Meeting: Complexity and evaluation

Description

Tweet

Date: 15th April 2009
Venue: Diana Memorial Fund offices on the South Bank, London

Dear All,

The next event in the ongoing series exploring how complexity is useful in the aid and development sectors will focus on evaluation. The meeting will be hosted by Panos London on Wednesday April 15th (9am-5pm) at the Diana Memorial Fund offices on the South Bank.

Building on the previous sessions which have focused on the background and theoretical roots of complexity, we will have a brief introduction to some of the key issues and implications for evaluation approaches that attempt to address the complex nature of aid and development.

A large part of the day will focus exploring and sharing practical examples of projects and programmes where evaluation approaches which borrow from complexity thinking have been attempted.

It is increasingly recognised that development and aid work is subject to multiple and often unforeseen influences on the possibilities of positive development outcomes. Evaluation techniques however, are still largely based on assumptions of linear causality between the inputs of a project and expected outcomes.

For the complex reality of social systems to be adequately addressed, there needs to be better recognition of the multiple factors that impact on any particular situation, and the more modest contribution of a project to outcomes in what is a constantly changing environment.

There perhaps needs to be more of an emphasis on learning and reflection, and an ongoing, adaptive engagement with the shifting context, if development responses are to achieve their strategic aims. But a shift from focusing on contribution, rather than attribution sits uneasily with current aspirations for identifying unequivocal impacts, demanded by top-down, pre-specified models of accountability.

This day will explore a range of challenges for evaluation in complex social settings, such as: how to re-position evaluations to improve understanding of and responses to complexity; enhancing the learning function of monitoring and evaluation; improving programme adaptability through evaluation.

Places are limited, so if you would like to come please email Bec Shaw Crompton at Panos: bec.crompton@panos.org.uk

Please include a couple of sentences to describe your interest in this area â?? in the event that the day is oversubscribed weâ??ll use these as some kind of criteria for selection. Please also let us know if there is a case study of applying complexity to evaluation that youâ??d like to share on the day.

Directions and a more detailed agenda for the day with information about the case-studies to be shared will follow.

Apologies if some of you got this invitation twice!

Regards

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Category

1. Types of Events
2. Workshops

Date
15/11/2026
Date Created
02/04/2009
Author
admin