



Southern Hemisphere

SUPPORTING MEANINGFUL CHANGE

“It’s too complex to evaluate” – an introduction to evaluating advocacy initiatives

Social justice advocates and funders frequently argue that given the unpredictability of outcomes of advocacy, one cannot evaluate advocacy initiatives except by their ultimate achievements – changes in policy or in practice. However, over the last ten years a body of work on evaluating advocacy has developed that support activists, advocates and funders of this work to identify progress towards advocacy objectives. This workshop will provide you with the theory underlying advocacy evaluation with a particular focus on what kind of outcomes provide signs of progress or lack thereof.

Examples of advocacy evaluations will be shared and the mix of methods they have used and then open discussion with participants on experiences and questions. The workshop will be followed by training in outcomes harvesting, a method particularly suited for capturing outcomes of social justice advocacy because of its focus on actual change.

Objectives

The objective of the workshop is to

- build participants’ understanding of the theory and practice underlying evaluation of advocacy and their ability to distinguish a range of methods that might be suitable for answering their evaluation questions

Methodology

This course will be run in a workshop-style using adult learning methodologies. Group work is interspersed with input sessions. Workshops provide a space for participants to learn from each other by sharing knowledge and experiences.

Outcomes

Participants will:

- be able to link the theory of change underlying strategizing for influencing policy-makers and institutional decision-makers to approaches to advocacy evaluation
- be able to identify the range of types of outcomes that measure progress towards achievements of advocacy goals, including in relation to movement-building, ‘outsider’ strategies such as protests, and ‘insider’ strategies such as negotiation.
- be able to distinguish between attribution and contribution and understand why contribution is acceptable in advocacy evaluation

Who should attend?

- Activists, advocates, evaluators and funders of social justice advocacy

Programme outline:

Introduction – What distinguishes evaluating advocacy from evaluating other programmes and projects?

Module 1 – Contemporary thinking on how civil society influences policy and practice, and its implications for evaluation

- Linear explanations of change versus understanding change in complex systems
- The role of activists / advocates in linking problems to potential solutions/ policy options to those who can make change happen – if it's so messy, what do you evaluate?

Module 2 – What kinds of outcomes are signs of progress towards achieving advocacy goals?

- Using real cases to identify what kind of changes indicate progress in advocacy and how these link to theories of change

Module 3 – Beyond advocacy outcomes: what mix of methods are able to answer advocacy evaluation questions?

- Discussion of the types of questions advocates and their funders may want to answer regarding advocacy initiatives and what types of evaluation methods can answer them

Note: This one day orientation to evaluating advocacy provides the background to, and will be followed by, a two-day course on the Outcomes Harvesting (OH) Method. Participants who would like to build concrete skills in evaluating advocacy outcomes are strongly recommended to attend the OH course.

More about the trainer: Barbara Klugman (PhD) provides freelance support to social justice NGOs, social movements and funders in strategy development and evaluation-for-learning She brings together, overlapping with each other, over 35 years of experience as a social justice and women's rights activist and academic, 17 as a funder, 10 as an evaluator working both internationally and in South Africa. She has published on the theory and practice of conducting, training for and evaluating policy advocacy, as well as on analyzing and addressing gender and rights in health research, policy and activism. She is a visiting Associate Professor at the Wits School of Public Health. Barbara incorporated outcomes harvesting as an evaluation tool after conducting an outcomes harvest evaluation of a global advocacy network with its originator, Ricardo Wilson-Grau in 2012, after which she continued to collaborate with him.

Trainer: Barbara Klugman, freelance evaluator with specific expertise in evaluating advocacy, training and leadership development;
<http://barbaraklugmanevaluatingadvocacy.blogspot.com/>



Cost: R 2,800 (incl VAT) per participant (incl. comprehensive course materials, refreshments & lunch, certificate). Special discounts apply for groups of 3 people or more, and 10% early bird registration applies

In House - Available Upon Request

Courses: - Minimum 5 Persons

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