

Systemic Project Evaluation

Thilo Bodenstein

bodensteint@spp.ceu.edu

Office 337

Office hours: Tuesday, 1.30-3.30

Fall term 2018

CEU Credits: 2

This class uses the CEU e-learning platform.

Please register on the website and download schedule and reading materials.

This course is an introduction to systemic project evaluation. Project evaluation is an increasingly important component of development practice of foreign aid organizations, agencies and NGOs. For instance, the German government established an evaluation institute in 2012 in charge of assessing German development aid. The starting point of this course is the assumption, that project evaluation is more than the assessment of outcomes. Evaluation of outcomes is an important feature, but systemic project evaluation goes deeper than that. Systemic evaluation scrutinizes the whole architecture of a project in its various components. Project evaluation distinguishes between (long-term) objectives, (medium-term) results, and actions to be taken to achieve results. This makes evaluations fairly complex. In the first part the course will give an overview over the main principles of evaluation. In the second part the course will work with the framework of “Capacity works” developed by GIZ to evaluate the internal dynamics of development projects. During the course students will work with evaluation reports from the World Bank’s Independent Evaluation Group in order to apply their knowledge. A key component of the course is a 2-session workshop with an evaluation practitioner. The learning objective is a thorough understanding of the principles of systemic evaluation and familiarity the practice of evaluation.

Requirements and assessment

Students are expected to attend the course regularly, to prepare the required readings and to participate in group activities. Groups will work on an evaluation report throughout the course. At the end of the course each student will submit an assessment (3000 words) of the evaluation

report. The deadline for the assessment submission is [...]. Extensions can be granted with a written medical note only. Grading is based on group work (40%) and the final assessment of an evaluation report (60%).

Books:

Clarke, Alan and Dawson, Ruth (1999) *Evaluation Research: An Introduction to Principles, Methods and Practice*. London: Sage.

Davidson, Jane (2005) *Evaluation Methodology Basics: The Nuts and Bolts of Sound Evaluation*. London: Sage.

Fink, Arlene (2005) *Evaluation Fundamentals: Insights into the Outcomes, Effectiveness, and Quality of Health Programs*. London: Sage.

Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) (ed.) (2015) *Cooperation Management for Practitioners: Managing Social Change with Capacity WORKS*. Wiesbaden: Springer Gabler.

Pawson, Ray (2013) *The Science of Evaluation: A Realist Manifesto*. London: Sage.

UNDP (2009) *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results*. New York: UNDP.

WHO (2013) *Evaluation Practice Handbook*. Geneva: WHO.

Evaluation report for group work:

Independent Evaluation Group: Nepal – Poverty Alleviation Fund

Evaluation reports for final assignment (choose only 1 [one] report):

Independent Evaluation Group: Kyrgyz Republic – Rural Education Project

Independent Evaluation Group: Mali – Rural Community Development Project

Journals:

American Journal of Evaluation; Evaluation; Evaluation Quarterly; Evaluation Practice; Evaluation Review

Schedule

	Date	Topic	Replacement date
1	19 September	Introduction	
2	26 September	Systemic evaluation	
	3 October	(no session)	16 November
3	10 October	Objectives vs. results	
4	17 October	Generative mechanisms	
	24 October	Reading week (no session)	
	31 October	(no session)	16 November
5	7 November	Strategy	
6	14 November	Cooperation	
7/8	16 November (Friday)	Workshop	
9	21 November	Processes	
10	28 November	Learning and innovation	
11	5 December	Steering structures (GIZ) /summary	

1 Introduction

19 September, 3:30-5:10, O/234

Pawson, Ray (2013) "Precursors: The Seven Pillars of Realist Wisdom."

Henry, G.T. (2003) "Influential Evaluations." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 24:4, 515-524.

Fundamentals

2 Systemic evaluation

26 September, 3:30-5:10, O/234

Required reading

United Nations Evaluation Group: *Norms and Standards for Evaluation*.

Pawson, Ray (2013) *The Science of Evaluation: A Realist Manifesto*. London: Sage. Ch. 5
(‘Informed Guesswork...’)

Recommended reading

Alkin, Marvin C. and King, Jean A. (2017) “Definitions of Evaluation Use and Misuse, Evaluation Influence, and Factors Affecting Use.” *American Journal of Evaluation*, 38:3, 434-450.

Alkin, Marvin C. and King, Jean A. (2016) “The historical development of evaluation use.” *American Journal of Evaluation*, 37: 4, 568–579.

