

UPCOMING EVENT

Practical Responses to Current Monitoring and Evaluation Debates

INTRAC M&E Workshop

Wednesday 27 November 2013 10h00 -17h30

St Anne's College, Oxford (UK)

A one day workshop for M&E practitioners, consultants, civil society organisations, and development agencies to share experiences and practical responses to key planning, monitoring, evaluation, learning and impact assessment debates.

Event background

For many years there has been increased pressure on NGOs to improve their M&E systems to meet new requirements from donors and stakeholders. In many respects, this has pushed civil society practitioners outside of their methodological comfort zones and towards a wider range of social research approaches within their M&E systems. This has ripple effects across organisations – within programme planning, organisational structures and procedures, staffing and skills, budgeting, relationships with different stakeholders, and partnerships with those who support M&E approaches.

More importantly, how NGOs carry out M&E using new techniques and approaches has major implications for partners and beneficiaries.

Recent years have seen numerous new forums emerging – interactive networks, virtual platforms, conferences, workshops and campaigns – to debate new methodological approaches to M&E. Much of this has focused on championing or challenging the use of more scientific methods in the monitoring and evaluation of international development interventions.

What has often been lacking is solid, practical debate amongst practitioners on their experiences of using new approaches, and how to address gaps and challenges.

Themes and Objectives

INTRAC has regularly hosted conferences and workshops for civil society on all aspects of monitoring and evaluation.

This one-day INTRAC workshop has a practical focus, aiming to provide space for practitioners to share and compare methods and tools in current areas of debate, and to reflect on opportunities and challenges emerging.

We have identified four themes for this workshop, where our experience demonstrates there is the greatest need for discussion, debate, sharing and reflection:

Designing and using baselines for complex programmes

This theme will consider questions such as:

- Is a baseline essential in order to be able to assess impact?
- What options are there for ensuring baseline methodologies are appropriate to the size of programme and organisation?
- To what extent does the baseline design and methods used need to follow or replicate the proposed evaluation design?
- How can baseline data collection exercises across multiple countries, sites or projects take account of cultural and contextual differences?

Using Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in M&E

This theme will consider questions such as:

- What types of new technologies are NGOs using within their M&E systems, and to what end?
- What are the practical challenges and experiences of using new technologies?
- What are the advantages and drawbacks of using new technology for M&E?

Experimental and quasi-experimental methods in M&E, including randomised control trials

This theme will consider questions such as:

- What are practitioners' experiences of experimental and quasi-experimental methods in M&E?
- What are the challenges and benefits?
- Under what conditions are these methods appropriate?
- What practical lessons are there on overcoming ethical challenges in using controls and comparison groups?

M&E of Advocacy

This theme will consider questions such as:

- What are practitioners' experiences of trying to assess the impact of their advocacy activities?
- What are practitioners' experiences of evaluating the impact of their advocacy when timescales for policy and practice change can be long?
- What tools or approaches are practitioners using to support the M&E of their advocacy?
- Is it possible to find ways to 'quantify' or 'verify' influence?
- Is there a 'go-to' place to share learning on M&E of advocacy? Where and how do practitioners share M&E tools, experiences and learning?

Call for M&E Case Studies

The workshop will be built around case studies from civil society organisations and analysis emerging from INTRAC's work with numerous CSOs. Case studies and papers will be produced and made available.

We are looking for short case studies from practitioners focusing on one or more of the four event themes. If you have experiences, tools, lessons, or ideas that you would like to share, please submit a short abstract, explaining which theme(s) your case study comes under, a brief outline of the example, and the main points you wish to make. More structured guidance on plans for publishing and presenting case studies will be provided after we have screened the abstracts.

Deadline for Abstracts (max. 500 words): Friday 13th September 2013

Participation and Beyond

This workshop will involve around 60-80 participants.

We recognise that many practitioners around the world would benefit greatly from participation; and that potential participants may wish to follow the workshop via the internet.

We do not plan to record or live-stream the workshop as this limits the formats we can use for debate and discussion. However, we are hoping to run one to two webinars after the workshop to review key discussions and provide space for wider reflection. More information on these plans will follow.

Event cost: £80 (£60 early bird price for bookings before 19th October).

To book a place at the workshop, email zwilkinson@intrac.org