

Evaluability Assessment

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Overview

- Overview of context (case study)
- Definition of evaluability assessment
- Overview of process and six steps of evaluability assessment

Context

- Requested to undertake an outcome evaluation
- Project aimed at promoting nutrition and developing healthy eating habits in new humanitarian arrivals (Sudan/ Afghanistan)
- Logframe activity and product focussed (outcomes not defined)
- Little clarity in evaluation purpose, question and use
- Lack of baseline data
- Decided on evaluability assessment first

Evaluability Assessment

Definition:

A process in which a program's or project's goals, objectives, activities, expected outputs and outcomes and client group are articulated and examined to assess the program's plausibility, the evaluability of its goals and its readiness for evaluation. Usually depicted pictorially.

Six steps

Step 1: Identifying the stakeholders and end users of the evaluation

Step 2: Articulating the project, its goals and objectives from the perspective of key stakeholders

Step 3: Explore project reality including articulating the project logic or theory

Step 4: Assessing the plausibility of the initial project logic

Step 5: Constructing a new project logic

Step 6: Deciding on what components of the project, if any, are amenable to evaluation

Methods

- Reflective journal
- Semi-structured interviews
- Observation
- Problem analysis
- Process of returning to stakeholders for feedback on logic model
- Literature review
- Evaluator in facilitator role

Step 1: Identifying the stakeholders and end users of the evaluation

Methods:

- Semi-structured interviews with project staff
- Review of project documentation to map stakeholders

Step 1: Identifying the stakeholders and end users of the evaluation

- Initially included broadest range of stakeholders possible including policy makers, service providers, project staff, host community, home community and target community
- Narrowed down based on '*who wants to know?*' and '*who will know?*' - formed the 'sample' or key informants for assessment

Key informants

- Project staff
- Representatives of the Sudanese and Afghan communities
- Members of the project Steering Committee
- Direct service providers in English tuition and other settlement services

Identified stake and estimated interest towards the project from high to neutral

Step 2: Articulating the Project

Method:

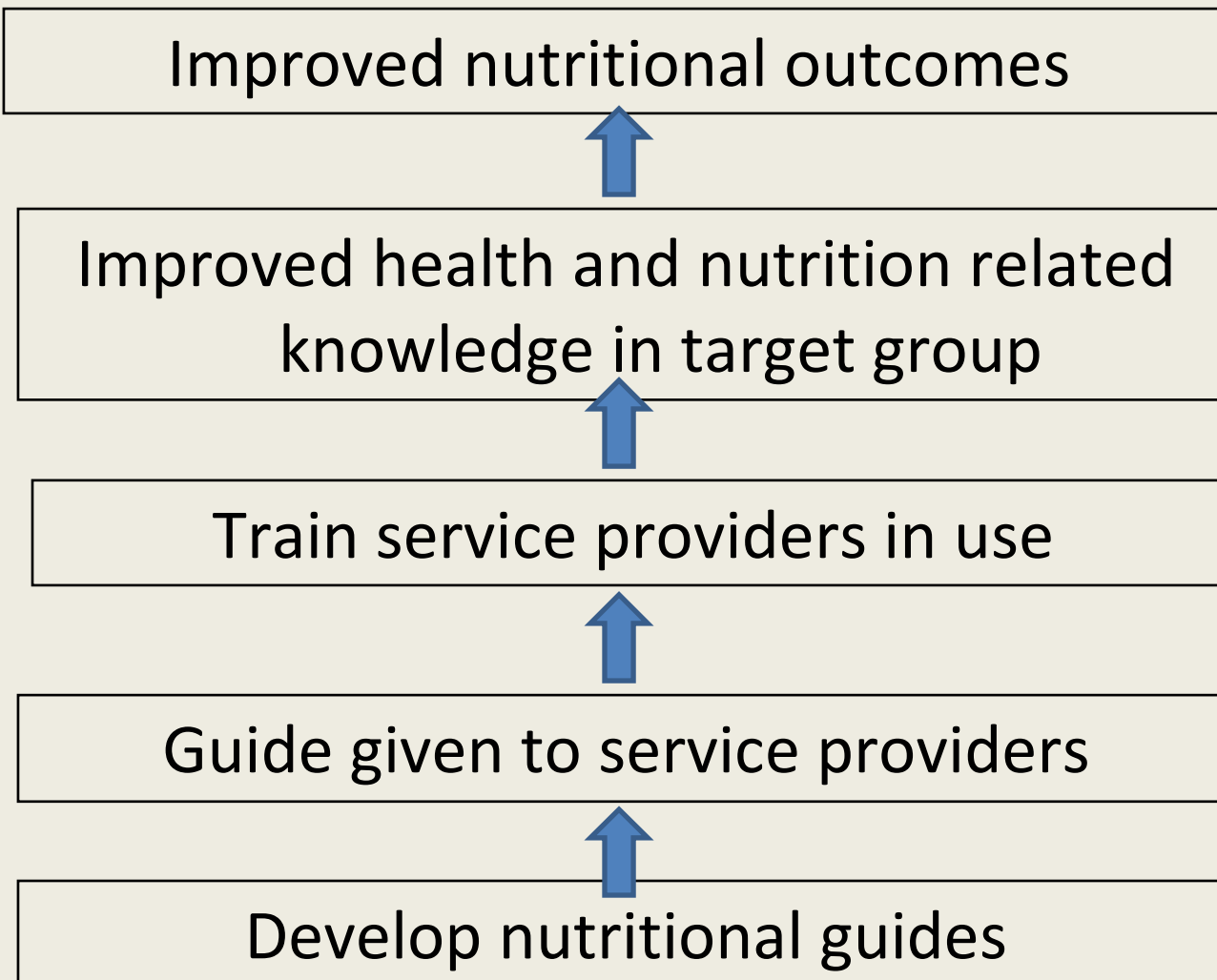
- Review of project documentation
- Semi-structured interviews with key informants

