

Evaluation: A 'nested game changer' for ESE¹ as evaluative processes of learning-led change

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... we have to be evaluative if we are to describe, understand, and explain social life adequately (Sayer, 2011, p.216, emphasis added).

Abstract:

The paper opens with a critique of instrumental perspectives on education and evaluation that emerged within the structural-functionalist bureaucratisation of modern social life in social institutions. The conventional wisdom here, commonly reduces evaluation to accountable measure of behavioural outcomes or to a perspective on the worth of a course that can be reduced to a collection of 'likes'. The study notes how an instrumental system of reason in education and its evaluation has persisted despite the shift to ESE as co-engaged evaluative processes for enabling participants to enact evaluative transitions toward more just and sustainable ways of being.

The paper approaches evaluation as nested assessment moments for, as, in and of ESE as situated processes of deliberative, learning-led change. In this way the narrative scopes an expanding evaluation landscape implicit in environment and sustainability education. Here, the SDGs are reframed as an evaluation tool for enabling more purposeful contextual work in situated depth-inquiry where participants are co-engaged in evaluative actions. The mix of evaluative work here shapes and plays out in reflexive patterns of reason and changing material practices that can, in turn, be evaluated for the coherence of the associated learning actions and their outcomes.

The paper thus points to a need to contemplate four intermeshing dimensions of evaluative assessment for, as, in and of ESE, namely:

- *Evaluation **for** ESE (Contextual histories and the SDGs)*
- *Evaluative action learning transactions **as** ESE (Deliberative critical processes of reflexive, depth inquiry enhancing diverse competences)*

¹ Environment and Sustainability Education (ESE) is approached as a process encompassing diverse education responses to social justice and future sustainability concerns. These emerged in early conservation, environmental, development, peace and global citizenship education, for example, as expanding sustainability education imperatives that has been variously contested and enacted in response to emergent matters of concern in a changing world of and at risk.

² This paper, lead authored by Rob O'Donoghue with Eureka Rosenberg (Rhodes University Chair of Monitoring and Evaluation in a SITA Environment), Deepika Joon (Mahatma Gandhi Institute for Education and Peace, MGIEP) and Jennifer Krah (WWF, Germany), was developed across a series of ESD Expert-Net workshops on evaluation in 2017/18. (<http://www.esd-expert.net>)

- *Evaluation **in** ESE as embodied processes of reflexive learning (Tools and processes for participants to produce and assess value.)*
- *Evaluation **of** ESE practices and their outcomes (The evaluation of programmes, projects, centres and outcomes, impacts and scaling of change in transformative material practices).*

An expanded and integrated conception of evaluation is centred on the modern human condition where reflexive agency for positive, depth enquiry has emerged as necessary evaluative processes to foster deliberative action learning and change. To develop this wider perspective, the narrative scopes four start-up trajectories in evaluation around local change projects, namely:

1. *working with **contextual histories and the SDGs** as an initiating evaluation tool for ESE*
2. *contemplating the **purposes of evaluation** work in ESE as reflexive processes of evaluative learning and change*
3. *ESE as inclusive processes where the rational contours of sustainable futures are differentiated by **participants in the course of depth inquiry**, and*
4. *Where the **outcomes of learning-led change** remain open to review for the scope of the change (impact / scale) but where these are not only attributed to education processes but inscribed in the evaluative agency of the participants producing both more enlightened learning and any associated emancipatory change.*

The central concern of the paper is to question the narrow, instrumental scope of current systems of reason informing evaluation practices and to open up the possibility of better situated evaluation work that is more orientated towards ESE as deliberative processes of evaluative reflexivity. These reflexive historical processes of becoming critically active in the re-making of society and ourselves are contemplated as co-engaged evaluation in our changing worlds.

Preamble

Most environment and sustainability education processes include elements of action and reflection that, in ESE, are commonly associated with participant-initiated change projects in our daily lives, institutional settings or communities. The conclusion of an intervention project commonly involves evaluation work to judge the effectiveness and impact of an intended process of learning and change. This narrow approach to evaluation reflects a system of reason which developed within modernity in a period where education was seen as an instrument of change. The instrumental assumptions and functionalist dispositions of modern education are examined in this paper towards repositioning evaluation as an critical agency emergent where people are engaged in the reflexive reproduction of sustainable well-being within the finite limits of socio-economic and ecological systems and processes. Here evaluation work is emerging as a reflexive human agency that has expanded the hitherto narrow scope and reductionist systems of reason in evaluation and evaluation research to become a nested game-changer.

