EVALUATION: A MEANS TO GAIN INSIGHTS INTO AND IMPROVE THE ROER4D PROJECT

Goodier, S.;

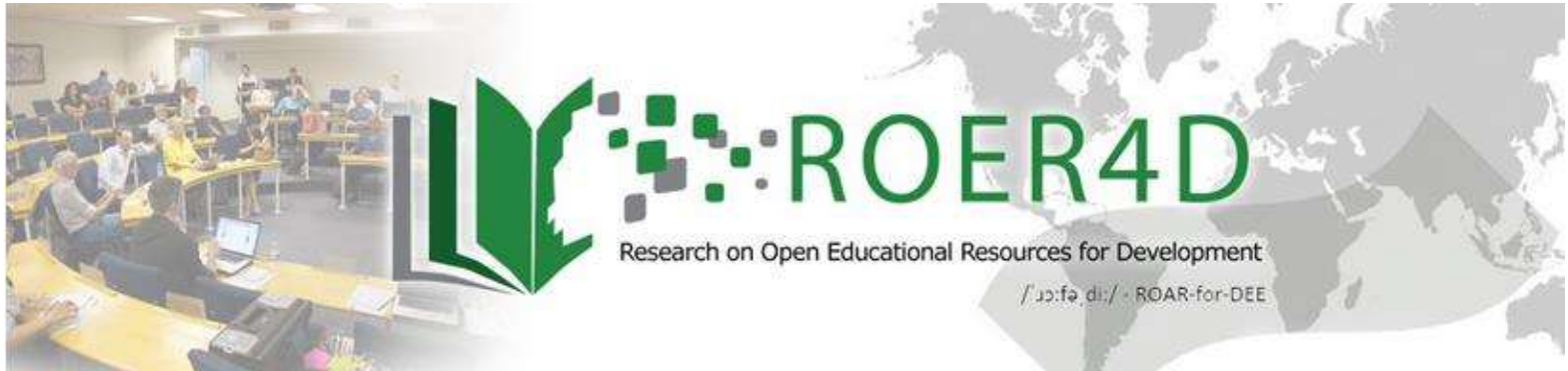;

Evaluation: a means to gain insights into and improve the ROER4D project

Sarah Goodier

ROER4D Evaluation Advisor

EDN4502W: Research & Evaluation of Emerging Technologies

9 September 2015

WHAT IS EVALUATION?

Evaluation is…

… the systematic determination of the quality or value of something (Scriven, 1991)

Scriven, M. (1991). Evaluation Thesaurus. Sage.

Evaluation is...

... the **systematic** determination of the quality or value of something (Scriven, 1991)

- It is done according to a specific plan/method, in a thoughtful way

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Evaluation is...

... the systematic determination of the **quality or value** of something (Scriven, 1991)

