

Module I. MEL Introduction - (mentoring)

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1. Introduction to utilization focused evaluation (UFE)

- A decision-making framework for enhancing the utility and actual use of evaluations (Patton, 2008)

- UFE is a decision-making framework to design MEL
- UFE makes MEL design highly collaborative
- In this approach, primary interested users of the evaluation are the **owners** of evaluation design

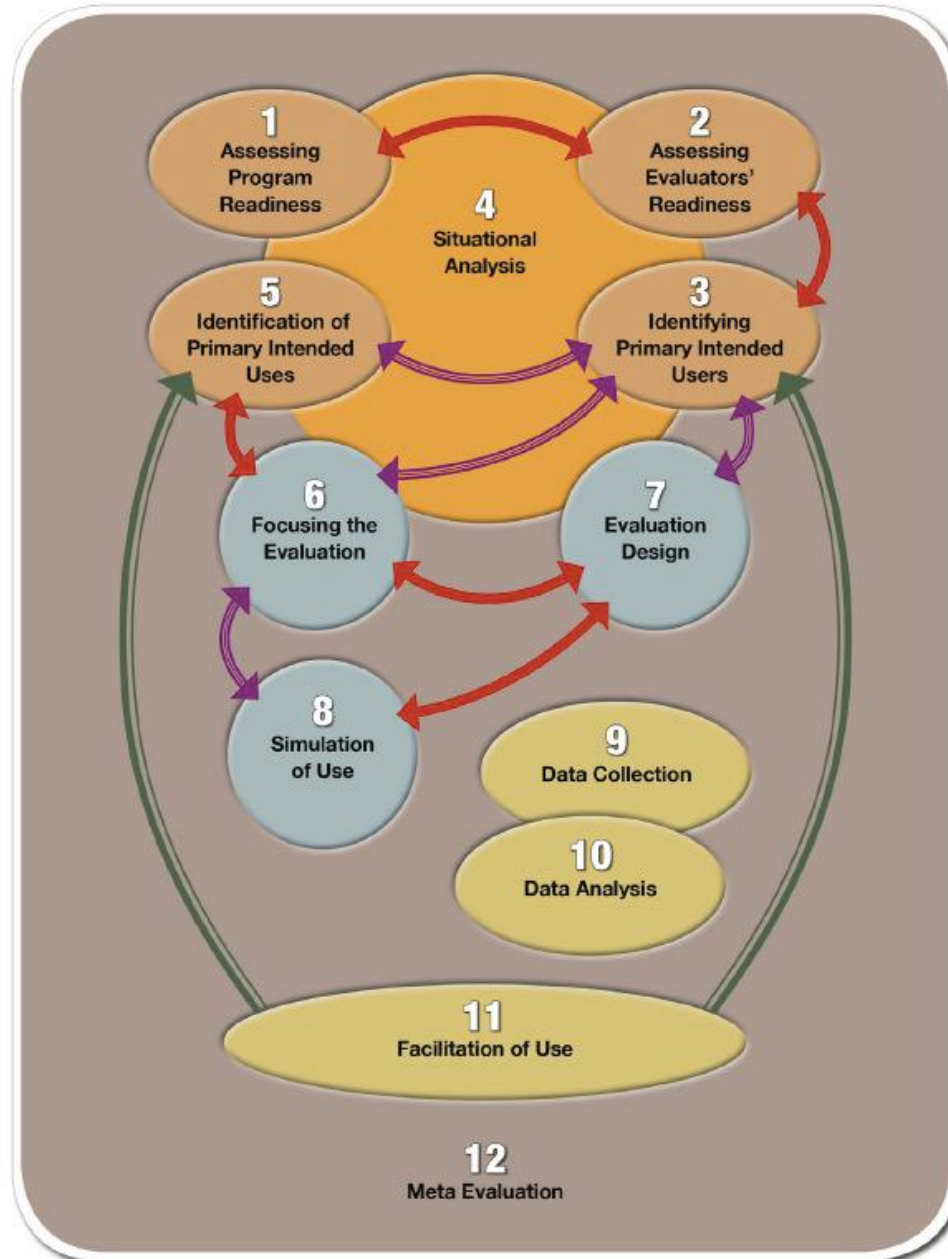
2. UFE as the foundation for MEL

- A decision-making framework that invites project team members to become primary intended users of the evaluation
- The PIUs define the uses or purposes of a MEL system
- The OPSYS is an externally-required tool for accountability; this is only one use of MEL
- The MEL system will be broader and more able to capture the unique context of each project

3a. Premises

- Evaluations should be judged by their actual use
- No evaluation should go forward unless and until there are primary intended users who will use the information that can be produced
- Primary intended users of evaluation are involved in the full process – commitment
- Ideally, evaluation is part of initial program design. The primary intended users want information to answer key evaluation questions
- The evaluator's role is to help intended evaluation users clarify the uses and key evaluation questions
- Implications for use are part of every decision through the process – it is the driving force behind UFE

3b. Steps



4. Readiness

- Management buy-in
- Designated resources and MEL staff
- Ability to manage MEL in addition to accountability requirements (OPSYS)
- An organizational culture open to change
- Curiosity within the team to adapt

5. Engaging stakeholders

- Engaging stakeholders contributes to:
- Personal LEARNING among them
- More CONFIDENCE and direct APPLICATION of evaluation findings to program practices
- A reduced POWER DIFFERENTIAL between evaluators and program practitioners
- More NEGOTIATED DECISION MAKING and learning

Resources

- Utilization-focused evaluation: A primer for evaluators (2013) – (English, French & Spanish)
<https://evaluationandcommunicationinpractice.net/featured-publications/>
- Video: Benefits and challenges of U-FE_ Operation ASHA (Cambodia)- (2018) 2.36 min
<https://evaluationandcommunicationinpractice.net/knowledgebase/video-benefits-and-challenges-of-u-fe-operation-asha-cambodia/>
- Video: DECI-1 evaluation support to DREAM-IT (Mongolia)- (2018) 2.16 min
<https://evaluationandcommunicationinpractice.net/knowledgebase/video-deci-1-evaluation-support-to-dream-it-project-mongolia/>
- Webinar: Utilization-focused evaluation – Steps 1 through 3 (2014) 29.06 min.
<https://evaluationandcommunicationinpractice.net/knowledgebase/utilization-focused-evaluation-steps-1-through-3/>