Background

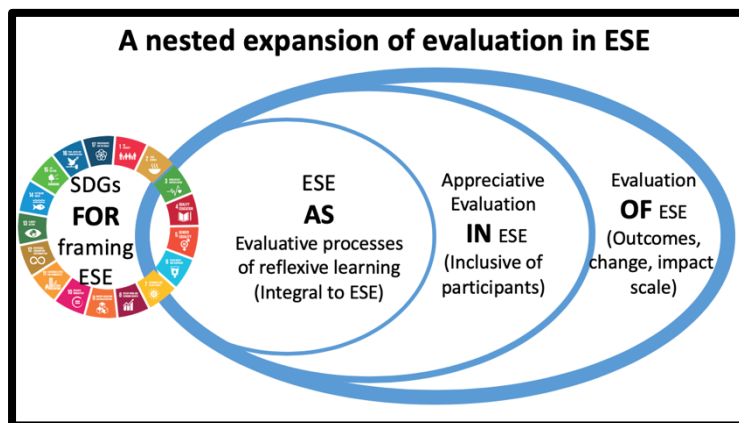


Figure 1: A nested image for ESE and evaluation

been wide ranging across concerns like poverty and social justice as well as biodiversity loss and climate change, for example.

The scope of sustainability concerns have been made explicit by world governments in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as an agenda for evaluation and change on both local and global scales. As an integrating discourse, the emergence of environment and sustainability concerns in Education for Sustainable Development has shaped and activated diverse social movements, notably within the UNESCO DESD and the Global Action Programme (GAP) that followed and is now integrated with Global Citizenship Education (GCEd) (UNESCO, 2018). Here imperatives for learning-led change have developed as salvation narratives for humanity to engage and resolve sustainability concerns. The underlying educational rationale for ESE is that expanding systemic and social-ecological competences will enable participants to recognise sustainability concerns and effect the necessary changes to attain the desired, more sustainable, states of being signalled in the 17 key focus areas and their specified goals. The outcomes are then to be assessed against the SDGs with measures that attest to the attainment of specified goals as proxies for the desired states of future sustainability.

Defining the generalised norms and standards for evaluation UNEG (2016) specifies:

An evaluation is an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality using appropriate criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide credible, useful evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of organizations and stakeholders.

This externalises and constitutes evaluation as impartial, rational and professional processes of accountability that was perhaps necessary in relation to development funding. There are implicit limitations here, and a reductionist perspective of education being enacted as an instrument of change to subsequently be evaluated. This approach does not include the evaluative human agency necessary for deliberating (co-engaged) partners to discover and

Diverse forms of ESE as evaluative processes of learning-led change have encapsulated and superseded earlier education narratives like conservation, development, human rights, peace and environmental education that had proliferated as responses to increasing contradictions and risk in the modernist project. Here focus areas for evaluative review have

produce an enhanced well-being that is more sustainable in a changing world. The study proposes an expansion of current disposition on evaluation and for ESE to be contemplated as a nested sequencing of evaluative processes of situated learning-led change (See Figure 1)

In the earlier functionalist framings of global education as instrumental interventions to effect change, the measurement of behaviour change was the gold standard for evaluation. Despite more inclusive, participatory and collaborative methodologies, these entrenched systems of reason on evaluation have remained relatively unchanged. Evaluation systems still exemplify impact measures of behavioural change as evidence of transformation to future sustainability. Also, the measurement of these effects is commonly undertaken by more objective and trusted external agents for institutions framing education initiatives to mediate future sustainability. This has shaped evaluation as an expert field of endeavour that is relatively blind to evaluative processes that are integral to learning-led collaborative processes of reflexive reorientation.

The review noted how instrumental systems of reason driving evaluation work are prone to assumptions that are not consistent with participatory learning processes of reflexive change, an evaluative and co-engaged process of situated, evaluative learning. Here the specifics of sustainable human wellbeing are not open to a priori specification as these must emerge for humans within deliberative enquiry. Individuals and groups engaging in resolving the concerns of the day can come to realise new insights and enact change to mediate social-ecological and economic wellbeing of people and planet. An emergent condition of wellbeing can only be proposed as found in the SDGs but cannot be known before being realised by participants engaged in reflexive activity. Here they are guided by what is becoming known to them in deliberative action learning so this only emerge for them in an enlightened learning condition that is open to refinement and further change as conditions change.

