UKES CONFERENCE 2012 Evaluation for results: What counts? Who stands to gain? How is it done?

Description

Tweet

16 March 2012
The Macdonald Hotel, Birmingham

[from UKES website] UKES conferences address leading issues of the day in programme and policy evaluation. The 2012 Annual Conference will address the current drive towards evaluation focused on results â?? frequently linked to â??Payment by Resultsâ?? and what, in international development and elsewhere, is familiar as â??Results-Based Managementâ??.

Evaluators and those who commission evaluation who advocate a focus on results reflect a legitimate concern with the productivity and efficiency of programmes and the capacity of interventions to secure gains and improvements in practice and provision. They point out that programmes should be held to account to accomplish what they were designed to do and paid for, often out of public funds. A primary focus on results seeks to emphasise main effects and outcomes that have been valued and agreed. In times of austerity and unusually scarce resources, proponents of a strong focus on results argue that emphasising value for money is socially responsible.

Others argue that an over-emphasis on measuring a programmeâ??s results neglects important questions of how results are generated in a context, whether results capture the real quality and accomplishments of a programme, and how those results may reflect the values and ambitions of all programme stakeholders. They remind us of secondary effects and â??unintended beneficiariesâ?? of programmes that may not be readily captured by results. Some also raise questions about the source of criteria over what counts as a worthwhile result given that not all programme achievements can be measured, and stakeholders may differ over a programmeâ??s objectives.

Against this background conference participants are invited to contribute their own perspectives on the dominant issues they consider relevant to the theory and practice of evaluation in the public interest. We anticipate a lively and informative debate to stimulate professional learning and to contribute to the improvement of evaluation practice and commissioning.

Potential contributors are invited to propose discussions, seminar presentations, lectures or poster sessions which explore issues around this theme. Those issues may fall within one of the following categories â?? though you are invited to propose your own theme:?

- How do we define a valid â??resultâ?? and whose results get counted?
- How do we best measure a result â?? including taking account of counterfactuals?
- How do we understand where results came from, what significance they have and whether they can be replicated â?? i.e. what is the relation between a result and context?
- Where do benchmarks come from to measure results achievement?
- If a result is, say, a 4% improvement â?? how do we know whether that is a lot or a little under the circumstances?

- How do we represent the circumstances and mechanisms that give rise to a result?
- How do we account for programme accomplishments that are not represented in results?
- Is results-measurement a robust foundation for replication/extension of a programme?

A formal call for papers and proposals for sessions will be circulated shortly. The conference will be preceded on 15 March 2012 with a choice of training workshops on specialist topics.

Category

1. Conferences
2. Types of Events

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