

INTRODUCTION TO UTILIZATION FOCUSED EVALUATION

SLEVA

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Agenda

1. Introduction to UFE Curriculum & DECI
2. *UFE* – What is it? How is it different? Why?
3. First steps – practical example
4. Stakeholder identification
5. Roles definition
6. Readiness for UFE?

Recess

Your best & your worst...

Think back about the BEST and WORST evaluation experiences you have had.

Contrast them in terms of:

- The role that the **CONTEXT** played
- The **UTILIZATION** of the findings
- The **ROLES** you played

Discussion



Trends in the literature on evaluation

CONTEXT: context as a factor explaining use (this includes organizational and project culture, time and resource constraints, physical and social conditions).

DIFFERENT TYPES or LEVELS OF USE: from the individual to the organizational level.

ROLE OF THE EVALUATOR: diversified to include facilitation, planning and training.

Utilization focused evaluation is...

A decision-making framework for enhancing the utility and actual use of evaluations. (Patton, 2008a: slide 9)

Utilization focused evaluation is...

A **PROCESS** for helping primary intended users select the most appropriate content, model, methods, theory, and uses for their particular situation. However, UFE does not advocate any particular evaluation content, model, method or theory. Situational responsiveness guides the interactive process between evaluator and primary intended users.

Evaluation done for and with specific, intended primary **USERS** for specific, intended **USES**.

“**USES**” refers to the way real people in the real world **APPLY** evaluation findings and experience the evaluation **PROCESS**. (Patton, 2008: 37 - Ch.2)

What is evaluation?

What do we want to know?

- What is the worth, value, significance?
- How effective was program?
- Was it implemented as planned?
- Were goals achieved?
- Did participants benefit?
- Any unexpected consequences ?
- What worked? How to improve?
- Do next?

Evaluation Use – Why is it important?

Many evaluations land on
dusty bookshelves

BUT.....

- Monies have been spent \$\$\$\$\$
- Do not know what is effective or not

SO ...

How do we do evaluations that can be
used?

Engaging users contributes to

Personal **LEARNING** among them.

More **CONFIDENCE** and direct **APPLICATION** of evaluation findings to program practices.

A reduced **POWER DIFFERENTIAL** between evaluators and program practitioners.

More **NEGOTIATED DECISION MAKING** and learning.

A collaborative approach means...

- Maintenance of an ongoing focus on **LEARNING**.
- Clarification of **ROLES** and **EXPECTATIONS**.
- Creation of spaces for **DIALOGUE**.
- **JOINT FOCUS** on all issues being investigated.
- Attention to the **VALIDATION** of findings.
- Joint **INTERPRETATION** of results.