Clarke, Alan (1999): “Understanding Evaluation.” In: Clarke, Alan: *Evaluation Research: An Introduction to Principles, Methods and Practice*. London: Sage.

Davidson, Jane (2005) “Defining the purpose of evaluation.” In: Davidson, Jane (2004) *Evaluation Methodology Basics: The Nuts and Bolts of Sound Evaluation*. London: Sage.

King, Julian (2017) “Using economic methods evaluatively.” *American Journal of Evaluation*, 38:1, 101-113.

3 Objectives vs. results

10 October, 3:30-5:10, O/234

Required reading

GIZ (2015) “Objectives and results.” In: (GIZ) (ed.) (2015) *Cooperation Management for Practitioners: Managing Social Change with Capacity WORKS*. Wiesbaden: Springer Gabler.

Recommended reading

Bamberger, M. et al. (2004) “Shoestring evaluation: Designing impact evaluations under budget, time and data constraints.” *American Journal of Evaluation*, 25:1, 5-37.

Dahler-Larsen, Peter et al. (2017) "Evaluation, language, and untranslatables." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 38:1, 114-125.

Fink, Arlene (2005) "Evaluation questions and standards of effectiveness." In: Fink, Arlene (2005) *Evaluation Fundamentals: Insights into the Outcomes, Effectiveness, and Quality of Health Programs*. London: Sage.

Manzano, Ana (2016) "The craft of interviewing in realist evaluation." *Evaluation*, 22:3, 342-360.

Thomas, D.R. (2006) "A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27:2, 237-246.

Yin, Robert K. (2013) "Validity and generalization in future case study evaluations." *Evaluation*, 19:3, 321-332.

UNDP (2009) "Planning for results: Practical applications." In: UNDP (2009) *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results*. New York: UNDP.

WHO (2013) "Evaluation planning." In: WHO (2013) *Evaluation Practice Handbook*. Geneva: WHO.

Woolcock, Michael (2013) "Using case studies to explore the external validity of 'complex' development interventions." *Evaluation*, 19:3, 229-248.

4 Generative mechanisms

17 October, 3:30-5:10, O/234

Required reading

Recommended reading

Befani, Barbara and Stedman-Bryce, Gavin (2017) "Process tracing and Bayesian updating for impact evaluation." *Evaluation*, 23:1, 42-60.

Bjurulf, Staffan, Vedung, Evert and Larsson, C. G. (2013) "A triangulation approach to impact evaluation." *Evaluation*, 19:1, 56-73.

Byrne, David (2013) "Evaluating complex social interventions in a complex world." *Evaluation*, 19:3, 217-228.

Davidson, Jane (2005) "Dealing with the causation issue." In: Davidson, Jane (2005) *Evaluation Methodology Basics: The Nuts and Bolts of Sound Evaluation*. London: Sage.

Gates, Emily and Dyson, Lisa (2017) "Implications of the changing conversation about causality for evaluators." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 38:1, 29-46.

Hayton, Keith (2015) "Evaluating the evidence - a move to more Realistic Evaluation: A case study of Regional Selective Assistance in Scotland." *Evaluation*, 21:2, 248-262.

Mayne, John (2012) "Contribution analysis: Coming of age?" *Evaluation*, 18:3, 270-280.

Mohr, Lawrence B. (1999) "The Qualitative Method of Impact Analysis." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 20:1, 69-84.

Pawson, Ray (2013) *The Science of Evaluation: A Realist Manifesto*. London: Sage. Chs 6,7 ('Invisible Mechanisms...')

Thiem, Alrik (2017) "Conducting configurational comparative research with qualitative comparative analysis: A hands-on tutorial for applied evaluation scholars and practitioners." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 38:3, 420-433.

Practice

5 Strategy

7 November, 3:30-5:10, O/234

Required reading

GIZ (2015) Success Factor – Strategy; Toolbox Strategy.

Recommended reading

Dart, J. and Davies, R. A. (2003) “A dialogical, story-based evaluation tool: The most significant change technique.” *American Journal of Evaluation*, 24:2, 137-155.

Renger, R. and Titcomb, A. (2002) “A three-step approach to teaching logic models.” *American Journal of Evaluation*, 23:4, 493-503.

Solmeyer, Anna R. and Constance, Nicole (2015) “Unpacking the "Black Box" of Social Programs and Policies: Introduction.” *American Journal of Evaluation*, 36:4, 470-474.

