Impact Evaluation
Objectives and Design

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Outline

- Monitoring vs. Evaluation
- Impact evaluations
- Qualitative evaluations
- Planning an evaluation – some tips
- Evaluations of Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programs
- Conclusions
Definitions

Monitoring
- Measuring what happens
- A fiduciary responsibility
- Comprehensive

Evaluation
- Inferring why it has happened
- An investment in increased knowledge
- Selective
Monitoring vs. Evaluation

**EVALUATION**
- Impact
- Outcomes

**MONITORING**
- Outputs
- Inputs

Program effects on well-being
Access to, use of, and satisfaction with services
Goods and services generated
Financial and physical Indicators

Impact: Program effects on well-being
Outcomes: Access to, use of, and satisfaction with services
Outputs: Goods and services generated
Inputs: Financial and physical Indicators
Impact Evaluations

- Assess changes in well-being attributable to a particular intervention (e.g., a particular program).
  * Did indicators change?
  * How much did they change?
  * Are the changes because of the program?

- Can also address
  * Did impacts vary across different groups, regions or over time?
  * How could program design be modified to increase impact?
  * How effective is the program compared to alternative interventions?
Impact Evaluations

Features

* Key component of comprehensive M & E plan
* Distinct from but complementary to monitoring and other types of evaluation
* Quantitative focus based on the analysis of survey data (especially household surveys) applied to both treatment and comparison/control groups
* Focus on results generalizable to the population of interest, based on representative samples
Understanding Impact Evaluation

- What would beneficiaries' lives have been like if the program had not existed?

- Cannot observe the **counterfactual**, but can approximate it by constructing an appropriate control or comparison group.

- To model counterfactual, establish control/comparison group (those who do not participate) and compare with treatment group (those who participate). If methodology is sound, differences can be attributed to the project.

- Key issue is how to select or identify nonparticipants. Choice of method determines evaluation design.
Impact Evaluation Designs

- Experimental/randomized design
  - Randomly assigns communities into treatment and control groups. Most rigorous. Requires planning during project design.

- Quasi-experimental designs
  - Reflexive Comparison – compares same group before and after. But participants’ situations change for many reasons, so hard to address causality
  - Matched comparison – statistical methods for constructing a comparison group. Methodologies can be complex.
Qualitative Evaluations

- Focus on social analysis and the understanding of processes, behaviors and conditions as perceived by those studied
- Yield critical insights into beneficiaries’ perspectives, processes and context
- Provide more in-depth and nuanced interpretation of findings
Qualitative Techniques

- *Key informant interviews* with key stakeholders
- *Focus group discussions* with beneficiaries
- *Participant observation*
- *Case studies*

Often complemented by Participatory Rural Appraisal techniques such as *mapping, ranking and trend analysis.*

Use triangulation - compare data sources, collection methods, investigators and theories to determine degree of bias and reliability of information. Focus on validity of information
Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

- Combinations or ‘mixed method’ approaches are recommended for a comprehensive evaluation.
- Quantitative and qualitative approaches can be sequenced:
  * Qualitative can inform impact evaluation design/content of surveys
  * Qualitative can shed light on results of impact evaluations → helps answer why, explore context, develop paradigms
  * Can focus qualitative work on ‘outliers’ or extreme cases
Planning an Evaluation

To determine scale and complexity of evaluation design, address the following **as early as possible**:

- **Objectives** - What are the key questions that need to be answered?
- **Methodology** - What type(s) of evaluation is(are) needed? Is an impact evaluation needed?
- **Timeframe** - Depends largely on depth and breadth of evaluation, design and availability of existing data. Sufficient time must have elapsed for results to be produced for an impact evaluation.
Cost - vary widely: average between 0.25% and 2.0% of project costs. Data collection often highest expense.

Financing – often under financed; can be financed by project, other government resources, grants or combinations. Explore donor resources given public good value of results.

Capacity - coordination and execution is challenging. Balance between using international technical assistance and local capacity.
Planning an Impact Evaluation

Evaluate impact when project is:
- Innovative
- Replicable
- Strategically relevant for reducing poverty
- Evaluation will fill knowledge gap
- Substantial policy impact

Ingredients for success:
- Political and financial support
- Advance planning
- Understanding context
- Stakeholder involvement
Why Evaluate the Impact of CCT’s?

- **Innovative** focus in development
  - Combines focus on short-term and long-term poverty alleviation
  - Demand-side incentives vs. traditional supply side subsidies
  - Multi-sectoral focus: education, health, nutrition
  - Gender dimensions
- **Replicable** – the model has been expanded nationally and replicated internationally
- **Strategically relevant for reducing poverty** – key elements of many social protection systems
- **Knowledge gap** - Little was known about effectiveness
- **Policy impact** – policymakers keenly interested in the results
What Have CCT Evaluations Addressed?

- Adequacy of program administration
- Targeting to poor areas and households
- Existence and size of welfare impacts on human capital accumulation
  - Education: enrollment, attendance, promotion, repetition, achievement
  - Health and nutrition: health care utilization, consumption; age-specific measures (child malnutrition, vaccinations, diarrhea); maternal and child mortality
- Unanticipated effects
  - Community and intra-household dynamics
- Beneficiary/stakeholder perceptions
- Cost-effectiveness
CCT Impact Evaluation Approaches

- Evaluations prioritized in program design stage
  - Allowed for baseline data collection; randomization

- Experimental evaluation design (randomized control design) used in most of the ‘first generation’ of programs
  - Honduras PRAF, Mexico PROGRESA and Nicaragua RPS
  - Considered the most robust evaluation approach because randomization addresses selection issues
  - Randomization built in to program expansion; opportunistic use of constraints on resources
  - Randomization carried out at the geographical level

- Matching methods used in most of the ‘second generation’ evaluations
  - Jamaica, Colombia, urban Mexico, Turkey
The Impact of CCT Impact Evaluations

- Impact evaluations have provided robust evidence of positive impacts on human development outcomes.
- Qualitative evaluations have provided insight into social dynamics, beneficiaries’ perceptions.
- Impact evidence key to program survival across changes in political administrations.
- Results have been key to national expansion and international adoption.
Strong support and early planning produced rigorous evaluations

Having an evaluation in place helped focus on program objectives

Evaluations important to public transparency and accountability

Need for international financing of impact evaluations of innovative programs; knowledge of development effectiveness is a public good

Impact evaluations are key, but limited

Good monitoring key to management/program success

Context affects results - CCTs are not a magic bullet for poverty reduction