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Effective evaluation: Issues, challenges and lessons Learned from Canadian practices.

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Evaluation as a tool for management and continuous improvement of policies/programs/services has developed rapidly in Canada over the last decades. What path has it taken? What are the principal achievements? What aspects must be developed strengthened? What issues and challenges are we now facing? This presentation therefore takes a critical look at the role of evaluation as experienced in different fields of activity within Canada. The fields of public administration and health care will be used in particular to illustrate a series of findings that are emerging.

A number of issues will be examined, and for each issue, the related effectiveness factors and principal difficulties/constraints experienced will be explored. These include: 1) factors that contribute to advancing the quality and usefulness of evaluation; 2) development of monitoring and evaluation capabilities (individuals, organizations, networks); 3) evaluation as a decision-making and learning tool within an organization; 4) link-up with procedures for strategic planning, budgeting, managing expenses and accountability. This look at the past and present of the rationale for evaluation within Canada will help to identify a few channels of optimization for the future and serve to promote other experiences internationally.