An underlying functionalist rationale

The Millennium Development Goals were accompanied by a United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development that has now been followed by Sustainable Development Goals and an associated Global Action Plan (GAP, as mentioned above). Here

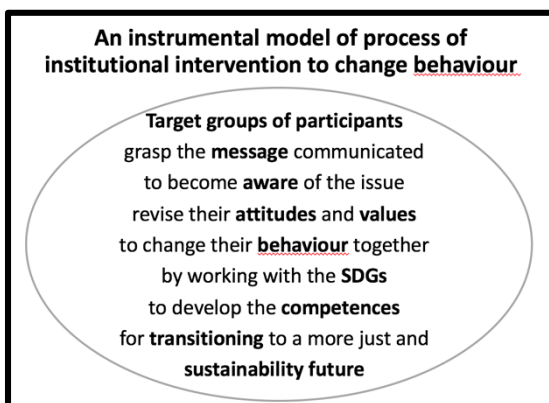


Figure 2: An instrumental schema for ESE

education, environment, civic and state organisations all over the world made commitments to mediate change, working with the Global Goals 2030 (SDGs) as a roadmap to future sustainability. The embedded theory of change or system of educational reasoning in most of these initiatives was constituted around educational interventions to create awareness so as to change attitudes and values in learning actions that develop the necessary competences to effect the desired change towards a sustainable future (See figure 2 for a process model of an educational intervention).

Limitations of instrumentalist approaches to ESE

Institutional models of instrumental change do not come with an adequate underlying theory of change and human agency. It is simplistic to assume that that information / knowledge on risk, communicated to target groups, will create the awareness and that the associated learning will develop competencies with changed attitude and values that shape changed patterns of behaviour. One of the difficulties here is that education is seen as the instrument of change within a conventional wisdom that it is the intervention that produces behaviour change to be assessed against benchmarks (SDG Goals) as indicators that reflect proxies for the attainment of a sustainable future. Unfortunately, this is a dissociative logic as it is only humans learning individually and in the mediating company of others in education and other settings who can develop a cognitive capability to enact and realise change. The mediating design and progressions of a course cannot be given causal precedence over the reflexive capabilities of participant actions as they learn together on a course. Alongside this it should be pointed out that no educational research has determined a conclusive causal progression from awareness creation and behaviour change, except perhaps at the level of becoming aware that fire burns and choosing not to touch a hot pot on a stove without suitable oven gloves. And yet the instrumental shorthand of courses creating change and the associated educational assumptions that one can measure behaviour change as a learning outcome is still the underlying logic in most education and evaluation work.

Popkewitz (2017) describes how this institutional disposition has emerged as a system of reason which promises relief from uncertainty through the educational intervention being the instrument that produces an enlightened future. The roots of this pattern of reason can be found in how the sciences have produced institutional knowledge that has resolved uncertainties despite the reality that the same scientific innovation has also produced much of the escalating risk we are currently experiencing in our modern age. However, a faith in science and progress has led to the doubtful extrapolation that the provision of knowledge through education will create awareness that will, in turn, produce the desired behaviour change.

Here it is also important to note how, in colonial modernity within many countries of The South, the sciences and state institutions were implicated in colonising processes of social engineering that gave effect to particular historical patterns of exclusion. Notable in apartheid South Africa and elsewhere were sustained state processes of economic, racial and political marginalisation of indigenous peoples. The reductionism in instrumental pedagogies for education and its evaluation commonly exclude these social histories from consideration as the focus in education programmes becomes technical competencies. Educational interventions can thus be experienced by many in the South as oppressive and as lacking relevance. They can also play out in modes of instrumental social control that are resisted least they continue the exclusionary social-ecological cultures and economic hegemonies of a globalising West.

In summary, the scientific treatment and assessment of people through education programmes that are orientated to give effect to and measure a priori specifications of competences to mediate future conditions of sustainability have developed as an

entrenched but tenuous intellectual conventional wisdom in modern education. One of the challenges in instrumental systems of reason is that education as processes of emerging competence are not easily articulated within imperial histories of domination and exclusion/ oppression in the South or with associated struggles for emancipation. Exclusionary histories and emancipatory struggles can be stripped away and displaced by technical inscriptions of competence like systems thinking and problem solving skills. Here competencies can be little more than inadequate proxies that are unlikely to engage participants in producing the conditions of future sustainability and wellbeing that they desire.

