

SUMMER SCHOOL ON MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

June 2010

The Summer School is part of the **University of Bologna International Summer School Programme**. It is organized and managed by the **Centre for International Development** in cooperation with the **University of Bologna Faculty of Political Sciences, the Department of Economics and the Department of Political Science**. This year, the School will be co-organized by the **Center for International Development at the Rockefeller College for Public Affairs and Policy, University at Albany of the State University of New York**.

The course is usually a 6-day intensive course delivered in English, open to applicants of any country and background, and gives 4 credits (graded by the European Credit Transfer System). **The enrollment fee is 1,500 Euro**. A scholarship fund will be made available by the Fondazione della Cassa di Risparmio di Bologna, a local Bank Foundation, for applicants from developing countries only.

The course will take place in Bologna, Italy, Monday through Saturday **7 - 12 June 2010**.

Concept

Planning, monitoring and evaluation in development programs requires a focus on national development priorities. The definition and measurement of intended results should respect the principle of national ownership and should strengthen both institutional and human capacities for managing development initiatives. The Course aims to strengthen results-based approaches by improving the quality of planning, monitoring and evaluation at all stages of policy making and implementation. The Course covers the following areas:

- an overview of policy processes with particular reference to public policy;
- an overview of the design and implementation of national Poverty Reduction Strategies and their links to global public policies;
- the conceptual foundations of planning with specific reference to the preparation of results frameworks that guide monitoring and evaluation;
- the integrated nature of planning, monitoring and evaluation, and the critical role they play in managing for development results;
- an overview of policy evaluation, including key elements of evaluation design and implementation, including practical steps in managing the evaluation process;
- how to plan for monitoring and evaluation before implementing a policy;
- an overview of monitoring system components, including data requirements, data analysis and interpretation, reporting and use of findings and the maintenance of feedback loops for program improvements;
- specific issues related to monitoring and evaluating Poverty Reduction Strategies; and
- an overview of participatory M&E techniques and approaches with special emphasis on Outcome Mapping.

The Course presents practical steps and examples in applying monitoring and evaluation to strengthen management for development results. Participants will leave with practical step-by-step guidance on how to prepare and carry out benchmarking, monitor outcomes and use information on program and project results to improve performance. Policy makers, program managers, ministerial strategy departments, and staff and consultants responsible for M&E will find this course useful. It presents analytical tools solidly grounded in economic theory applied to the practical questions of monitoring and evaluating policy programs in developing countries.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM AND CALENDAR

The Course is developed around the following topics/themes. It begins with an overview of the **policy process** and the models and the issues arising in design and implementation. It frames the policy process using actual cases of **Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS)** in developing countries. The design and implementation of PRS provide classic examples of how, in planning, monitoring and evaluation we confront the core issues of how policy making effectiveness is influenced by donor development strategies and reporting requirements. The course will then move on the **tools**, beginning with **monitoring**, moving to assessing and managing performance and the use of the tools for **evaluating policy outcomes** in different contexts. M&E and performance management will be explored through the examination of actual examples from PRS in developing countries. Accountability, transparency, commitment and trustworthiness will be also addressed. The course will then address M&E needs and practices, review some of the emerging tools and approaches with a particular focus on **outcome mapping** as method for managing the complexity inherent in policy processes.

