

Impact, Innovation and Learning: Towards a Research and Practice Agenda for the Future

Institute of Development Studies, Brighton (UK)

March 26-27, 2013

The methods currently used in the evaluation of development impact represent only a fraction of the research methods used in political science, sociology, psychology and other social sciences. Systems thinking and complexity science, causal inference models not limited to counterfactual analysis, and mixed approaches with fuzzy quali-quantitative boundaries have shown potential for application in development settings. In addition, evaluation research needs to be explicit on values and learning needs to be maximized across a wide range of stakeholders. As a consequence, a key challenge in development impact is mastering a broad range of approaches, models and methods that produce evidence of performance in a variety of research settings and fields.

The aim of the event is to shape a future agenda for research and practice in the evaluation of development impact. The Centre for Development Impact will be launched in connection with the event. CDI is a partnership between IDS and ITAD; both organizations share the view that impact evaluation should draw on a broad range of methods and be appropriate for specific requirements, questions and constraints. The workshop is an initial step in a longer-term process of engagement that IDS and CDI wish to undertake within the broader development impact community.

The workshop is “small-scale” and thus invitation-only: around 40 key stakeholders will attend and actively participate through keynotes, paper session, panel sessions and group work. Different types of stakeholders will take part, reflecting the commissioning, conduct, theorization and utilization of impact evaluations in development. For those who are unable to participate, the main sessions of the workshop will be livestreamed here ([link](#)).

PROGRAMME

Day 1: March 26

- 10:15-11:15 Keynote 1: *Are Development Evaluators Fighting The Last War?*
Bob Picciotto (King's College, UKES, EES)
- 11:45-12:25 Paper Session 1: *Why Systems-Based Impact Evaluation?*
with **Elliot Stern**, Editor of *Evaluation* (chair), **Bruno Marchal** (Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp) and **John Grove** (Gates Foundation)
- 14:30-15:10 Paper Session 2: *Complex Systems in Impact Assessment: Applications*
with **Ben Ramalingam** (ODI, chair), **Aaron Zazueta** (GEF), **Peter Loewe** (UNIDO)
- 16:45-18:15 Panel Session 1: *Values and Learning in Critical Systems Thinking*
with **Martin Reynolds** (Open University), **Bob Williams** (Bob Williams), **Richard Hummelbrunner** (ÖAR)

Day 2: March 27

- 9:00-10:00 Keynote 2: *Towards a Research Agenda for Impact Evaluation of Development*
Patricia Rogers (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, live from Australia)
- 10:30-11:10 Paper Session 3: *Scientific Standards and Rigour*
with **Barbara Befani** (IDS, EES, chair), **Laura Camfield** (University of East Anglia) and **Richard Palmer-Jones** (University of East Anglia)
- 13:15-14:00 Paper Session 4: *Credible Evidence of Impact*
with **Chris Barnett** (ITAD/IDS, chair), **Giel Ton** (Wagenigen University), **Barbara Befani**, **John Mayne** (live from Thailand)
- 15:30-16:00 Bridge: *Towards a More 'Impact-Oriented' Institutional M&E System: Common Challenges and Potential Solutions from a UN Perspective*
with **Jos Vaessen** (UNESCO) and **Oscar Garcia** (UNDP)
- 16:00-17:30 Panel Session 2: *How to Create the Conditions for Innovative Research and Practice in Impact Evaluation*
Panel Session with **Elliot Stern** (chair), **Lina Payne** (DFID), **Marie Gaarder** (World Bank), **Colin Kirk** (UNICEF), **Ole Winckler Andersen** (DANIDA), **Oscar Garcia** (UNDP)

Because the event is highly interactive, it is worthwhile listing the participants not included in the programme:

1. Paul Balogun (Balogun)
2. Julian Barr (ITAD)
3. Kelly Beaver (IPSOS)
4. Kate Bingley (IDS)
5. Bernward Causemann (Causemann)
6. Gerry Bloom (IDS)
7. James Copestake (University of Bath)
8. Sabine Dinges (GIZ)
9. Rosalind Eyben (IDS)
10. Colin Jacobs (UKES, British Council)
11. Andrew Lawson (Fiscus)
12. Michael Loevinsohn (IDS)
13. Sam MacPherson (ITAD)
14. Rosemary McGee (IDS)
15. Tamlyn Munslow (IDS)
16. Derek Poate (ITAD, UKES)
17. Ana Pueyo (IDS)
18. Dane Rogers (ITAD)
19. Jim Sumberg (IDS)
20. David Todd (IDEEDS)
21. Patrick Ward (Oxford Policy Management)
22. Cathy Shutt (University of Sussex)