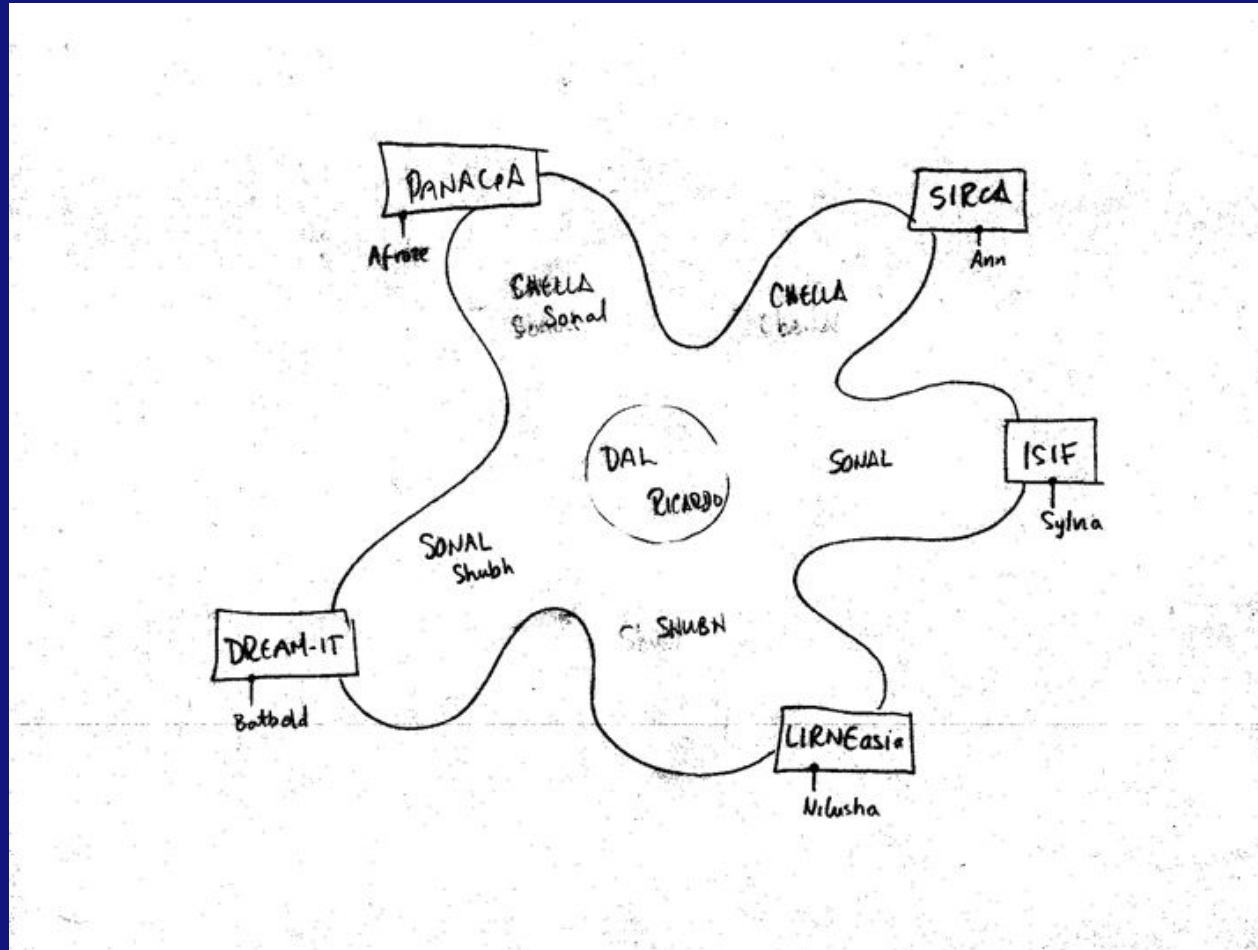
UFE : KEY POINTS

What is unique in this project in terms of:

1. Context
2. The role of the evaluators
3. Collaborative approaches

DECI PROJECTS

Developing evaluation capacity for ICT4D



Premises of UFE

1. Evaluations should be **JUDGED** by their utility and **ACTUAL USE**.
2. No evaluation should go forward unless and until there are **primary intended users** who will use the information that can be produced.
3. Primary intended users are **involved in the process - commitment**.
4. Evaluation is part of **initial program design**. The primary intended users want information to help answer a question or questions.
5. **Evaluator's** role is to help intended users clarify their purpose and objectives.
6. **Implications for use are part of every decision** throughout the evaluation – it is the driving force of the evaluation process. (Patton, 2008a)

UFE in 12 steps

1. Project / network readiness assessment.
2. Evaluator readiness and capability assessment.
3. Identification of primary intended users.
4. Situational analysis.
5. Identification of primary intended uses.
6. Focusing on evaluation.
7. Evaluation design.
8. Simulation of use.
9. Data collection.
10. Data analysis.
11. Facilitate use.
12. Meta-evaluation.

Think back about your best evaluation experience...

To what extent was your best evaluation experience compatible with UFE?

Review it in terms of:

- The **USERS**: were they identified?
- The specific **USES**: were they clear?
- User **ENGAGEMENT**: how and why?

REFLECT

If you had thought like this – do you think it would have made a difference? HOW?

Comments / Questions



¿Who are the stakeholders that are or need to be involved in this project?



ROLES (1 of 3)

EVALUATOR: Person or organization responsible for facilitating / leading the design, the implementation and the utilization of the evaluation. Tasks: organizational development agent, educator, coach/mentor, strategic planner, etc.

ROLES (2 of 3)

PRIMARY USER: People who will use and apply the findings of the evaluation. Patton (2008) suggests the following profiler:

1. Interested.
2. Knowledgeable.
3. Open minded.
4. Represents an important interest group.
5. Has credibility.
6. Teachable.
7. Available for ongoing interaction throughout the evaluation process.

ROLES (3 of 3)

AUDIENCE INTERESTED IN THE REPORT: Actors interested in the unfolding and findings of the evaluation.

¿From the stakeholders that were identified, who plays what role?

UFE traps or temptations (1 of 2)

- **Evaluators make themselves the primary decision makers.**
- Identify vague, **passive audiences** as users.
- Targeting **organizations** as users.
- Focusing on **decisions instead of decision makers.**
- Assuming the **evaluation's funder** is the primary stakeholder.

UFE traps or temptations (2 of 2)

- **Waiting until the findings** are in to identify intended users and intended uses.
- Taking a stance of **standing above the messiness** of people and politics.
- **Being co-opted** by powerful stakeholders.
- Identifying primary intended users but **not involving them** meaningfully.

(Patton, 2008, adapted from p. 90 - Ch.3)

Under what conditions...

Are the traps real?

What can you do from the **START** to minimize the risk of falling into them?

How have you addressed the risk of falling into these traps?

What **other traps or temptations** have you faced?

How well prepared do we feel we are for adopting UFE as the methodology to evaluate this project ?

Are all involved parties supportive of adopting a UFE approach?

What resources do we require in order to implement a UFE plan ?

What could the main challenges of this evaluation initiative be?

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BREAK



PARTICIPATION