Specifications of competence should note how learner agency and collaboration is a necessary and emergent dimension for participants to develop the insights and grasp necessary for realising desired emancipatory change together. In formal education, Rieckman (2018) illustrates how the SDGs can be deployed as an agenda centred on competencies to be acquired within a specified blend of cognitive, social-emotional and behavioural dimensions for ESE pedagogy in classroom learning (See also UNESCO, 2017)³. The three categories of objectives are stipulated for student acquisition of knowledge, social acumen and systemic competences for transitioning to future sustainability. Competences here are useful referents for contemplating and enabling action learning towards better ways of knowing and doing things together. In this way the SDGs, as a 'road-map' for future sustainability, can assist participants in learning transactions to choreograph how they might come to grasp concerns and become competent to enact any necessary change.

A pedagogical omission here is that the necessary contextual histories for initiating and enacting change are emergent properties that cannot be reduced to systemic and other categories of competence. Contextual histories and life experience cannot be displaced by abstract specifications of technical competences as those necessary for a systemic grasp of and coordinated action on sustainability concerns. Pinker (2018) pointing to the importance of the 'cognitive or cultural niche' of the human condition notes:

This embraces a suite of new adaptations, including the ability to manipulate mental models of the world and predict what would happen if one tried out new things; the ability to cooperate with others which allowed teams of people to accomplish what a single person could not; and language, which allowed them to coordinate their actions and to pool the fruits of their experience into the collections of skills and norms we call cultures. (Pinker, 2018 p. 23.)

The challenge here is to not to specify competences as abstractions but to see them as emergent within intergenerational cultures of knowing (contextual historical capital) as foundations for evaluative inquiry by participants. This clarifying break within earlier instrumentalism exemplifies ESE as emergent, emancipatory processes of situated learning where participants work from what is experienced and known as they travel together on deliberative, learning pathways to future sustainability that becomes known to them.

³ For the area of Higher Education Wiek et al. (2011, 2016) synthesised a key competency model in sustainability education, also giving suggestions how to operationalize these (systems thinking, future thinking/anticipatory, values thinking/normative, strategic/action oriented, collaboration/interpersonal and integrated problem solving competence).

An explicit inclusion of contextual histories and life experiences here foregrounds reflexive systemic competences as an evaluative capability for the emergent realising of changing ways of being and doing things together in a changing world.

Towards more inclusive approaches to ESE and evaluation

It has been noted how institutional evaluation practices have reifying and narrowing



Figure 3: A co-engaged schema for participatory ESE processes

attributes in education that is approached as instrumental change management with measurement of behaviour as the gold standard in programme evaluation. Here instrumental generalisation has exemplified reified competencies over reflexive expansion within and through situated cultural capital. Most recently, ESE is being exemplified as contextually within cultural norms and emergent within co-engaged processes of reflexive depth inquiry. Here the concern is with participants working from what is known, to deliberately learn together to

recognise sustainability concerns, assess value and exploring better ways of acting to bring about change as expansive learning processes (See fig: 3). Here the competencies associated with recognising concerns, assessing value and acting for change (Schreiber and Siegel 2016) are evaluative processes in ESE.

There have been notable shifts from functionalist models of process for education as institutional interventions to more contextual, participatory and action-centred approaches. The latter foreground the context and deliberative agency of the participants and are centred on a concern for how evaluative depth enquiry in a given context will enable participants to transition to more sustainable states of wellbeing.

Evaluation in this transition to more situated, emergent and participatory approaches to education has recently stuttered between differing degrees of specification and measurement. As mediating control has shifted from the intervening programme of education to co-engaged participants and developing reflexive competence to enact change together, evaluation has become more integral to and distributed across education processes. The significant point for evaluation work is that education as an emergent change game, reframes evaluative processes as a nested sequence in nested evaluative progressions as was depicted in Figure 1. Perhaps the most significant change here, is a de-centring from instrumental intervention to situated participatory agency for depth inquiry to effect change towards more sustainable wellbeing; an emergent process of realising discovery through inclusive depth inquiry by individuals and collectives working from culture and life experience and using what is known to them in deliberative engagement with emancipatory concerns that become evident and important to the co-engaged participants.

The expanding integration of evaluation in ESE as deliberative action learning, resonates more closely with the SDGs as a process of evaluation for framing ESE deliberations amongst the interest groups in a given context, opening the way for co-engaged work as a learning journey to sustainable wellbeing as an open-ended arena of change in response to emerging risk.