- It is done according to a specific plan/method, in a thoughtful way
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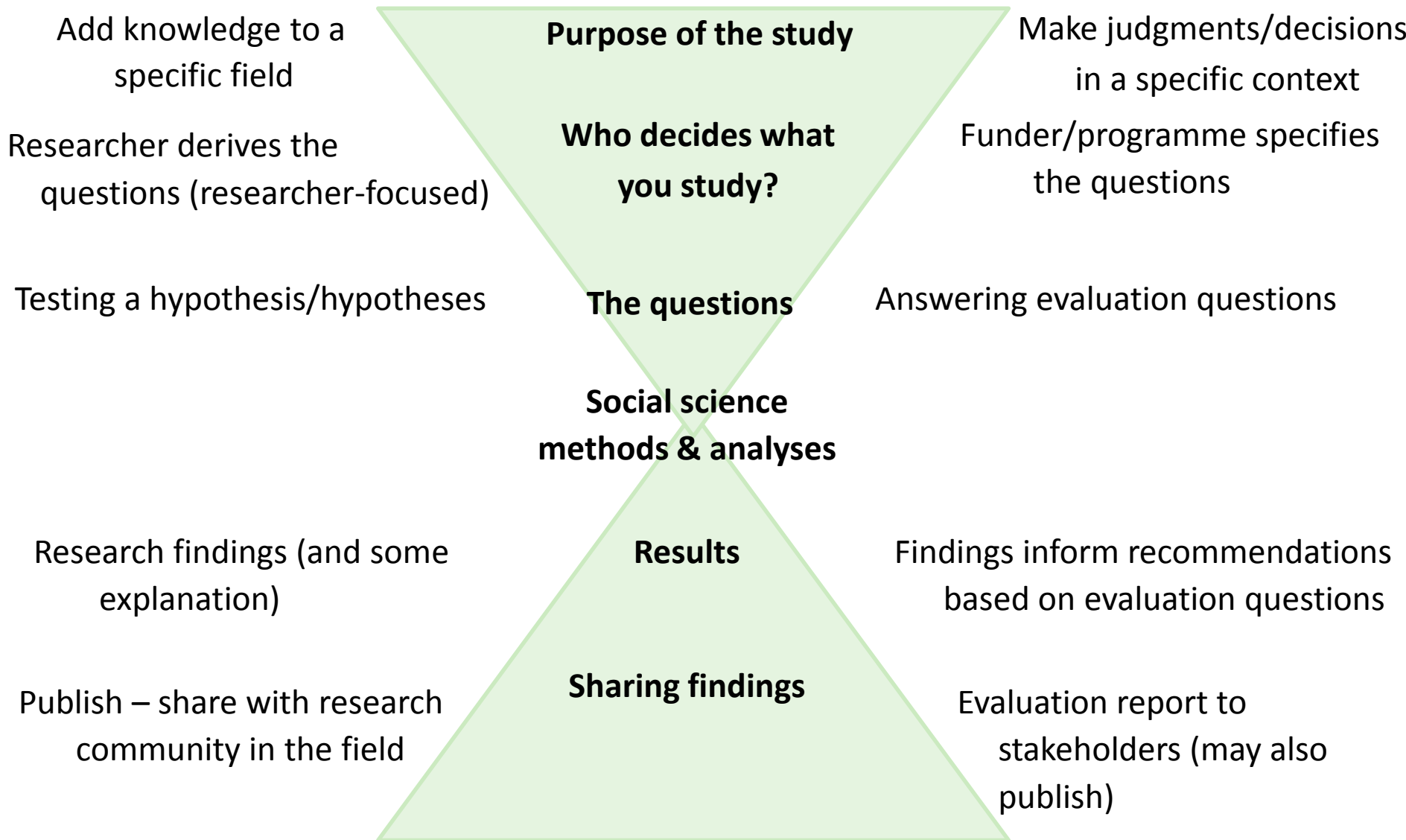
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The purposes of evaluation

- Assessment of merit or worth

    Are specific standards met?

- Improvement

    What can be improved? And how?

- Oversight and compliance

    Is the technology cost-effective?

Research vs Evaluation

	Purpose of the study	
Add knowledge to a specific field		Make judgments/decisions in a specific context

	Who decides what you study?	
Researcher derives the questions (researcher-focused)		Funder/programme specifies the questions

	The questions	
Testing a hypothesis/hypotheses		Answering evaluation questions

Social science methods & analyses

	Results	
Research findings (and some explanation)		Findings inform recommendations based on evaluation questions

	Sharing findings	
Publish – share with research community in the field		Evaluation report to stakeholders (may also publish)

Modified from: http://aea365.org/blog/john-lavelle-on-describing-evaluation/

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Exercise:

- Come up with a example of 1) Research and 2) Evaluation that show the difference between the two

