, number trainings delivered.
- Number of clinics identified, number of CBA plans completed, number and type of CBA activities conducted.

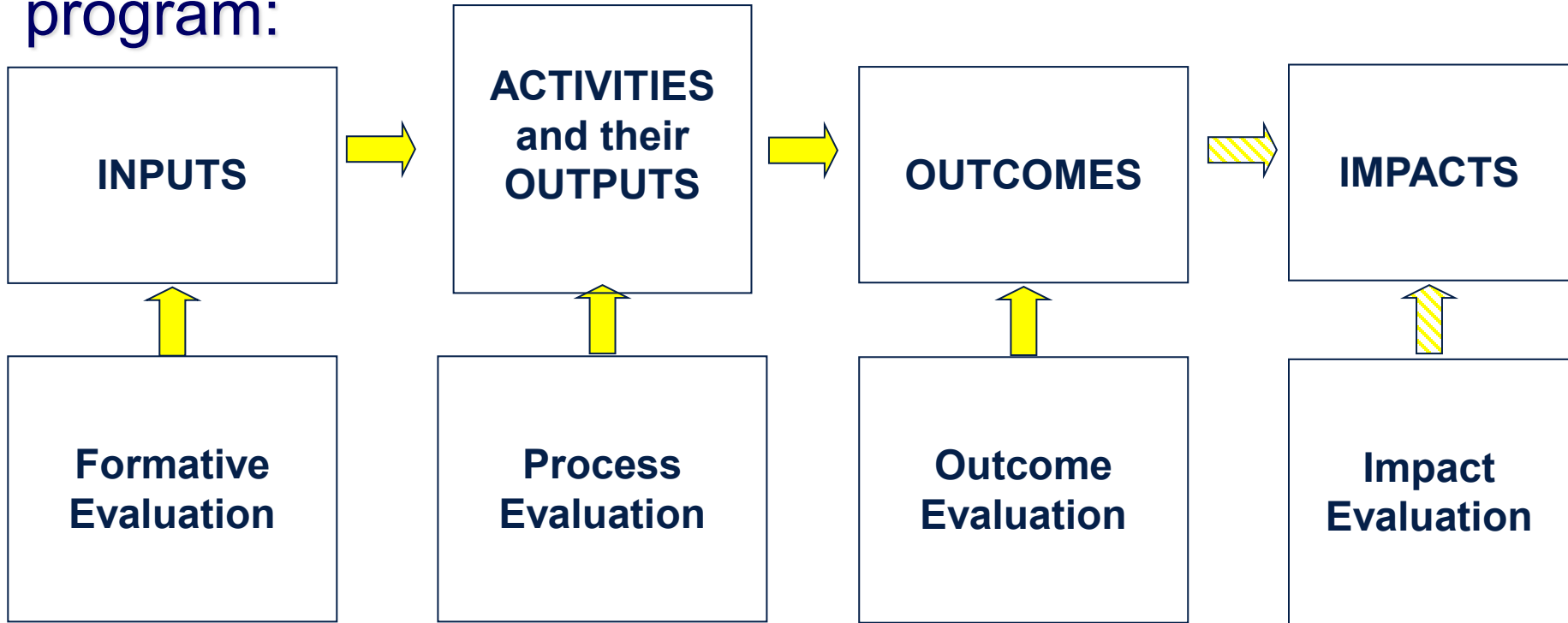
In summary

- Program evaluation is critical for understanding how and how well a program or strategy works, and an evaluator's perspective is important to this process.
- Evaluation emerged to support accountability and is now an important part of most social programming efforts.
- Evaluation should be considered alongside program planning.
- Evaluation requires specific skills (research in the “real world”) and evaluation as a profession is a viable and valuable choice.

Types of Program Evaluation

- There are 4 general types or components to comprehensive program evaluation:
 - Formative evaluation
 - Process/implementation evaluation
 - Outcome/effectiveness evaluation
 - Impact evaluation

Each type of evaluation corresponds to a stage of the program:



Formative Evaluation

- Before it is fully implemented, it ensures that a program or activity is:
 - Feasible,
 - Appropriate, and
 - Acceptable
- Thus, it is usually conducted when a *new* program or activity is being developed or when an existing one is being adapted or modified.
- Often concerned with the *inputs* of a program.