Step 2: Articulating the Project

Project aim: to improve the knowledge, attitudes and skills related to the health and nutrition of recent humanitarian entrants

Activities: developing educational resources in flip chart, picture cards and story book format: 1) anaemia; 2) poor appetite; 3) breastfeeding; 4) introduction to solids; and 5) preparing school lunches – to be disseminated by service providers

Step 2: Articulating the project



Step 2: Articulating the project Identified challenges in achieving aim

- Change in service provision resulted in change in number of service providers project engaged with
- Change in clients (Eastern European to south Sudanese /Afghan)
- Change in project staff
- Developing materials taking longer than planned
- Materials not likely to be in use until end of project

Step 2: Articulating the project

Changed client group was biggest were a professional challenge for service providers who felt unprepared:

'they (the Sudanese) have been coming in since about April 2001, April to July of that year has to have been the worst year of my professional life!'

'there is a whole array of things culturally they are very different especially those who have not lived in a city . . . we found it very very difficult culturally at the beginning, to really come to grips with the African culture'

Step 3: Explore project reality including articulating the project logic or theory

Methods:

- Problem analysis
- Observation
- Draft visual representations of the project logic presented to stakeholders and revised (of each problem identified)

Step 3: Explore project reality including articulating the project logic or theory

Problem analysis:

Problems to be addressed identified as 1) anaemia; 2) poor appetite; 3) lack of knowledge about breastfeeding; 4) lack of knowledge about when to introduce solids; and 5) preparing school lunches

Analysis of 'problems' revealed target group lack of knowledge only one factor contributing to poor nutritional outcomes

Step 3: Explore project reality including articulating the project logic or theory

Health problem: Anaemia and other micro-nutrient deficiencies					
Risk factor Access to services	Risk factor Carbonated beverages/ processed foods	Risk factor •Inadequate water intake	Risk factor Poor oral health	Risk factor School children embarrassed traditional foods	Risk factor Poor appetite
Contributing factors •Language •Transport •Culture •Fear •Economics •Knowledge of system •Acceptance of fatigue	Contributing factors Available •Advertising •Pressure from children •Knowledge •Lifestyle	Contributing factors •High intake of sugary drinks •High intake of tea	Contributing factors •Torture and trauma •High sugar intake	Contributing factors •Parents not sure what to include in a healthy lunch box in the Australian context	Contributing factors •Trauma •High sugar •Unfamiliar foods •Taste

Step 3: Explore project reality including articulating the project logic or theory

Problem analysis resulted in:

- Questioning of the project logic
- More in-depth questioning and analysis about what the project was actually doing
- More explicit discussion and recognition about day to day realities of project activities

Step 3: Explore project reality including articulating the project logic or theory

Actual project activities:

- Awareness raising in policy/decision makers (advocacy, meetings, letters, project fact sheets and up dates etc)
- Awareness raising in service providers
- Awareness raising in and working with community members
- Participatory development of educational materials (incomplete at time of assessment)

Step 4: Evaluating the plausibility of the initial project logic

Methods:

- Literature review
- On-going data analysis
- Observation
- Re-drafting visual representations of the project logic and re-presenting to stakeholders

Step 4: Evaluating the plausibility of the initial project logic

'Part of the problem with the "project theory" is that it makes the assumption that the new arrivals are doing something "wrong" that needs to be changed. Part of what we are grappling with is that the new arrivals are not necessarily "wrong" but rather the system in which they find themselves, the infrastructural constraints and the awareness amongst service providers of nutrition as a significant issue that should be addressed is perhaps what is "wrong".'