To make the four intersecting evaluation processes for ESE, as ESE, in ESE and of ESE more explicit, we developed a cup and saucer metaphorical image. This attempts to remind us that we must ensure that situating, integral process, inclusivity and outcome evaluation are in a balanced mix.

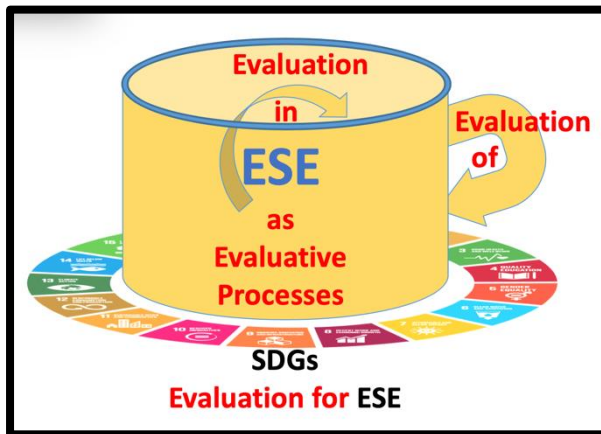


Figure 4: A cup and saucer metaphor for ESE and evaluation

Pinker notes:

As soon as you turn up to discuss the question of what we should live for (or any other question) as long as you insist your answers, whatever they are, are reasonable or justified or true and that therefore other people ought to believe them too, then you have committed yourself to reason, and to hold your beliefs accountable to objective standards (Pinker, 2018:8).

Objectivity here can be narrowly inscribed as what can be measured or what can be reasoned in the company of others within the intergenerational processes producing a current grasp of things. A grasp of reasoned objectivity⁴ developing within the evaluative processes of critical reflexivity can produce what is reasonable or justified and true for those committed to learning-led change as an evaluative process that is open to evaluation by all of those involved.

Practical evaluation tools for an ESE change project

Evaluation tools were developed as starting points for partners initiating local ESE change projects. The starting point that participants found useful was to initially specify the purposes of the evaluation process and then to ensure that there is a balance across:

1. Contextual profiling use of the SDGs to frame concerns with participants (Constitutive Evaluation)
2. Developing tools for participants to monitor and report activities (Appreciative Enquiry)
3. Tools to assess value creation and the scope and scale of impact of the project learning activities (Value Creation and Impact Evaluation)
4. The underlying theory of change shaping the processes enabling evaluative learning and change. (Developmental Evaluation)

⁴ The empirical notion of 'object congruence' and the idea of 'inter-subjective objectivity' are useful here.

Getting started with a purpose

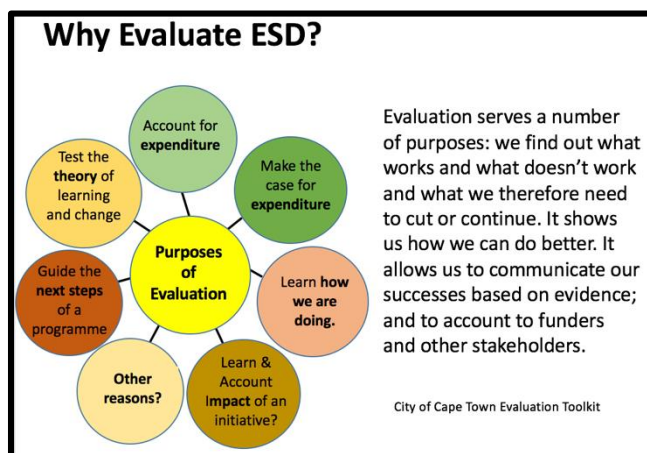


Figure 5 : Clarifying the purpose of evaluation work

Evaluation activities are best undertaken with a clear purpose that can be simply mapped out in a lollipop diagram (Figure 5). This tool for thinking about why we want to evaluate, scoped the range of purposes applicable to the evaluation of youth development programmes undertaken by the City of Cape Town, a local authority in South Africa. The map is part of a 'tool kit', a resource for the development of templates and processes, developed by Rosenberg and Raven (2017) in partnership with the local authority.