Day	Topic	Instructor
Day 1	The policy process.	
Mon AM	A. Models of the process and their development implications. B. Elements of policy designs produced by these processes. C. Dealing with implementation issues in linear models. D. Dealing with implementation issues in political models.	Bob Nakamura
Mon PM	E. Generic implementation problems and solutions. F. A distribution of <i>possible implementation</i> outcomes.	Bob Nakamura
Day 2	Policy M&E and Poverty Reduction Strategies	
Tue AM	A. The PRSP as a policy process B. Lessons learnt in governance C. Process deficits or political constraints? Policy discrepancies in implementing anti-poverty programs	Pier Giorgio Ardeni
Tue PM	D. Data, indicators and tools for monitoring and evaluating PRSPs E. Problems in M&E of PRSPs	Pier Giorgio Ardeni
Day 3	Basic Principles of Program and Policy Monitoring	
Wed AM	A. The basics of policy monitoring and templates for data collection	Mark Schacter
Wed PM	B. Adapting key concepts and tools to development programs and PRS C. Differences between policy monitoring and policy evaluation	Mark Schacter
Day 4	Evaluating Outcomes and Understanding Accountability	
Thu AM	A. The basics of policy evaluation and impact evaluation D. Adapting key concepts and tools to development programs and PRS	Mark Schacter
Thu PM	E. Performance assessment and management, transparency and accountability issues. Making policy making/politicians trustworthy. Political legitimacy and policymaking	Mark Schacter
Day 5	Outcome Mapping and M&E	
Fri AM A.	Needs and practices in current M&E	Terry Smutylo
B.	Theory and practice of outcome mapping	
Fri PM	C. Applying OM in your current work – A participatory session	Terry Smutylo
Day 6	Outcome Mapping and M&E (continued)	
Sat. AM	C. Applying OM in your current work – A participatory session (continued)	Terry Smutylo
Sat. PM	D: Assessing OM in light of existing needs and practices	Terry Smutylo

SUMMER SCHOOL ON MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES PROGRAM TOPICS

1. THE POLICY PROCESS

A. MODELS OF POLICY MAKING

The purpose of this section is to provide the conceptual tools to help practitioners make sense out of the often chaotic representations of the policy making process confronting them.

The policy process is commonly understood as involving a series of activities: making decisions about what is to be done, implementing those decisions, and assessing the results. Conceptions of the processes involved, however, differ according to the academic and bureaucratic perspectives of analysts and actors: political scientists, sociologists and anthropologists emphasize how actor concerns about power and values drive the process; economists focus on solving societal problems produced by market and government failures; international donors and governments look to the process as an opportunity to produce stakeholder agreement on means and ends, thereby promoting ownership and increasing chances for better outcomes.

Our examination of the policymaking process will be informed by both academic and practical work and will emphasize the following themes:

- a. The tension between linear or rational models of the policy process used to organize decision making and explain the process to outsiders, and the demands of the political contexts in which decisions are actually made. While the former is centered on the dispassionate analysis of costs and benefits the latter is focused on politics of who gets what.
- b. The features of alternative policy tools/instruments that get incorporated into policies: their assumptions, rationales, implementation requirements and characteristic problems and advantages.
- c. The dichotomy between the demands of the policy making and implementation processes.
- d. The different meanings of "ownership" and the processes for promoting them.

B. FROM POLICY MAKING TO IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES

Ideally, a development policy should energize the nation's political ecology during implementation by the creating the conditions for new and more productive partnerships between existing participants through the commitment of new resources and specification of new relationships. Getting as close as possible to that state is the goal of effective implementation.

Policy implementation is the point of the process where decisions are to be translated into actions to produce the intended results. It is often the most problematic stage of the policy process because of tensions between the requirements of policy design and implementation, and the inherent difficulties arising out of the complexities of joint action. Problems are further exacerbated in development due to high expectations arising out of the need to sell policies to domestic and international publics, limited information about the circumstances under which policies must do their work, reliance on uncertain and unproven technologies for achieving results, and dependence for implementation on an assemblage of ill-equipped intermediaries often with scant histories of cooperation.

While the policy formulation process is often explained in linear and rational terms, what it produces is more often a combination of those concerns (primarily efficiency and effectiveness) with instruments chosen for political reasons (concerns about equity, intensity, the impact of decisions on the distribution of power).

This section will describe the generic problems of implementing policies shaped by participants with multiple and conflicting goals, requiring implementers to assemble and run complex machines

comprised of people and organizations with their own goals and interests, and get them to co-produce results to a specified level.

