

# The Limits of Collaborative Evaluation?

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# Aims

- To discuss the challenges experienced in the collaborative evaluation of a six year project.



# The Program

- To introduce cultural change in a sporting organisation to prevent violence against women.
- Changes planned at head and regional offices and in local community sporting clubs in Victoria



# Violence against women

- Fostered in settings where there are:
  - Sexist peer norms and cultures.
  - ‘Group disrespect’ (rude and aggressive behaviour, sexualised discussion, encouragement of group drinking)
- These behaviours are noted in male dominated, team sporting settings



# Primary Prevention

- Aims to prevent violence from occurring in the first place through education and culture change
- Changing attitudes and behaviours that foster or support violence against women
- Bystander strategies
- Men as partners in prevention



- Large national sporting body with community and elite competition
- Duration: six years: 2008 – 2014
- Progressively rolled out in 3 regions in Victoria
- Plans to roll program out Australia wide after 2014.
- Continually evaluated using a collaborative approach.



# Project Management

- Three way management structure
  - The program: senior management representative/s
  - The evaluators
  - The funding body
- Closely monitored @ three weekly meetings



# The Evaluation

- Partnership between the project (managers, workers, stakeholders) and the evaluator.
- A variety of methods were employed:
  - observation
  - participant interviews
  - key informant interviews
  - a pre and post survey



# Results based evaluation

- Constructivist focus, deep understanding of meanings
- Problem solving approach
  - Responsive to problems as they emerge
  - Aim to continually contribute to improving practice
- Empowerment focus (all stakeholders)



# Challenges

- Comprehension, commitment
- Conflict of cultures
- Capacity, flexibility
- Communication



# Comprehension, commitment

- Funding driven participation
- Prevention of violence against women is a new field, this was a first time program of this nature.
- Evaluation a new concept to the organisation
- High levels of resistance from state office staff



# Conflict of cultures

- Sport is ordered, 'play by the rules'
- Program: community development, a new and challenging concept.
- Example: club audit tool.



# Capacity & Flexibility

- Prevention is a new field with few practitioners.
- We are all learning as we go
- To be effective, workers need to be creative and capable of responding to challenges on their feet.
- This was not built into the program in the first place.



# Problem solving

- As problems have been identified they have been brought to the table at management or one-on-one meetings.
- Suggestions for change seldom applied
- Evaluator included in HO program planning for two years, then excluded.

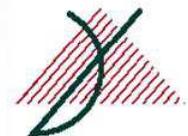


# Where are we now?

- Collaboration now minimal
- Management meetings suspended
- Despite feedback the same processes are being used that have not worked in the past
- Change only focused on clubs (with lowest likelihood of sustainability because of volunteers turnover)



- Partnerships 'thin'
- Understanding: as evaluators we feel we have learned a great deal from the program.
- Difficult to convince stakeholders they can learn from failure (sport about winning).
- Communication through management meetings, one-on-one meetings, pamphlets, written reports
  - mostly well received but resulting in little real change.



# Questions

- How effective is collaborative evaluation when:
  - evaluation is a contractual obligation,
  - the complexity of the program is not well understood in the environment?
- What can be done ensure feedback is adopted and incorporated into the program?
- How can we best deal with issues in long term projects?