Evaluation in context with the SDGs

The SDG wheel has been widely used as a quick and powerful tool for scoping the range of concerns in an historical context. It can be included as part of a contextual profiling exercise

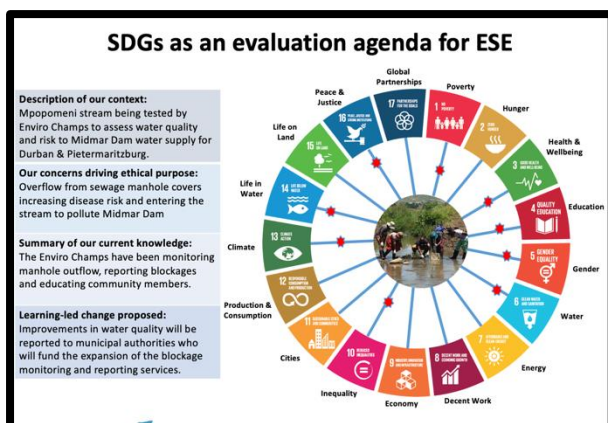


Figure 6: SDGs as an evaluation tool in Mpopomeni, KZN

to drill down into the drivers of environment and sustainability concerns for an ESE change project. It is best used with the project partners and is useful for scoping the interests and goals that can be taken into account in an ESE initiative. The example here was completed with Enviro-Champs involved in the monitoring of river quality and sewage pollution in the Mpopomeni area of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa.

Framing evaluation activities

The next design concern is to develop an evaluation process with participants as an integral part of the programme activities and reporting. The tools for reporting activities can take

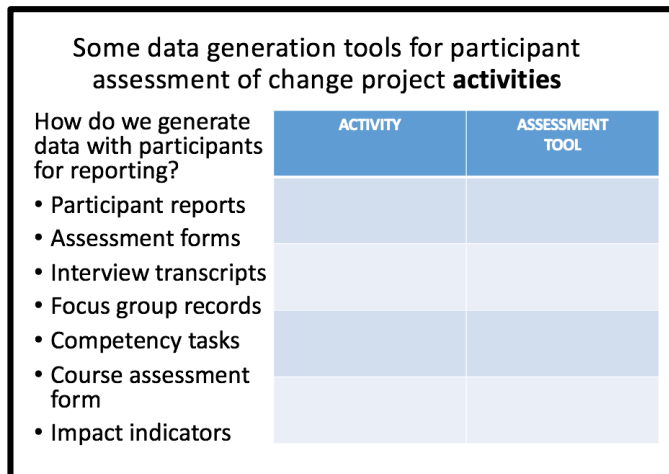


Figure 7: Participant evaluation as appreciative enquiry

many forms and this is primarily a creative challenge to design appropriate monitoring and reporting tools.

Working in this way provides partners with feedback on project activities to inform decision making going forward as well as becoming the information foundations for assessments of value creation that can be extended to include assessments of the scale of impact of a change project. Here value creation after Wenger, Trayner and De Laat (2011) is a useful

framework for evaluation research but this can also be used in the simple sense of what value the activities are producing for participants.

All evaluation tools can be simply administered in focus group sessions or as written feedback forms. They can also be developed as a progressive process or a cycle that is aligned with a change project cycle

Evaluation progressions and cycles

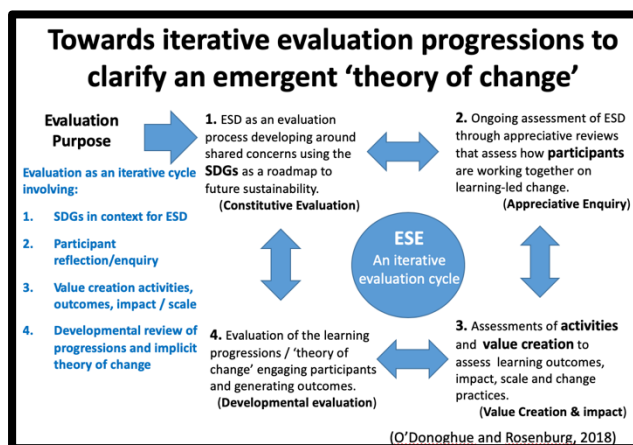


Figure 8: Evaluation as a cyclical process in ESE

The information generated by these tools can produce an accumulating picture of a change project and the learning insights and impact that the activities are producing for the participants.

The advantage of developing an evaluation plan as a simple progression around the purpose of an evaluation is that the accumulating data can be read with increasing depth to provide useful insights on learning and change.