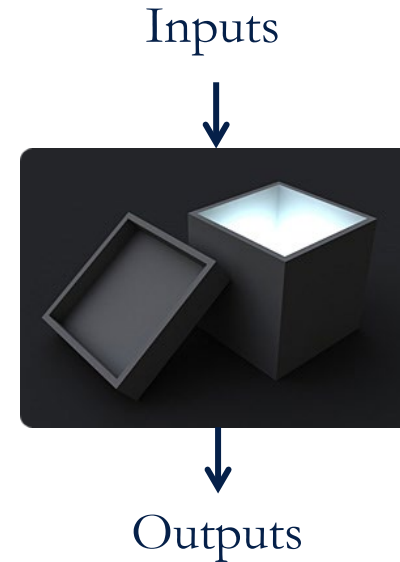
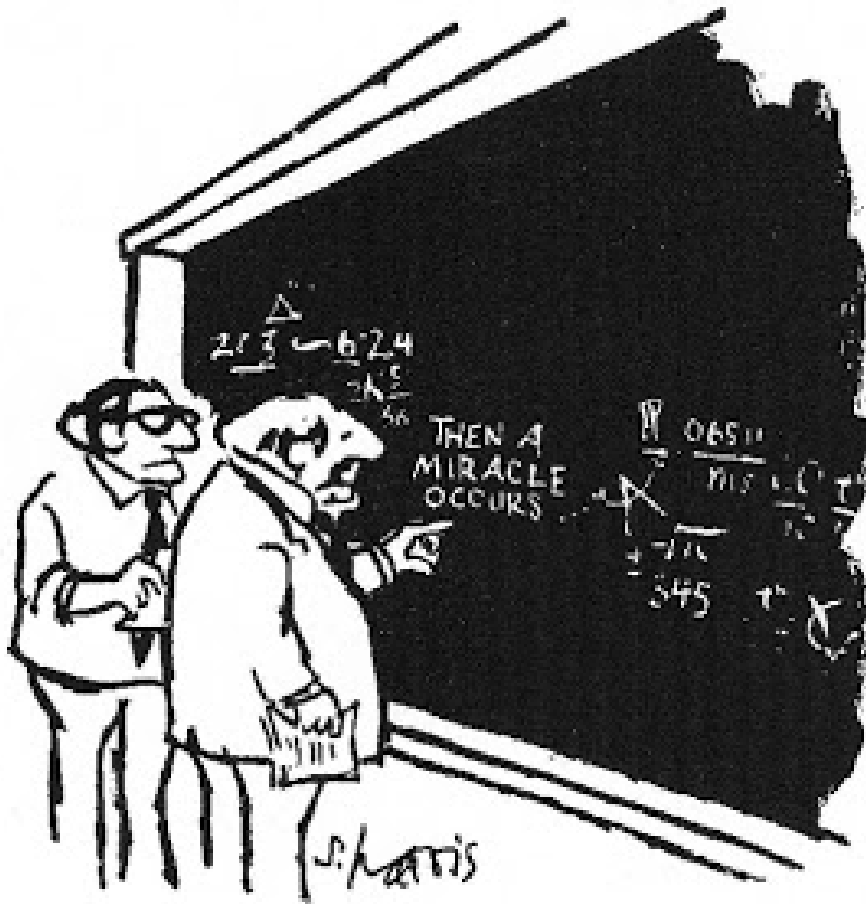
When, what and why formative evaluation?

- What is it good for?
 - Diagnostic of program elements and match to target population.
 - Also diagnostic of the extent to which an evaluation is possible.
 - Allows for modifications before full implementation.
 - Helps maximize the likelihood that the program will succeed.

Process Evaluation/Program Monitoring

- Determines whether program activities have been implemented as intended and results in the outputs you expect.
- Should be conducted throughout the life of the program.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of a program associated with:
 - Design: Was the outcome due to the intervention design?
 - Implementation: Was the outcome because the intervention was or was not implemented as intended?

Process evaluation is critical for avoiding and unpacking “the Black Box of Evaluation”



"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."

Process Evaluation Questions:

- Key questions in process evaluation:
 - Who is served?
 - What activities or services are provided?
 - When did the program activities take place?
 - Where did the activities take place?
 - What are the barriers/facilitators to implementation?

Process Evaluation/Program Monitoring

- What it's good for:
 - Demonstrates extent of implementation relative to design.
 - Demonstrates accessibility and acceptability to target population.
 - Diagnostic at early going.
 - Program monitoring.

Outcome Evaluation

- Examines effectiveness, goal attainment and unintended outcomes.
- In simple terms, “*what is different as a result of your efforts?*”
- Gauges the extent to which a program produces the improvements it intends.



Outcome Evaluation Questions

- Was the desired change(s) attained?
- To what degree did the desired change(s) occur?
- What aspects of implementation were associated with the outcome?

Outcome Evaluation

- What it is good for?
 - Demonstrates the extent to which a program is having an effect on the target population's behaviors
 - Tells whether the program is effective in meeting its objectives.

Impact Evaluation

- Assesses program effectiveness in achieving its ultimate goals or purpose.
- Usually requires time to pass before it can be measured.
- Is often costly and difficult.



Impact Evaluation

- What it is good for:
 - Demonstrates the degree to which the program meets its ultimate goal.
 - Provides evidence for use in policy and funding decisions.

How to choose?

- Planning a good evaluation requires understanding when and why each type of evaluation is useful.
- Once the purpose of the evaluation is clear, there are a variety of evaluation designs that can be selected to match the program activity being measured.
- The program stage and scope will determine the level of effort and the methods used.

In summary

- The four main types of evaluation correspond to different components of a program
 - Formative evaluation: in planning or changing
 - Process: for assessing implementation
 - Outcome: for determining if objectives were met
 - Impact: for determining if the overall goal of the program was met
- Remember that *process evaluation* is important and should go hand in hand with *outcome evaluation*.

What can program evaluation do for you?

- It can prove your work and the resources it requires are worth while.
- It can help you understand what internal processes need to change.
- It can help you think about course corrections/strategic planning.