Evaluation of HIV Viral Load Programs

Management and approaches

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Clear Outcomes

4 November 2021

CLEAR OUTCOMES

About Clear Outcomes

- Clear Outcomes, a Bixal company, is a woman-owned management consulting firm

- Solution-oriented monitoring, evaluation, research and learning support to international and domestic organizations

- Expertise in global health

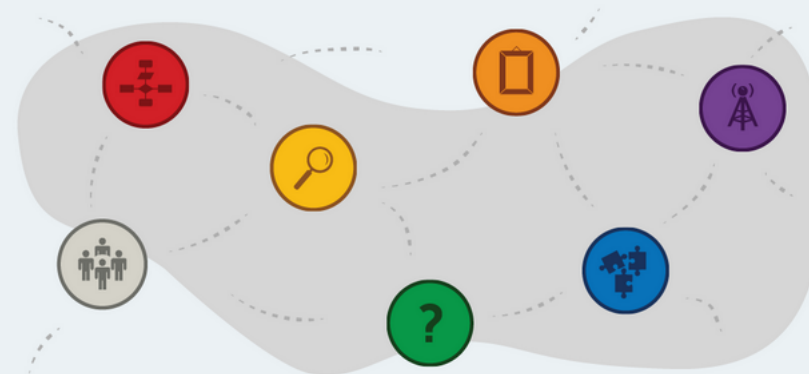- Mid-term evaluation of ASLM LabCoP project

Key Resource: Better Evaluation

Overview

- Evaluation: framework
- Monitoring vs Evaluation
- Managing an evaluation
- A few tips and tricks

What is Evaluation?

Evaluation is a way of reflecting on the work that has been done and the results achieved.

Any systematic process to judge merit, worth or significance by combining evidence and values (Better Evaluation)

"The systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability." (OECD)

Evaluation is Action-Oriented

Evaluation seeks to answer a range of questions that might lead to adjustment of project activities, including:

- Is the program addressing a real problem, and is that problem the right one to address?

- Is the intervention appropriate?

- Are additional interventions necessary to achieve the objectives?

- Is the intervention being implemented as planned?

- Is the intervention effective and resulting in the desired change at a reasonable cost?

Types of Evaluation

Type:
- Process Evaluation
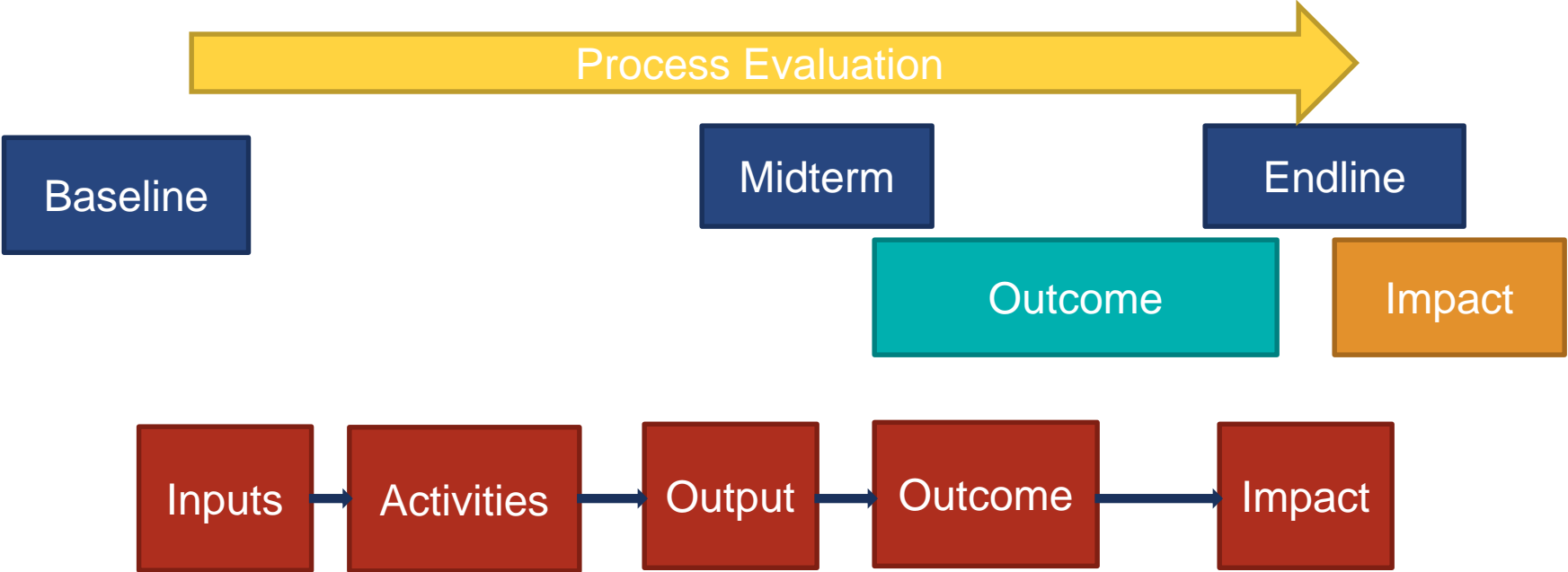- Outcome Evaluation
- Impact Evaluation

