Editorial

Description

Tweet

The â??**Rick on the Road**â?• blog is where I write about specific issues M&E issues that are of interest to me. Here is the list of the most recent â??Rick on the Roadâ?• editorial postings:

2024

- On two types of Theories of Change: Temporal and atemporal, and how they might be bridged
- Developing and using a Configurational Theory of Change within an evaluation

2023

- Using the Confusion Matrix as a general-purpose analytic framework
- Beyond summarisation by AI and/or editors- Readers can now interrogate full transcripts of meeting discussions
- Evaluating thematic coding and text summarisation work done by artificial intelligence (LLM)
- Finding useful distinctions between different futures
- How can evaluators practically think about multiple Theories of Change in a particular context?

2022

- Four types of futures that should be covered by a Theories of Change
- We need more doubt and uncertainty!
- Using ParEvo to conduct thought experiments
- Alternative futures as â??search strategiesâ?•
- Budgets as theories
- Making small samples of large populations useful

2021

- Choosing between simpler and more complex versions of a Theory of Change
- Exploring counterfactual histories of an intervention
- Reconciling the need for both horizontal and vertical dimensions in a Theory of Change diagram
- Diversity and complexity? Where should we focus our attention?
- Paired case comparisons as an alternative to a configurational analysis (QCA or otherwise)
- The potential use of Scenario Planning methods to help articulate a Theory of Change
- Mapping the â??structure of cooperationâ?•: Adding the time dimension and thinking about further analyses
- Connecting Scenario Planning and Theories of Change

2020:

- The implications of complex program designs: Six proposals worth exploring?

- â??If you want to think outside of the box, you first need to find the boxâ?• â?? some practical evaluative thinking about Futures Literacy
- Has the meaning of impact evaluation been hijacked?
- Quality of Evidence criteria that can be applied to Most Significant Change (MSC) stories
- Mapping the structure of cooperation
- EvalC3 versus QCA â?? compared by a re-analysis of one data set
- Converting a continuous variable into a binary variable i.e. dichotomising
- Rubrics? Yes, butâ?¦
- Temporal networks: Useful static representations of dynamic events

2019:

- Combining the use of the Confusion Matrix as a visualisation tool with a Bayesian view of probability
- On finding the weakest linkâ?¦
- Participatory design of network models: Some implications for analysis
- Extracting additional value from the analysis of QuIP data
- On evaluating innovation
- Where there is no (decent / usable) Theory of Changeâ?¦
- On using clustering algorithms to help with sampling decisions

2018:

- Two versions of the Design Triangle â?? for choosing evaluation methods

2017

- Transparent Analysis Plans

2016

- â?¦and then a miracle happens (or two or three)
- Three ways of thinking about linearity
- EvalC3 â?? an Excel-based package of tools for exploring and evaluating complex causal configurations
- Why we should also pay attention to â??what does not workâ?•
- Why I am sick of Evaluation Questions!

2015

- False Positives â?? why we should pay more attention to them
- Macro versus meta Theories of Change
- Clustering projects according to similarities in outcomes they achieve
- Evolving better performing hypotheses, using Excel
- Is QCA its own worst enemy?
- Characterising purposive samples
- Evaluating the performance of binary predictions
- How to select which hypotheses to test?

- In defense of the (careful) use of algorithms and the need for dialogue between tacit (expertise) and explicit (rules) forms of knowledge
- A mistaken criticism of the value of binary data

2014

- Comparing QCA and Decision Tree models â?? an ongoing discussion
- Pair comparisons: For where there is no common outcome measure?
- The challenges of using QCA
- Thinking about set relationships within monitoring data

2013

- Complex Theories of Change: Recipes for failure or for learning?
- Measuring the impact of ideas: Some testable propositions
- A reverse QCA?
- Another perspective on the uses of control groups
- An example application of Decision Tree models
- My problem with RCTs

2012

- Evolutionary strategies for complex environments
- AusAIDâ??s â??Revitalising Indonesiaâ??s Knowledge Sector for Development Policyâ?? program
- Open source evaluation â?? the way forward?
- Representing different combinations of causal conditions
- A perspective on â??Value for Moneyâ?• relationships
- Data mining algorithms as evaluation tools
- Criteria for assessing the evaluability of Theories of Change
- Can we evolve explanations of observed outcomes?
- Modular Theories of Change: A means of coping with diversity and change?
- Evaluation questions: Managing agency, bias and scale

2011

- Evaluation quality standards: Theories in need of testing?
- Relative rather than absolute counterfactuals: A more useful alternative?
- Evaluation methods looking for projects or projects seeking appropriate evaluation methods?
- Models and reality: Dialogue through simulation
- A submission to the UK Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI)

2010

  - Counter-factuals and counter-theoreticals: What to do when random assignment is not an optionâ?¦.
  - Do we need a Minimal Level of Failure (MLF)?
  - Meta-narratives, evaluation and complexity

- Cynefin Framework versus Stacey Matrix versus network perspectives
- Evaluating a composite Theory of Change (ToC)

2009

- Reflections on Dave Snowdenâ??s presentations on sense-making and complexity
- On the poverty of baselines and targetsâ?¦
- Why we should make economists work harder
- Constructing longer term perspectives
- Bibliographic Timelines

2008

- Comments on the draft DFID evaluation policy
- An aid bubble? â?? Interpreting aid trends
- Aid organisations as self-interested businesses?
- Social Frameworks: An improvement on the Logical Framework?
- Assessing achievements in Katine, Uganda
- A network approach to the selection of â??Most Significant Changeâ?• stories

2007

- Managing expectations about monitoring and evaluation in Katine
- Katine: an experiment in more publicly transparent aid processes
- Checklists as mini theories-of-change
- Evolving storylines: A participatory design process?
- Prediction markets as a source of independent and continuous evaluation for development projects?

2006

- Assumptions, evidence and multiple stakeholders
- Evidence that the (development) world is getting better
- Integrating funding applications and baseline surveys
- The risks of big increases in aid flows to poor countries
- The â??attribution problemâ?• problem

2005

- Impact pathways and genealogies
- Networks of Indicators
- Fight institutional Alzheimers
- Using â??modular matricesâ?• to describe programme intentions and achievements
- Constructing â??an auditable trail of intentionsâ?¦â?•
- Identifying the impact of evaluations: Follow the money?
- Learning circles and loops: Time for some more sophisticated representations

2004

- Open Government and Open Aid
- No more paradigm changes please!
- Where have all the evaluations gone?
- Projects versus Project Funding Mechanisms
- Treating organisations as though they were machines
- Is moving the goal posts a good thing?
- Where are the partners?
- Monitoring empowerment: A contradiction in terms?
- Why did the chicken cross the road?
- Thinking about networks of policies
- Question: How do you assess a countryâ??s ownership of a PRSP?
- Hypothesis-led Surveys of Influence â?? on KAP
- PRSP Monitoring: Target fixation and mission creep

Readers may also be interested in

- The Rickâ??s Methods page on this site
- Rick Daviesâ?? comments on other websites and blogs [in process]
- My YouTube presentations from some training events and conferences
- See also Evaluating Katine

Category

1. Uncategorized

Date
05/11/2026
Date Created
14/04/2008
Author
admin