Step 4: Evaluating the plausibility of the initial project logic

Initial conclusions:

- Project logic simplistic
- Did not reflect day to day reality or project
- Lack of confidence goals would be met
- Stakeholders not aware of all activities undertaken by project team
- Significant changes from drafting of project to implementation
- Outcome/impact evaluation not feasible

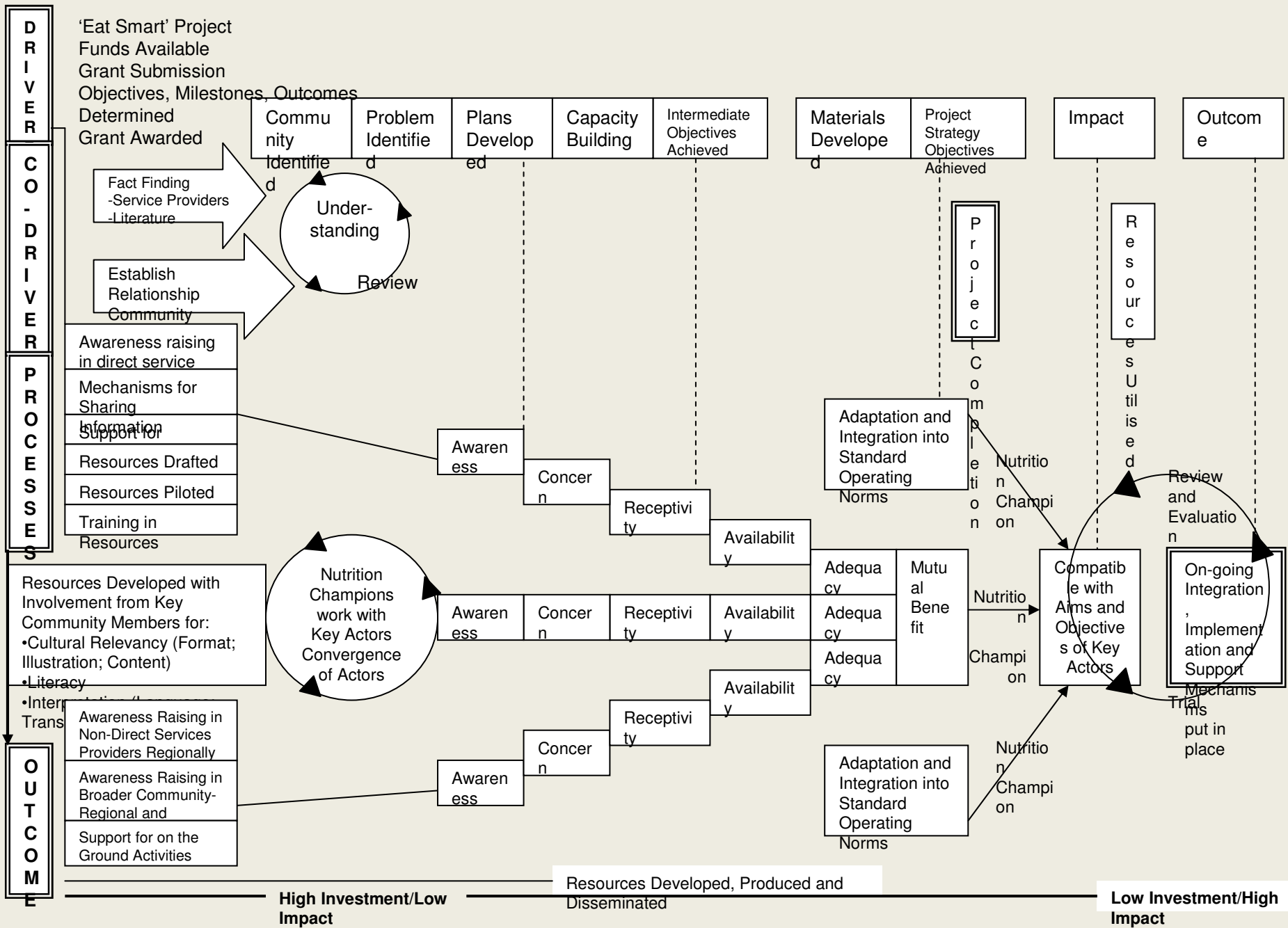
Step 5: Reconstructing the project logic

Methods:

- Literature review
- Further re-drafting visual representations of the project logic and re-presenting to stakeholders

Step 5: Reconstructing the Project Logic

'Much of what we are doing are not directly going to impact on behavioural change, it's more about providing information in a culturally sensitive way, the next step is behaviour change, which we won't have time for'.



Step 5: Reconstructing the Project Logic

A cluster of 6 critical precursor conditions need to be fulfilled for behaviour change and program institutionalisation

- 1) awareness of the problem
- 2) concern for the problem
- 3) receptivity for change
- 4) availability of solutions
- 5) adequacy of program to address the problem
- 6) perceived benefits outweigh the costs

Goodman, R. M. & Steckler, A. 1989

Step 6: Determining what is evaluatable

- Measureable indicators developed and information collected for all three levels related to awareness, concern, receptivity to change
- Evaluation of outputs developed related to availability and adequacy of products
- The reconstructed logic also provided an advocacy tool for securing cross-sectoral support and building coalitions

Benefits of the evaluability assessment

- Provided a check whether project evaluatable
- Helped to identify evaluation question and use
- More in-depth understanding of the project among key stakeholders
- Helped identify information needs
- Provided an evaluation decision making framework
- Provided a tool for redesign of project
- Provided an advocacy tool

Any questions?