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# Evaluation Methods: Overview of Common Approaches

Tania Dmytraczenko and Mursaleena Islam  
Abt Associates Inc.



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# Why evaluate social programs?

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- **To determine impact of a program**
  - Whether program produces pre-defined intended outcomes
  - Whether vouchers affect access, equity, and quality in health services
- **To determine what works best**
  - Whether the program works
  - Does it work efficiently

# Why evaluate social programs? (contd.)

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- **To share lessons learned so that informed decisions can be made regarding funding and designing such programs**
- **Create evidence base for**
  - program funders and implementers
  - community partners
  - evaluation peers
  - other stakeholders

# Aspects to evaluate

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- **Access**
  - How many vouchers are being used and where?
  - Are there any barriers to using vouchers?
- **Equity**
  - Who is using the vouchers? What proportion of the intended target population is using the vouchers? (SES, gender, age groups, or risk groups)
  - Are the vouchers being used by people who previously did not have access?
- **Quality**
  - Are clients receiving better care than previously?
  - Are incentive structures adequate for providers to improve quality?

# How to measure impact?

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- **What would have happened in the absence of the program?**
- **“Impact evaluation assesses a program’s performance in attaining well-defined objectives against an explicit counterfactual, such as the absence of the program”**

(Ravallion, 2007)

# Steps in evaluation

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- **Define counterfactual**
  - since counterfactual is not directly observable, construct the counterfactual by selecting a population group not affected by the program
- **Define clear outcome indicators**
- **Assess outcomes against explicit and policy-relevant counterfactuals**
  - for treatment vs. control groups

# Validity

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- **Internal validity**

- Can we attribute the impact estimates to the program and not to something else

- **External validity**

- Can we generalize the impact estimates from this program to other populations, time periods, countries, etc.

# Biases to consider

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- **Sample selection bias**
- **Attrition bias**
- **Duration bias**



# Types of impact evaluation methods – rigorous approaches

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- **Randomized evaluations**
  - Compare randomly assigned treatment and control groups (often with staggered roll-out)
- **Non-experimental or quasi-experimental methods**
  - Differences-in-differences (pre/post survey)
  - Time-series

# Types of impact evaluation methods – other approaches

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- **Case study**
  - quantitative data analysis
  - qualitative assessments – interviews, focus group discussions

# Data collection methods

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- **Population based household surveys**
- **Patient exit surveys**
- **Secret shoppers/sham patients/mystery client surveys**
- **Provider observation**
- **Facility survey**
- **Focus groups**

# Issues to consider when selecting evaluation design

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- Reason for conducting evaluation and need for a rigorous approach
- Funders' expectations
- Budget
- Availability of existing data
  - census, health, poverty level
- Logistics available for data collection
- Project time frame and scale
- Prevalence of condition or utilization rate

# Monitoring needs

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- **Quality**
- **Outputs**
- **Client satisfaction**
- **Program costs**
- **Fraud**
  - **Producer: over-production**
  - **Consumer: leakage**



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# Thank you

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