A useful way to work with project data is to assemble the accumulating evidence in a sequence to cover:

1. The constituting assessments that have informed a project. These can be read as baseline information but it is seldom that one finds pre-tests of awareness and competence these days as they are increasingly found to be spurious in the social dynamics of change. Along with this 'target groups' have become interest groups and co-engaged participants. What is more important is the depth and detail of the framing data and how this provides a detailed picture of the context and concerns

emerging amongst the participants driving the deliberative learning in an ESE change project.

2. We cannot emphasise enough that ESE is a co-engaged deliberative process and that the inclusion of participants in every stage of a project and in shaping and driving the project activities as evaluative processes is essential for ESE as a collaborative process of transitioning to new ways of seeing and doing things together. Here appreciative enquiry can be undertaken with and by participants and will usually provide the first evidence of the developing trajectories of a change project.
3. Value creation can be assessed quite formally by analysing how participants are producing and experiencing value.
4. Figures 2 & 3 above are examples of process modelling of differing theories of change. The first is a target group approach centred on awareness creation that has been common in many institutional settings but the latter is now superseding this disposition as participant become change agents intervening in their own contexts in ways that are appropriate to bring about change that is meaningful to them. We have found that it is very useful to process model the implicit 'theory of change' in a change project as this helps clarify the thinking and how this is playing out in learning-led change for participants and differing stakeholders. A clear model of process for a project is also a picture against which the other data and evidence of deliberative learning and co-engaged change can be assessed.

Conclusion

This paper was developed to clarify evaluation in relation to ESE processes of learning-led change. Co-engaged change projects can only benefit from depth analysis of the context of change with the SDGs, the use of a variety of evaluative process to generate data to inform the emerging learning-led change project with a sense of the value that the changing material practices are created for participants.

The field of evaluation is vast and not all perspectives are relevant for ESE processes of reflexive change and transitioning to future, more desirable, states of sustainability and social justice. Steven Pinker provides a useful perspective to conclude this short review of evaluation and ESE to suggest some start-up tools and progressions for the evaluation of change projects when he notes:

If we keep track of how our laws and manners are doing, think up ways to improve them, try them out, and keep the ones that make people better off, we can gradually make the world a better place. (Pinker, 2018:11)

In line with the opening quote by Andrew Sayer, this perspective is founded on the proposition that the evaluation for, as, in and of ESE is centred on 'being evaluative.' This implies inclusive processes that must often disrupt conventional institutional assumptions about and conventions of evaluation and evaluation research. This paper is developed as just such a disruption of institutional norms and standards by pointing to a necessary expansion of evaluation practices to indicate that evaluation and evaluation research in ESE must become more inclusive and evaluative in nature. Bhaskar (2016) in a review of conceptuality and behaviour in the social sciences concludes that:

[...] because we are embodied as well as conceptualising beings, the human sciences must be prepared to use quantitative as well as qualitative research, that is, to measure and count our material features, as well as interpret and record our conceptual activity – to employ, in effect, mixed-methods research (Bhaskar, 2016:57).

In ESE contexts of reflexive change, externalised conventions of professional accountability measurement and review (conventional evaluation practices) do not take adequate account of how reflexive processes of conceptualisation and the enactment of chance call for an inclusive expansion of evaluative practices and associated processes of civic accountability if embodied processes of evaluation are to produce the futures that we would like future generations to be better able to sustain.

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The Development of a Toolkit for Collaborative Evaluation in RCEs

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Evaluation in RCEs

Evaluation work is the entry point to start-up and development of all RCEs. The start-up evaluation tools, developed collectively by UNU-IAS and the RCE Community aim to strengthen evaluation practice and focus RCE work around the SDGs. The work of RCEs is thus rooted in evaluation. It begins with evaluating how things are being done, what is going wrong and what can be improved. Evaluation work is an entry point for the start-up of all RCEs, and to strengthen assessment practices.