We will then examine some tools for avoiding generic pitfalls including:

- a. Results focused approaches to policy design like “backward mapping” intended to anticipate implementation problems.
- b. Management tools and process evaluations intended to keep implementers focused on the desired results.
- c. Management of expectations arising out of different criteria used in program assessments (organizational capacity, degree of fidelity to policy, etc.) and evaluations (input concerns focused on probity, input to output concerns about efficiency, output to outcome concerns about effectiveness, outcome to impact concerns about adequacy).
- d. The role of “fixers” or the “new public managers” in overcoming problems by using specific tactics to break logjams and to motivate participants, and by redesigning the policies during implementation so that what emerges is better informed by experience.
- e. Recognizing and avoiding the detrimental effects on fragile, existing organizational capacity through overload, re-tasking from areas of established competencies to new and unfamiliar functions, the imposition of unsupportable or inappropriate overhead requirements.

2. POLICY MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGIES

A. M&E AND PRS

After several years now, do we have a better understanding of what works and what doesn't in designing PRS (Poverty Reduction Strategy) monitoring systems? Lesson learned should address three key aspects of the poverty reduction strategy process (PRSP):

A) improving country ownership

- monitoring arrangements can serve best to promote poverty-reduction policies where they are closely related to a politically supported and maturing budget process
- the role of poverty monitoring arrangements will be affected by policy-making and public-expenditure management institutions, in turn, these may change due to influencing political factors. It would follow there is a need for sound tactics, political sensitivity and strategic vision.

B) increasing results orientation

- the stronger coordination effort been introduced through the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (NIMES), would need to take into account existing monitoring activities in order to avoid duplication and over-load
- gearing poverty monitoring to promote results-oriented policy, could be addressed by the quality of the incentives generated in the wider system
- in order to be relevant, PRS monitoring systems have got to get better at addressing what policy makers need to know
- it is difficult to monitor plans which do not say how the specified outcomes are going to be achieved with the specified inputs, and how obvious obstacles would be overcome.

C) promoting partnership

- currently, the international climate is increasingly conducive to aligning development assistance around country efforts. An important challenge would be closing the gap that exists between the outputs from country PRS monitoring arrangements and what donors believe they have to monitor. The Performance Assessment Frameworks or PRSC matrices serve as a good illustration of mechanisms being used to track policy actions for better results.

B. MONITORING PRS IN AFRICA: LESSONS IN GOVERNANCE

Review of experience of projects aimed at developing governance and policy design and implementation capacity in Africa.

Governance failures in SSA are often attributable in whole or in part to:

- governments' unwillingness to make themselves accountable to the citizens they are supposed to serve
- the inability of citizens and of the organizations and institutions that are assumed to represent their interests (e.g. legislatures, the judiciary, the news media, NGOs) to impose accountability on governments.

Suggestions for improvement:

- Financial and technical resources are usually not the binding constraint to solving either governance or M&E problems.
- Local leadership matters.
- Need to work with actors outside the public administration to achieve changes within it
- Allow for interventions to be designed and implemented in a way that promotes local capacity development
- Exploit opportunities for coordination between various types of governance capacity-building interventions
- Tailor the intervention to the real nature of the problem "on the ground"
- Attend to the capacity-building requirements of decentralization

C. GOOD PRACTICES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRSP INDICATORS AND MONITORING SYSTEMS

Integrating PRSP indicators into policy formation processes

Reviews of Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) indicators and monitoring systems argue that monitoring mechanisms need to be founded on a realistic consideration of the relevant policy processes and the possible uses of information required to enforce new kinds of accountability and learning about poverty reduction. The results-orientation of the PRSP approach ought to consider final poverty outcomes/ impacts, intermediate outputs/ implementation processes and the delivery of the key inputs of poverty reduction strategies.

- Roles of monitoring and information in a PRSP context and reviews how to use indicators based on clear realistic intended outcomes.
- What to monitor and why, how to monitor in a way that provides a supply of valid and reliable information, and examines the question of monitoring for whom and for what.