(See the previous slide)
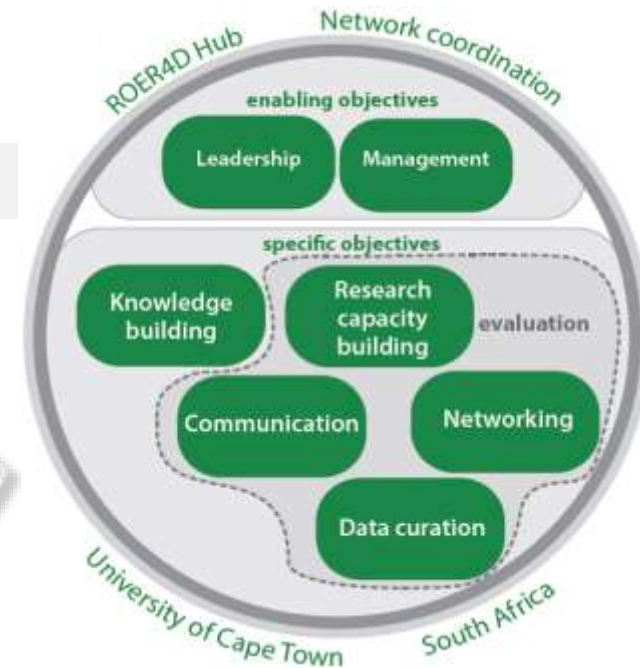
EVALUATING ROER4D

Research on OER for Development

- *In what ways, and under what circumstances can the **adoption of OER address the increasing demand for accessible, relevant, high-quality and affordable education** and what is its impact in the Global South?*

in the Global South

ROER4D Objectives

1. Build an empirical knowledge base on the use and impact of OER in education

2. Develop the capacity of OER researchers

3. Build a network of OER scholars

4. Communicate research to inform education policy and practice

5. Curate output as open content

ROER4D Key Evaluation Areas

1. Build an empirical knowledge base on the use and impact of OER in education

2. Develop the capacity of OER researchers

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EVALUATION

ROER4D Evaluation and Communication supported by DECI-2

DEVELOPING EVALUATION AND
COMMUNICATION CAPACITY IN
INFORMATION SOCIETY RESEARCH

HOME   ABOUT UFE & RESCOM ▼   APPROACH & PARTNERS ▼   RESOURCES & PUBLICATIONS ▼   UFE PRIMER   CONTACT

DECI-2
An IDRC funded research project to build and mentor Communication and Evaluation for IDRC flagship projects

http://evaluationandcommunicationinpractice.net/

WHAT WE DO

We provide capacity development in both evaluation and communication for IDRC research projects in the Information & Networks Program (I&N). We provide mentoring in Utilization-

WHO WE ARE

DECI-2 is hosted by the New Economy Development Group, a consulting group in Ottawa, Canada. Dal Brodhead and Ricardo Ramírez are co-leaders, with support from Wendy Quarry (Ottawa).

UTILIZATION FOCUSED EVALUATION (UFE)

What is utilization focused evaluation (UFE)

UFE is centered around intended use by intended users

What do the users (key stakeholders) want to know?

How will answers to the KEQs help to improve the project?

Remember that evaluation is about assessing worth of something

UFE in 12 steps:

1. Assessing program readiness
2. Assessing evaluator readiness
3. Identifying primary intended users
4. Situational analysis
5. Identification of primary intended uses
6. Focusing the evaluation
7. Evaluation design
8. Simulation of use
9. Data collection
10. Data analysis
11. Facilitation of use
12. Meta evaluation

Steps in the Utilization Focused Evaluation (UFE) process

UFE in 12 steps:

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In progress

Steps are *iterative*, not linear

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In progress

Different ROER4D objectives are at different stages in the UFE process

DEVELOPING AN EVALUATION STRATEGY

ROER4D Process of developing evaluation strategy

1. Understand what is needed in terms of the **scope** of evaluating the ROER4D project – the evaluation work is iterative by nature.

2. In collaboration with the ROER4D network hub team, formulate an **evaluation plan**, including what to evaluate and how.

    > The experience of the evaluation process and the effect this has is a key component of the evaluation.

3. Get **feedback** from DECI-2 around the evaluation work and incorporate this into the process.

ROER4D Process of developing evaluation strategy

ROER4D Process of developing evaluation strategy

4. **Connect** with members of the ROER4D, where needed (surveys, interviews, etc.)

5. Assess the **findings**

6. **Share products** of the evaluation work (e.g. slides around process and results, reports, etc.) timeously to allow the findings and recommendations to effect change.

7. Be aware of all components of the evaluation work and **collaborate/ share** information where possible and where needed.

