

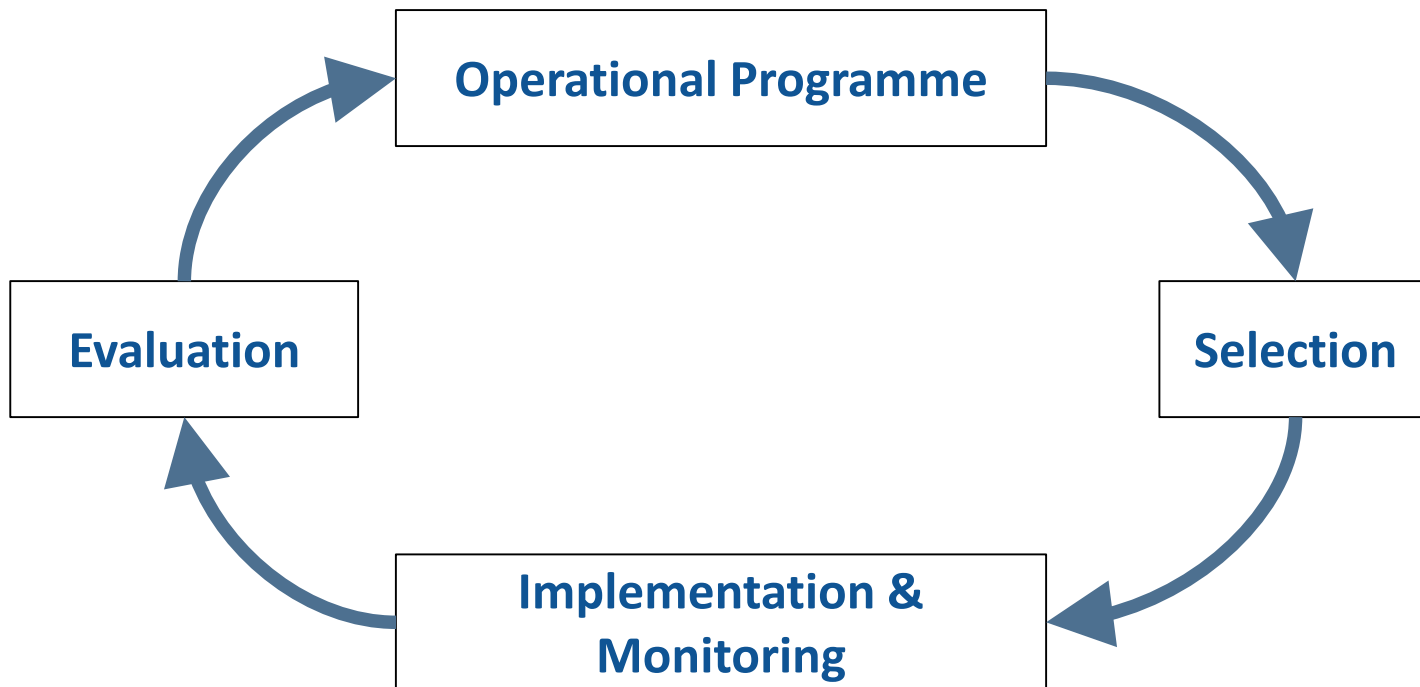


# Practical Challenges for the evaluation plan: planning, resources, data collection, timing.

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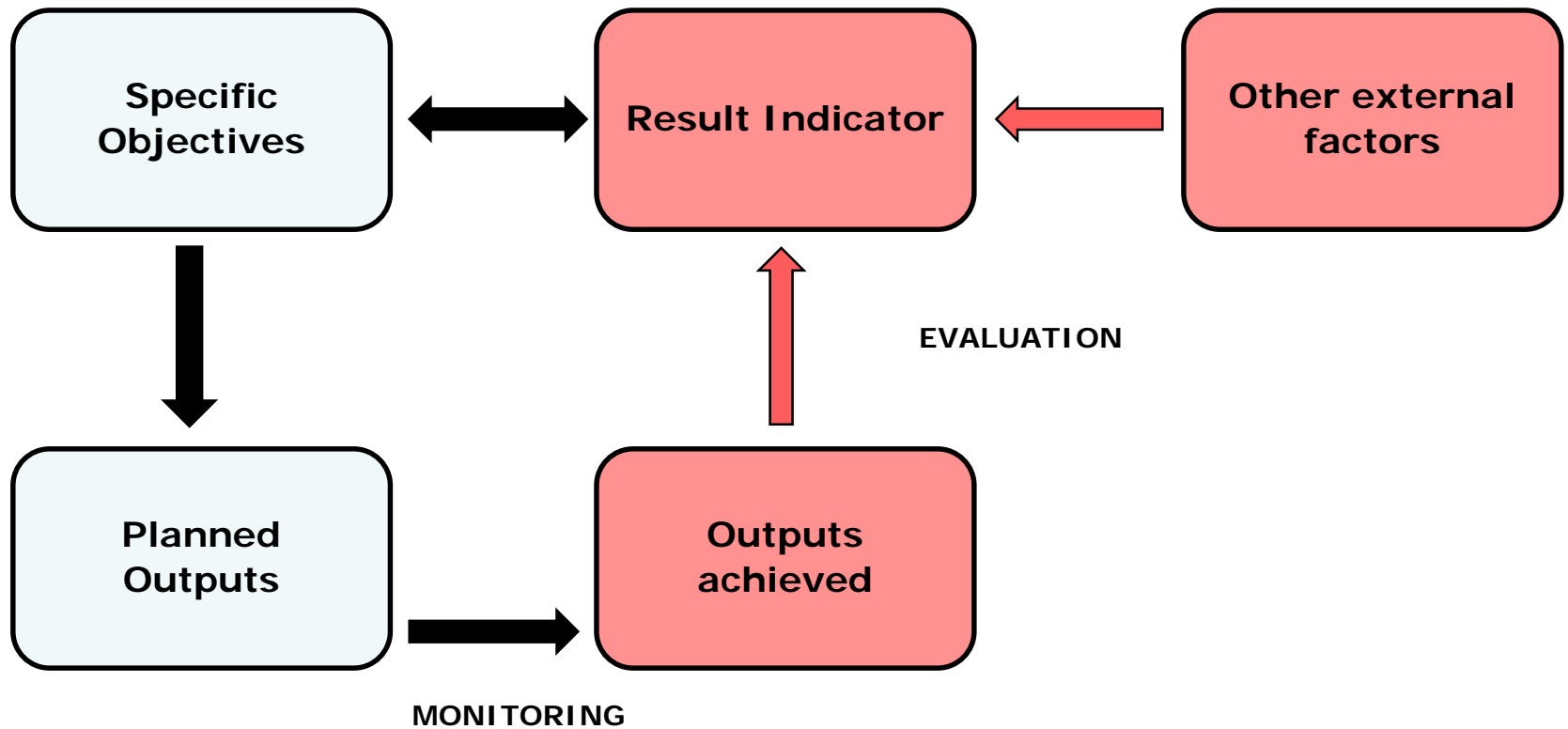
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# Programme Planning - the theory





Simplified Intervention Logic



## Remember...

- Good well designed programmes do not always translate into good projects
- Good projects, do not always mean a successful programme



# The evaluation plan – the basic requirements **(Article, 56 and 114, 1303/2013)**

- Within one year of programme approval;
- Evaluate each priority axis at least once during the programme period;
- x 2 for ESF / YEI (2015, 2018)
- Assess, effectiveness, efficiency and impact.
- Provide summary by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022
- Annual review by PMC

***LOTS OF FLEXIBILITY***

# The evaluation plan – change in focus



***Implementation***

*Are we doing what we said we would do?*

***Impact***

*Are we making a difference?*

## Evaluation – a number of purposes

- Assess and improve **performance**
- Being **accountable** for public investment
- As a basis for decision making and **planning**
- Developing **knowledge** and understanding
- Building institutional **capacity**

# Evaluation **Plan** – a number of purposes

- Improve quality
- Ensure timeliness
- Input into AIR and Progress reports
- Sharing Information and Learning
- Contribute to meta level evaluations
- Secure resources



# Attitude and motivation is key

- Is it about learning ?
- or
- Is it about obligation ?