Evidence of PRSP practices in Sub Saharan Africa shows that:

- PRSPs are leading to a major upsurge in final poverty-outcome measurement.
- There is much less evidence of renewed interest in measuring the intermediate processes and achievements necessary to produce the desired final outcomes.
- Little attention has been given to the poor quality of the administrative reporting systems on which much of the relevant data depend.
- Input monitoring is being relatively neglected as a component of PRSP monitoring.
- Little is being said about how stakeholders will be incorporated into PRSP monitoring arrangements.
- The approach to selection of indicators is at present not very purposeful.

Address the identified gaps and weaknesses, which covered what to monitor and why, how to monitor; and monitoring for whom and for what:

- A multidimensional approach to final poverty outcomes is increasingly accepted.
- The selection of intermediate variables to monitor needs to involve strategic thinking, as opposed to minor additions to existing poverty-monitoring systems.
- Tracking financial and non-financial inputs can lead to policy improvements that are critical for poverty reduction.
- For poverty targeting purposes, survey data needs to be combined with census and/ or PPA results. Improvements in routine information systems call for realism and a very imaginative approach.
- Service delivery surveys, problem-oriented commissioned studies and participatory impact monitoring (PIM) have proven to be useful complements to administrative data.
- Financial tracking surveys could be usefully combined with participatory approaches to public expenditure management.

D. TOOLS AND DATA FOR PRS MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Administrative data on poverty and living conditions and other social policy indicators
 - Ad hoc surveys: the Living Standard Measurement Survey (LSMS); the Household Budget Survey (HBS); other surveys
 - What data we need to monitor and evaluate PRS and the role of statistical data collection
 - The role of National Statistical Offices in the policy process
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3. METHODS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

This two-day part provides the standard basics of monitoring, evaluation, governance and accountability tools and methods. The first 1-1/2 days are devoted to Monitoring and Evaluation, while the last 1/2 day introduces the relationship between these topics and the larger concepts of governance and accountability

A. PROGRAM MONITORING: BASIC CONCEPTS, CHALLENGES AND TERMINOLOGY

- Understanding goals, benchmarks and indicators
- understanding the concept of an “outcome” vs. and “output”
- logical framework analysis (LFA)
- deriving performance measures and risk analysis from the LFA
- identifying key monitoring challenges, such as attribution, corrupting influence of performance measures, time lag
- key features of good monitoring indicators

B. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN POLICY MONITORING AND POLICY EVALUATION

Monitoring is the systematic, regular collection and occasional analysis of information to identify and possibly measure changes over a period of time. Evaluation is the analysis of the effectiveness and direction of an activity or research project and involves making a judgment about progress and impact. The main differences between monitoring and evaluation are the timing and frequency of observations and the types of questions asked. Monitoring is very useful in tracking the progress of policy implementation.

Distinction between performance monitoring and performance evaluation and the relationship between them:

- relative strengths and weaknesses of each
- different purposes and expectations related to each
- how they can complement and strengthen each other

C. POLICY EVALUATION: KEY CONCEPTS, CHALLENGES, TERMINOLOGY

- designing an evaluation
- core evaluation questions (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency)
- data gathering techniques (document review, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys, etc.)
- special challenges related to evaluating development programs
- Evaluating the impact of a specific program/project
 1. What do we want to measure?
 2. Why is that difficult?
 3. So what can we do?
 4. How do we get the necessary data?
 5. Who could do an evaluation?
 6. What results will we get from an evaluation?
 7. How can we assess the quality of the results? a) “Goodness of Fit”; b) Are the assumptions valid?