ROER4D Key Evaluation Areas – involving technology use

1. Build an empirical knowledge base on the use and impact of OER in education

2. Develop the capacity of OER researchers

3. Build a network of OER scholars

4. Communicate research to inform education policy and practice

5. Curate output as open content

Webinars

Social media
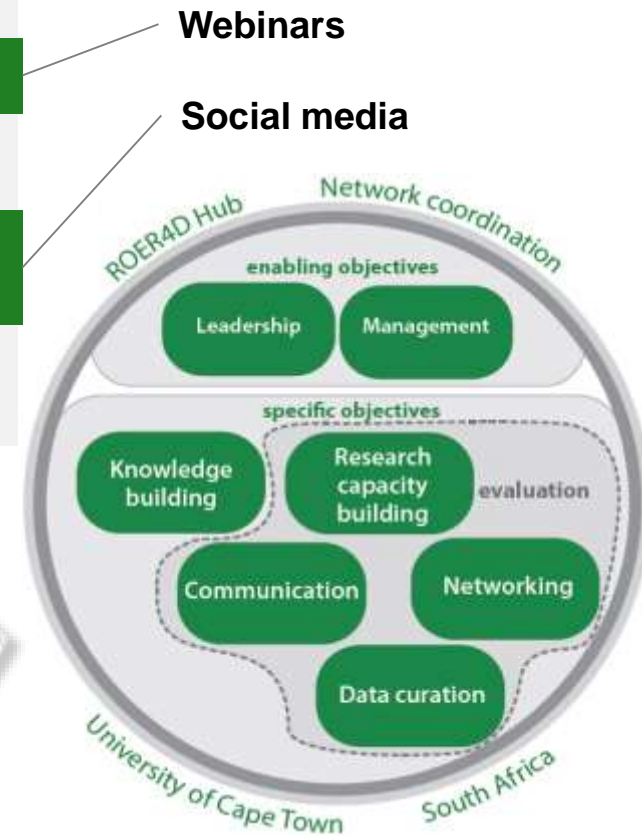
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In progress

Focus on:
- Data collection and analysis
- Facilitation of use by the ROER4D team

Next steps

- More data collection and analysis (ongoing for webinars, Twitter as well as other social media platforms)

- Feedback from the facilitation of use into refinements in the identification of primary intended uses and users to help focus the evaluation further

- Constant dialogue with the ROER4D team and PIUs

SUMMARY

Evaluation is…

… the systematic determination of the quality or value of **something** (Scriven, 1991)

- It is done according to a specific plan/method, in a thoughtful way
- It measures merit/worth
- It is focused on a specific programme/intervention/technology

- Prepare an evaluation plan
- Choose what to measure and how (indicators)
- Collect the data (evidence)

Research and Evaluation are different but share methods

Some lessons from evaluating ROER4D

- Find a framework for your evaluation (e.g. UFE)

- For both internal evaluation and external evaluations, never underestimate the importance of iterative engagement – more engagement = better understanding of the project and what matters to the evaluation users

- Keep feeding back from the facilitation of use into refinements in the evaluation to help focus the evaluation further

Further reading:

○ About ROER4D:

- Hodgkinson-Williams, C. (2013). *Research on Open Educational Resources for Development in Post-secondary Education in the Global South (ROER4D) - Scoping Document*. Available online: http://hdl.handle.net/11427/8430 [Last accessed 10 February 2015].

- Hodgkinson-Williams, C. and Cartmill, T. (2014). *Research on Open Educational Resources for Development in the Global South: 1st Technical Report 23 June 2013 to 27 August 2014*. Available online: http://hdl.handle.net/11427/9695 [Last accessed 11 February 2015].

About evaluation:

- Patton, M. Q. (2008). *Utilization-focused evaluation*. California: Sage Publications Inc.

- Ramirez, R. and Brodhead, D. (2013). *Utilization Focused Evaluation: A Primer for Evaluators*. Penang: Southbound.

- Scriven, M. (1991). *Evaluation Thesaurus*. California: Sage Publications Inc.

Links and license

Website: http://roer4d.org

Contact author: Sarah Goodier
sarah.goodier@uct.ac.za
@SarahGoodier