# Common obstacles to evaluation

- Need to focus on implementation /absorption
- Programme is going well - no value in evaluation
- Do not want to expose problems - wait until things are better

# Common obstacles to evaluation

- Austerity - should not “waste” money on evaluation - fund projects instead
- The programme cannot be changed - so what is the point?
- The programme is not considered to be important

# Evaluation Plan - basic questions

- What to evaluate?
- How to evaluate?
- When to evaluate?
- Who to involve ?



## The plan:

# 1. Objectives, coverage, and coordination

*Which programmes are covered?*

*Analysis of existing information?*

*Where is the focus / concentration?*

*Links with other evaluations?*

## The plan: **2. Evaluation Framework**

- *Who is responsible for evaluation?*
- *The process, use of steering groups?*
- *Involvement of partners?*
- *The expertise?*
- *Training?*
- *Arrangements for dissemination and use*
- *Timetable*
- *Budget*
- *Quality*

## The plan:

### 3. Planned evaluations

- *List and timetable for evaluations*
- *Balance between detail and flexibility*
- *For each evaluation:*

*Subject;*

*Methods and data*

*Duration and date*

*Estimated budget*

# Features of a good evaluation plan....

- Flexible -responsive to difficulties and monitoring;
- Proportionate – focus on key questions;
- Independence
- Partnership
- Usefulness
- Transparency





## The audience....

- Internal - to learn and improve
- External - accountable to the wider public

# Steering Group

- *To oversee the evaluation plan*
- *To oversee individual evaluations*

# Functions of steering group

- *Approve the TOR*
- *Monitor implementation*
- *Facilitate access to information*
- *Support the evaluators*
- *Assess quality*
- *Discuss findings*
- *Present to PMC*
- *Review implementation of recommendations*

# Stakeholders

- *Which stakeholders are most affected by the evaluation and its findings/*
- *How do we involve them?*

***Minimum role*** - *provide information, take part in surveys, discussion groups*

***Substantive role*** - *part of steering group*

# The evaluators?

- Internal evaluators? – independence?
- External evaluators?– framework contracts or single contracts
- Technical Experts or generic evaluators?

# Timing

- To improve current programme
- To improve future programmes
- Need enough data for meaningful evaluation

**On time is better than perfection!**

# Types of evaluation

- Impact
- Implementation

*Focus on what is important to your  
programme*

# Impact evaluations

**Theory based:** Why does the intervention work? How does it work? Who benefits? What conditions are necessary?

**Counterfactual:** Does it work? Is there a causal link?



# Terms of Reference for evaluation

1. *Objectives and scope*
2. *Stakeholders and Users*
3. *Evaluation questions*
4. *Available information*
5. *Methodology*
6. *Time scales and reporting*
7. *Indicative Budget*
8. *Qualifications of team*

## Evaluation questions ?????

**Accountability:** How successful has the programme been? Has it met its targets?

**Implementation:** Is the management systems working effectively?

## Evaluation questions ???????

**Planning:** Is this the best use of public money? Could money have been spent differently?

**Knowledge:** What have we learnt about what works? How and why does it work?

**Institutional Strengthening:** How are stakeholders involved in programme management

## Evaluation questions ???????

*What change can be observed?*

*Can the change be attributed to the intervention?*

*Are there unintended impacts?*

*What mechanism delivered the impact?*

*Impact on different sub groups?*

*Short term or long terms impacts?*

## Managing quality

*Clear and focused Terms of Reference*

*Be clear about data availability*

*Appointment of evaluator*

*Steering group*

*Inception report is key*

*Regular interim reports*

*Review final report*

# Example of implementation evaluation: Reducing the administrative burden

## Common complaints

- Difficult hard to follow information
- Long application forms
- Long processing times for applications
- Complex rules that change mid-programme
- “Overly zealous” financial verification
- Focus on inputs not outputs
- Slow payments
- Overly detailed contracts, hard to change



## Some questions?

- What are the processing times? Are targets being met?
- Are contracts kept to a minimum?
- Are simplified costs being promoted and adopted?
- Is there the necessary support in place for beneficiaries?
- Are intermediary bodies performing well?

## Some techniques?

- Quantitative review of processing times
- Qualitative review of successful/ unsuccessful applicants
- Qualitative review of projects about implementation (survey / focus group)
- Quantitative assessment of absorption



# Timing ?

- Commission in 2016
- Report 2016 and 2017
- Follow up in 2018 on implementation of recommendations



*End*



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