

# BENEFICIARY FEEDBACK IN EVALUATION: A STRUCTURED APPROACH

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Presentation to Aspen Institute, APEP Breakfast Series  
April 2015

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# Beneficiary Feedback in Evaluation: A DFID Working Paper



<http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/Project/61458/>

# Evidence Base

- 130 documents
- Interviews– 50 people
- Online contributions from 33 practitioners (<https://beneficiaryfeedbackinevaluationandresearch.wordpress.com/>)
- Analysis of 32 shortlisted evaluations

# Typology of beneficiary feedback

- One-way feedback **to** beneficiaries
- One-way feedback **from** beneficiaries
- Two-way feedback: **inter active conversation** between beneficiaries and evaluators but with evaluation team retaining independence and power and;
- Two-way feedback through **participatory evaluation** with beneficiaries as part of the evaluation team.

# Analytical Framework

|                                 | One-way feedback to beneficiaries | One-way feedback from beneficiaries | Two-way feedback - interactive conversation between beneficiaries and evaluators | Two-way feedback through participatory evaluation |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Evaluation Design               | X                                 |                                     |  | Y   |
| Data Collection                 |                                   |                                     | X  | Y   |
| Validation and Analysis         |                                   | X                                   |  | Y   |
| Dissemination and Communication | X                                 |                                     |  | Y   |

# Current Practice?

Mostly limited to data collection stage of evaluation: Lost opportunities and risks



|                          |                                       |                                      |  |                                    |                                     |  |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Evaluation Stages</b> | D: Dissemination and Communication    |                                      |  |                                    |                                     | <p>Key to bubbles:</p> <p>Small: 1-2 organisations</p> <p>Medium: 3-5 organisations</p> <p>Large: 6+ organisations</p> |
|                          | C: Data validation and early analysis |                                      |  |                                    |                                     |  |
|                          | B: Evidence gathering                 |                                      |  |                                    |                                     |  |
|                          | A: Evaluation Design                  |                                      |  |                                    |                                     |  |
|                          |                                       | 1. One-way feedback to beneficiaries | 2. One-way feedback from beneficiaries | 3. Two-way feedback - conversation | 4. Two-way feedback – joint working |  |
|                          | <b>4 Types of Feedback</b>            |                                      |  |                                    |                                     |  |

## **DFID: Minimum standard advisable**

= Evaluation commissioners and evaluators give due consideration to different types of beneficiary feedback in each of the four key stages of the evaluation process.



# Checklist

| Evaluation Stage  | Considerations   |
|---|--|
| Preparing for an evaluation:<br><br>Developing the Terms of Reference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Sufficiently strong commitment?</b> Adaptive programming possible?</li> <li>✓ Does <b>context section</b> clarify who the beneficiaries are, programme relationship with beneficiaries, and whether there has already been a process of beneficiary feedback during programme implementation.</li> <li>✓ Linking with <b>other data/ evaluations</b> by other donors to minimise beneficiary burden?</li> <li>✓ Does <b>methodology section</b> include consideration of different types of beneficiary feedback in each of the four stages of the evaluation process?</li> <li>✓ Does the <b>target audience</b> section include beneficiaries,? Should it?</li> <li>✓ Do the <b>competencies</b> required support meaningful and ethical beneficiary feedback?</li> <li>✓ Would it be reasonable to include representatives of the beneficiary population (e.g. town mayor or other leaders) on the <b>advisory group/ evaluation reference group</b>?</li> <li>✓ Have you required a <b>dissemination and communication plan</b> that includes beneficiaries/ beneficiary evaluation participants?</li> <li>✓ Do the <b>outputs include appropriate</b> products for feeding back to beneficiaries living in poverty e.g. a youth friendly summary? Radio show? Poster?</li> <li>✓ Will <b>evaluation questions</b> include how well project staff listened and responded?</li> <li>✓ Is there any <b>scope for beneficiary input</b> into the Terms of Reference?</li> </ul> |

## Checklist (Cont'd)

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Design                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Do processes of <b>quality assurance</b> of inception reports and methodological papers:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Assess</li><li>b) Verify</li><li>c) Validate choices made</li></ul></li></ul>  |
| Evidence gathering, analysis and validation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Do processes of <b>quality assurance</b> of draft and final reports:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– monitor the quality of beneficiary feedback- both methodologically and ethically and</li><li>– ensure that commitments made in design are followed through and that beneficiary feedback is not the first thing to “drop off” the list as often happens.</li></ul></li></ul>  |
| Dissemination and communication             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Are <b>necessary resources invested</b> in ensuring that dissemination and communication, including of management responses, occurs in a meaningful manner- including to beneficiaries and to decision makers within and outside of the organisation?</li><li>✓ Is there scope for supporting a commitment to ensuring that <b>dissemination goes all the way down the chain</b>, including beneficiary representatives who might have responsibility for feeding findings back to their communities? Are implementing or other partners prepared to support dissemination activities? If so, is it possible to agree a joint strategy?</li></ul> |

# Concluding Thoughts

Time to move beyond normative positioning of beneficiary feedback as “good thing”

And beyond “Beneficiary = data provider”

## **COULD YOU:**

- Use the framework?
- Think about current evaluations- where could you improve?
- Share your experiences through the blog?

Thank you...