6 Cooperation

14 November, 3:30-5:10, O/234

Required reading

GIZ (2015) Success Factor – Cooperation; Toolbox Cooperation.

Recommended reading

Orr, Shannon K. (2010) “Exploring Stakeholder Values and Interests in Evaluation.” *American Journal of Evaluation*, 31:4, 557-569.

Pouw, Nicky et al. (2017) "Participatory Assessment of Development Interventions: Lessons Learned from a New Evaluation Methodology in Ghana and Burkina Faso." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 38:1, 47-59.

Sturges, Keith M. (2015) "Complicity Revisited: Balancing Stakeholder Input and Roles in Evaluation Use." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 36:4, 461-469.

Vaughn, Lisa M. and Lohmueller, MaryAnn (2014) "Calling All Stakeholders: Group-Level Assessment (GLA)-A Qualitative and Participatory Method for Large Groups." *Evaluation Review*, 38:4, 336-355.

7 / 8 Workshop with Nikolaus Roloff (Como Consult)

16 November

9 Processes

21 November, 3:30-5:10, O/234

Required reading

GIZ (2015) Success Factor – Processes; Toolbox Processes.

Recommended reading

Caffrey, Louise and Munro, Eileen (2017) "A systems approach to policy evaluation." *Evaluation*, 23:4, 463-478.

Cohen, D.J., Leviton, L.C., Isaacson, N. et al. (2006) "Online Diaries for Qualitative Evaluation - Gaining Real-time Insights." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27,2: 163-184.

Durand, Roger, Decker, Phillip J., Kirkman, Dorothy M. (2014) "Evaluation Methodologies for Estimating the Likelihood of Program Implementation Failure." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 35:3, 404-418.

Gildemyn, Marie (2014) "Understanding the Influence of Independent Civil Society Monitoring and Evaluation at the District Level: A Case Study of Ghana." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 35:4, 507-524.

Koleros, Andrew, Jupp, Dee, Kirwan, Sean et al. (2016) "Methodological Considerations in Evaluating Long-Term Systems Change: A Case Study From Eastern Nepal." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 37:3, 364-380.

Wandersman, Abraham, Alia, Kassandra, Cook, Brittany S. et al. (2016) "Evidence-Based Interventions Are Necessary but Not Sufficient for Achieving Outcomes in Each Setting in a Complex World: Empowerment Evaluation, Getting To Outcomes, and Demonstrating Accountability." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 37:4, 544-561.

Woolcock, Michael (2013) "Using Case Studies to Explore the External Validity of 'Complex' Development Interventions." *Evaluation*, 19:3, 229-248.

10 Learning, Innovation and results-based monitoring

28 November, 3:30-5:10, O/234

Required reading

GIZ (2015) Success Factor Learning and Innovation; Toolbox Learning and Innovation; results-based monitoring system.

Recommended reading

Arkesteijn, Marlen, van Mierlo, Barbara and Leeuwis, Cees (2015) "The Need for Reflexive Evaluation Approaches in Development Cooperation." *Evaluation*, 21:1, 99-115.

Paz-Ybarnegaray, Rodrigo and Douthwaite, Boru (2017) "Outcome Evidencing: A Method for Enabling and Evaluating Program Intervention in Complex Systems." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 38:2, 275-293.

Tapella, Esteban and Rodriguez-Bilella, Pablo (2014) "Shared Learning and Participatory Evaluation: The Sistematizacion Approach to Assess Development Interventions." *Evaluation*, 20:1, 115-133.

Van Ongevalle, Jan; Huyse, Huib; Van Petegem, Peter (2014) "Dealing With Complexity Through Actor-focused Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME)." *Evaluation*, 20:4, 447-466.

11 Reporting & Summary

5 December, 3:30-5:10, O/234

Required reading

Johnson, Jeremiah, Hall, Jori, Greene, Jennifer C. and Ahn, Jeehae (2013) "Exploring Alternative Approaches for Presenting Evaluation Results." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 34:4, 486-503.

Recommended reading

Becker, Karin L. and Renger, Ralph (2017) "Suggested Guidelines for Writing Reflective Case Narratives: Structure and Indicators." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 38:1, 138-150.

Fitzpatrick, J.L. (2004) "Exemplars as case studies: Reflections on the links between theory, practice, and context." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 25:4, 541-559.

Ofir, Zenda (2013) "Strengthening Evaluation for Development." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 34:4, 582-586.

Schwandt, Thomas A. (2008) "Educating for intelligent belief in evaluation." *American Journal of Evaluation*, 29:2, 139-150.