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D. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ISSUES

- Making policy making/politicians trustworthy. Political legitimacy and policymaking.
 - link between monitoring/evaluation and governance/accountability
 - link between governance/accountability and poverty reduction
 - understanding the concepts of “governance” and “accountability”
 - special issues/challenges in governance and accountability that are found in developing countries, especially ones that are most heavily dependent on donor support
 - how information and analysis produced by monitoring/evaluation can (if circumstances are right) contribute to strengthening governance/accountability
 - Policy impact, attribution of competencies and responsibilities and how to formulate realistic intended outcomes which speak directly to the focus and limits of the specific initiative.
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4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND OUTCOME MAPPING

Outcome mapping (OM) is a methodology for planning and assessing development initiatives aimed bringing about sustainable changes in human and/or ecological well-being. Such change usually involves aspects of policy-making, service delivery, inter-departmental collaboration, citizen participation, and other forms of social behavior. Taking this complexity as given, OM is designed to help programs and projects: clarify their intentions; think strategically about what actions to take; identify and involve relevant stakeholders; and obtain feedback on results for reporting on and improving performance. OM provides a set of tools that can be used to formulate realistic expected outcomes, think strategically about acting to bring about change, influence the contributions of partners and other actors, and gather and use information on outcomes and change processes.

The following four sessions will progress over two full days, to complement and build on course discussions on planning, monitoring and evaluating poverty reduction policies by providing tools and concepts that can be applied to all stages of the policy process. These sessions combine both theoretical discussion and hands-on individual and group work and will end with an exploration of ways in which Outcome Mapping can be transposed, adapted and combined with other methods to meet needs and challenges within participants' ongoing projects and programs.

A. INTRODUCTION AND THE CHALLENGES WE FACE IN M&E

There are two parts to this session. In part one, participants identify the characteristics they consider essential for monitoring and evaluation to be practical and useful in relation to Poverty Reduction Strategies. In the second part we present what policy researchers have learned about implementing and adjusting M&E practices in community, national and international development organizations. Topics may include:

- Taking ‘impact’ from myth to reality;
- Fostering ‘evaluative thinking’ in an organization;
- Being realistic about outcomes in complex contexts;
- Emerging trends in complexity-oriented monitoring and evaluation;
- M&E tools that can add value to your current work;
- Differentiating between accountability and learning
- Impact, attribution of competencies and responsibilities and how to formulate realistic intended outcomes which speak directly to the focus and limits of the specific initiative.

B. THE THEORY AND CONCEPTS OF OUTCOME MAPPING

This session starts with a presentation and discussion of the theory underlying Outcome Mapping and its application, followed by an overview of the key concepts and their application for clarifying an initiative’s intentions so that the results can be improved, measured and reported.

OM helps a project or program learn about its influence on the progression of change in their direct partners, and therefore helps those in the assessment process think more systematically and pragmatically about what they are doing and to adaptively manage variations in strategies to bring about desired outcomes. OM puts people and learning at the center of development and accepts unanticipated changes as potential for innovation. As development is essentially about people relating to each other and their environment, the focus of Outcome Mapping is on people and organizations. The originality of the methodology is its shift away from assessing the products of a program (e.g., policy relevance, poverty alleviation, reduced conflict) to focus on changes in behaviors, relationships, actions, and/or activities of the people and organizations with whom a development program works directly. This session closes with participants selecting their own projects or case studies to work on in break-out groups.

C. APPLYING *OUTCOME MAPPING* IN YOUR CURRENT POLICY OR M&E WORK

In this session, participants focus on steps 1 to 6 of OM's 'intentional design' stage. They work in small groups using material from their current work or from a case study. This work is facilitated: first, by presenting & discussing each concept: and then, during and after break-out periods, through 'teaching moments', peer assists and plenary discussion. This session lasts a full day (afternoon of day 1 & morning of day 2).

D. ASSESSING OM IN LIGHT OF EXISTING M&E NEEDS AND PRACTICES

First, in this session, we review and clarify use-oriented M&E concepts and processes. We take a critical look at OM, its strengths & weaknesses in relation to other tools and established frameworks, and when it could or should not be used. Topics may include:

- Linking M&E to program management cycles and events
- Using OM tools in combination with other tools, methods & frameworks;
- Identifying when and when not to use OM;
- Identifying next steps for testing the usefulness of OM.

Evaluations will be conducted at the end of each day: on day 1 to give formative feedback for improving day 2; and on day 2 to provide summative feedback for future courses of this kind.