Purpose:
- Formative
- Summative

Evaluator:
- External
- Internal
- Hybrid

Linking types of evaluation to the results framework

Process Evaluation

Baseline

Midterm

Endline

Outcome

Impact

Inputs → Activities → Output → Outcome → Impact

Key differences between Monitoring and Evaluation

	Evaluation	Monitoring
Subject	Usually focused on strategic aspects	Addresses operational management issues
Character	Flexible subject and methods	Systematic
Frequency	Periodic	Continuous
Primary client	Stakeholders and external audience	Program management
Party conducting	Can be external or internal	Internal
Approach	Objectivity; transparency	Utility
Methodology	Rigorous research methods, sophisticated tools	Rapid appraisal methods
Primary focus	Focus on relevance, outcomes, impact and sustainability	Focus on operational efficiency
Objectives	To determine outcomes or impact, verify developmental hypothesis, and document successes and lessons	To identify and resolve implementation problems and assess progress towards objectives

Better Evaluation Approach

Rainbow Framework

Rainbow Framework

Rainbow Framework overview and downloads

- Manage
- Define
- Frame
- Describe
- Understand Causes
- Synthesise
- Report & Support Use

1. Decide how decisions about the evaluation will be made

2. Scope the evaluation

3. Develop the Terms of Reference (ToR)

4. Engage the evaluation team

5. Manage development of the evaluation methodology

6. Manage development of the evaluation work plan including logistics

7. Manage implementation of the evaluation

8. Guide production of quality report(s)

9. Disseminate reports and support use of evaluation

GeneraTOR
Terms of Reference generator

Project number

Background information ✓

Scope of the evaluation

Purpose / objectives / rationale ✓

Intended user(s) and use(s) ✓

Evaluation questions ✓

The principles and approach that will guide the evaluation

Methodology

Roles and responsibilities

Evaluator qualifications

Methodology

Once the overall evaluation design has been selected, the methods of investigation should be articulated and should be consistent with answering the evaluation questions, the intended users/uses, the principles and approaches as well as the budget and timeline for the evaluation.

The methodology section should specify as much detail as possible for each of the following:

Information sources / data collection instruments, protocols and procedures

Retrieving existing documents and data

☐ Formal policy documents, implementation plans and reports
☐ Official statistics
☐ Program monitoring data
☐ Program records
☐ Other

Collecting data from individuals or groups

☐ Interviews
☐ Questionnaire or survey
☐ Specialized methods

A few practical tips

Review previous evaluation activities/reports/TOR in your field

Think about evaluation activities at the beginning of your project: part of M&E plan

External evaluations: Have your evaluation partner on board at the start of the project

Budget is often the limiting factor

Use the Better Evaluation resources

BetterEvaluation

A few practical tips continued

Evaluation design for outcome and impact evaluations – thinking about **causation**:

Check consistency with causal contribution

Investigate possible alternative explanations
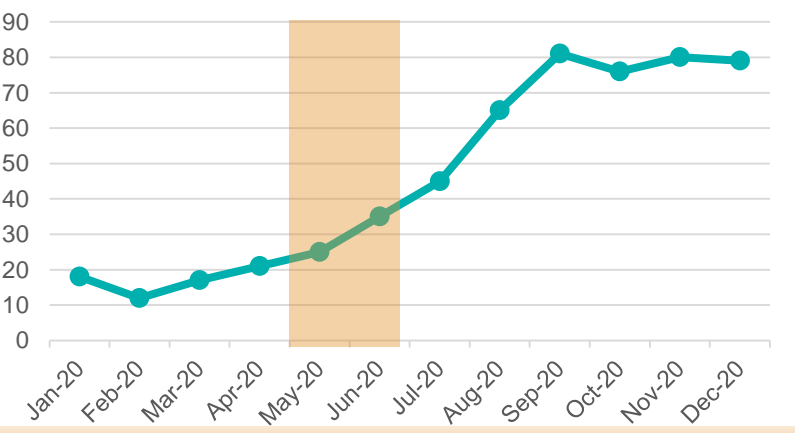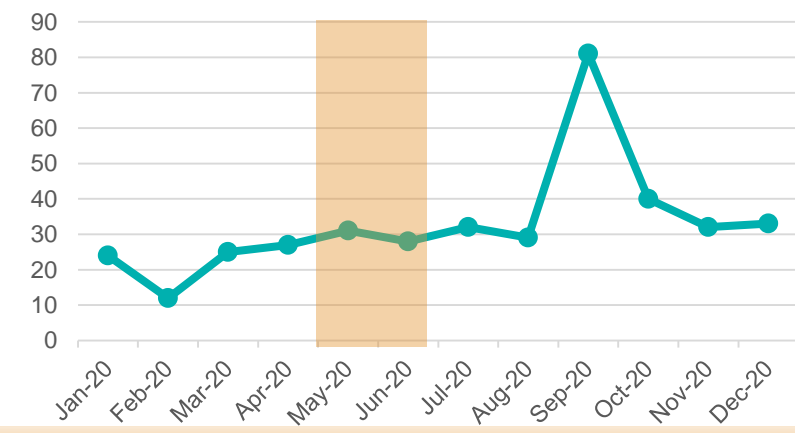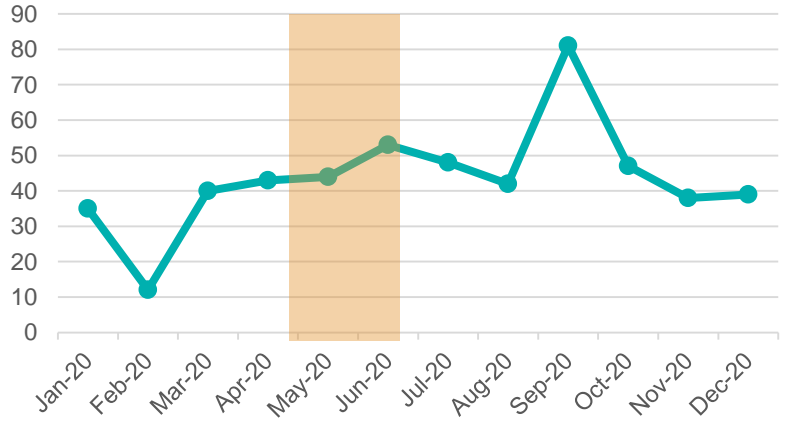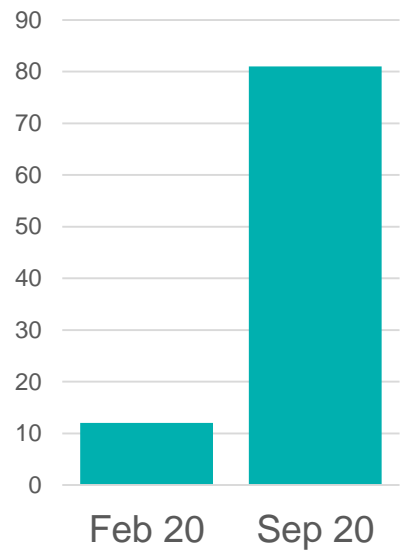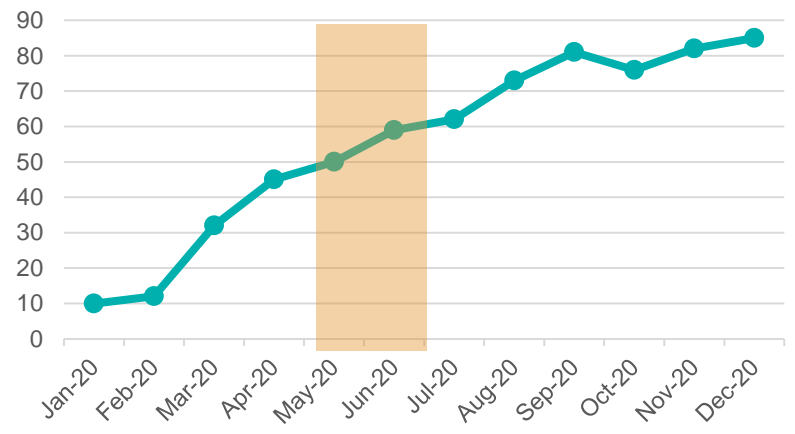
Compare with a counterfactual

- Control group – randomized – gold standard – but rarely used in evaluations.
- Nonrandomized control: adjacent communities/geographies, general population
- Before after comparison: CAVE example next slide

A combination of different approaches that corroborate each other (triangulation)

Before after design

Intervention: Viral Load demand creation activity in May and June 2020 on social media among clients on ART in your province
Measurement: Proportion of people on ART due for a Viral Load test who received a viral load test (per month)

A few practical tips

Use the results of the Viral Load test:

- ART clients with undetectable VL: less intensive models – DSD

- ART clients with VL > 1000 copies/mL

    - Follow-up sample

    - Change regimen if persistent

- Close collaboration with clinicians and recipients of care – get out of the lab!

- Use the advantage of available data – quantitative approaches

- Use your monitoring/quantitative results as a basis for your evaluation: Why have the indicators changed?

- Add Qualitative approaches to complement hard data

Finally ... Use Better Evaluation Resources

The Better Evaluation website combines
- systematic evaluation approaches
- Evaluation learning materials
- Practical examples and tools

BetterEvaluation