Goals

The RCE Start-up Evaluation Toolkit is a framework for RCEs to assess the following goals:

- improved collective learning
- enhanced sustainability and
- strengthened SDG work of an RCE

RCE Tools

The RCE assessment tools are built around three evaluation processes, present in most RCEs (See figure 1) :

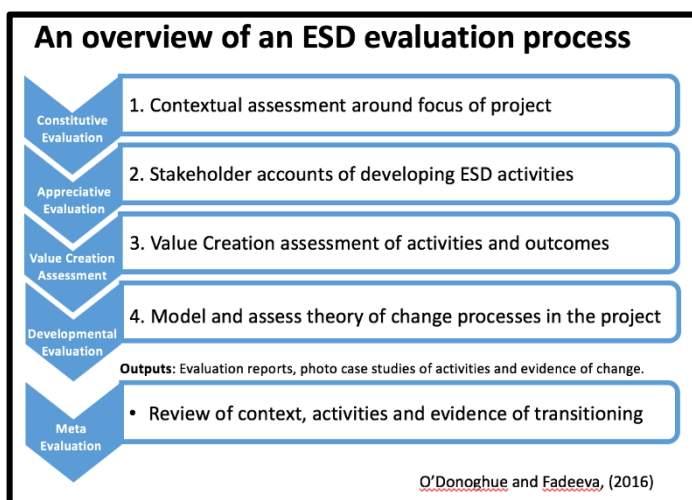


Figure 1: Summary of an evaluation process with meta-evaluation

engaged learning-led change activities.

Assessment Processes

These evaluation processes can be used in a step-by-step evaluation or in other creative sequences to:

- document RCE change projects that have been undertaken together,
- gather evidence for the assessment of what has been happening and

1. **Constitutive Evaluation** - assessments of the local situation that have given rise to the RCE and its activities
2. **Appreciative Enquiry** - a collaborative approach to assessing what participants appreciate about the work they are doing together.
3. **Value Creation** - participant assessments of the value, scale and impact of collaborative learning and change projects of the RCE.
4. **Developmental** – Model and assess the 'Theory of Change' within the learning transactions in the co-

- use the information gathered to assess emerging value (3), to understand the learning processes (4) and to plan a way forward together in continuing RCE activities (5).

This final stage 5 in a change project review can often take the form of a Meta-Evaluation where each stage of an evaluation cycle is read to get insights into what happened and how effective the whole process was for all involved. This can also be important for scaling up a change project.

Evidence and Outcomes

The start-up evaluation tools focus on questions that help participants to gather information and to deliberate the emerging evidence. Evaluation work is important to track and report RCE activities as civic society collectives. The toolkit will hopefully help RCEs to report the value, scale and impact outcomes of their programmes and to strengthen their collaborative work on the SDGs as local concerns that are relevant to them.

Case study of work with the hybrid evaluation framework in Makana RCE

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The RCE Evaluation Toolkit was used over a three-day review workshop with 12 participants in the Makana RCE involved in education activities related to:

- water (Water for Dignity group),
- energy (St Mary's Development and Care Centre staff)
- waste and sanitation (Makana Youth group)
- cleaning and compost gardens (Inqaba Yegolide organisation).
- an education exhibit on water (Albany Museum education staff)

Used in a primarily discursive process of six stages of scaffolded questions, as outlined above, and with a field visit to develop case stories of situated practice, the workshop was seen as a preliminary evaluation around which other evaluation focus areas, instruments and strategies could be developed as increasing capacity in evaluation practice emerged.

Groups unable to attend the review process that was convened by Makana Municipality as the new host of the RCE secretariat were subsequently interviewed using the same framework tool (Cowie Catchment Campaign, Eco-Schools, Umthathi, Fundisa for Change, RU Green and Galela Amanzi). The interview process allowed these groups to reflect on the outcomes of the evaluation and to provide their input into the process. This was not ideal but was a necessary adaptive move that illustrated how the RCE is a 'moveable feast' of partners / activities that, as affiliates, have tended to move in and out of the RCE structure over the years. Here it was notable that social movements from poorer communities tend to be facilitated by more formal structures like Makana Municipality (Makana Youth and Inqaba Yegolide) and the Rhodes University Water Research Institute (Water for Dignity)

The Makana RCE was identified as a structure for collaboration where 'people meet and work together' or 'meet – talk – act' in a local context. The Water Research Institute is exploring 'a new paradigm of transdisciplinary research' that interfaces university researchers, civil society organisations and state service institutions. These approaches were noted with appreciation as they meant that local issues could be addressed. The following positive features were recorded:

- beginning to communicate through water forums and by forming co-operatives (Water for Dignity)
- supporting small gardens with composting and then seedlings (Gaba yeGolide)
- hot bags being made and shared to save electricity costs (St Mary's DCC)
- stories of water and change-choice-practices are in the museum education programs (Albany Museum)
- sanitation practices are changing and problems are decreasing in Extension 6 and Extension 10 (Makana Youth)