Transformational evaluation, from cliché to practice, drawing from the book

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16 June 2022
Many actions by multiple actors for transformation, resisted by similar forces

- Intention is never a result
- The post-intention period is often disillusionment
- Politics and normative organizations not dissimilar
Some broad sweeps

- Context and relativism
- Why critical and independent evaluation counts
- Coping with the co-option threat, learning over rather than with accountability
- Survival fears in insecure evaluation functions
The political questions

- What do we change and why?
- When done, what do we measure?

How and who sets the transformation agenda?

Rationality and politics, fake news versus evidence

With all the evaluation out there, why so little evidence of sustainable change?
Experiential snippets

- Land Reform in South Africa
- The PSC for a better state
- Evaluation in the UN

Context and relativism

Change is incremental, but moving parts oiled by big and small "P"

- what was promised,
- what happened,
- how is it measured
Using independent evaluation

Let us use independent evaluation, to mirror the reality, to serve a transformation agenda

Challenge to practice are weak institutional evaluation set ups (policies),

Poor governance and inability to talk truth to power, for trust

Choosing the learning over accountability route
Engage in a dynamic and principled way

Traditional approaches: static & linear

- Learning
- Sequencing

IOE approach: dynamic and engaging

- Independence
- Credibility
- Utility

Principled engagement
“Evaluation supports accountability and learning, to improve transparency and accountability. However, the area that can benefit from user perspectives is that of learning. In practice, the construct of all evaluation needs to accept engagement as a part of process credibility, and seen as necessary for generating ongoing reflection as part of the learning process to build understanding.”

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16 June 2022

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ioe.ifad.org
IOE approach: interactive website

USER EXPERIENCE

- Fosters greater stakeholder engagement by reinforcing the independence of IOE
- Speaks to the core of what IOE stakeholders look for
- Intuitive, easy to navigate
- Invites new opportunities for users to engage with IOE in a dynamic fashion
- Creates a more personal connection between IOE and its stakeholders
- Tailors messages to IOE stakeholders through new products
Resources

- Indran Naidoo, 2018. IPDET Graduation Speech [here]