

Southern Hemisphere Newsletter July 2019

In this newsletter we discuss evaluating advocacy and highlight our professional development workshop on learning that we will be offering at the SAMEA conference.

"It's too complex to evaluate" by Barbara Klugman

"It's too complex to evaluate" is usually the complaint that advocacy groups make when asked how they're evaluating their strategies. This is not surprising. In a recent report on evaluating advocacy, Coe and Schlangen note, *"There's nothing linear about the experience of advocacy; it operates within a complex web of interacting factors and relationships, and change can emerge and cascade in unexpected ways. At the same time, advocates and their supporters want to understand whether what they're doing is making a difference."*

In my experience, highly experienced advocates are usually constantly monitoring if and how well their strategies are working and making improvements. But they seldom document the details. This is fine for a small group. But as they get bigger or are working in alliances, they need to find a way to share what they're seeing, and to ensure that everyone involved is collectively making sense of what is happening. They also need to ensure that there is some institutional memory of what's been done and what's been learnt, so that if they leave, the lessons remain in the organization. Even though their practice involves consistent evaluation, they have a terror of the idea of "M&E".

Another group of advocates are involved in less directed advocacy, for example trying to build up a movement of networks all working towards addressing the same objectives. They run trainings, seminars, and hold conferences etc. aiming to strengthen others' advocacy capacity on specific issues. They test whether participants gain knowledge or shift attitudes. But they have no idea if these participants then go and advocate, using this new knowledge. These advocates often say, *"it's really impossible to know what they do once they leave"*. So here too, groups need some support in finding affordable real-time ways of monitoring whether their strategies are working.

One methodology that lends itself to evaluating the effectiveness of advocacy is Outcome Harvesting (OH). Cabaj describes OH as *“one of the most important evaluation methodologies to emerge in the field of social change and innovation in the last 20 years.”* The method is useful not only for evaluating advocacy, but for any evaluation seeking to understand what actually happened (rather than what was predicted), and the intervention’s contribution to those outcomes.

Useful resources:

- The following resource by Jim Coe and Rhonda Schlangen provides six considerations that could be used to improve monitoring and evaluation of advocacy initiatives. [No Royal Road: Finding and following natural pathways in advocacy evaluation](#)
- A Tamarick Institute review of the [Outcome Harvesting: Principles, steps and evaluation applications](#) outcome harvesting book by Ricardo Wilson-Grau
- This article by Barbara Klugman provides a theory of change framework that can be used by activists, donors, and evaluators to assess progress in social justice advocacy initiatives. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22118149>
- In this brief, Barbara Klugman offers ideas on how to incorporate the concept of social justice and its underlying values into advocacy evaluation http://www.pointk.org/resources/files/klugman_evaluating_social_justice_a_dvocracy.pdf

The two courses that Southern Hemisphere is offering on evaluating advocacy and Outcomes Harvesting, with Barbara as the trainer, are both over-subscribed. But, look out for the next courses that we will be offering in Cape Town in 2020.

MLE - Learning is at the centre of Monitoring and Evaluation

Looking out for our workshop at SAMEA 2019 – Creating a learning framework from a Theory of Change, by Dena Lomofsky.

Learning has come centre focus in the monitoring and evaluation world, particularly for those of us who believe in that evaluation findings should be used to improve our

programmes. Monitoring and evaluation practitioners are being asked to help organisations learn from their data, not only to make judgments about their successes and failures. Questions such as what works, why, under what circumstances, for who, when, how much ... are all critical design and effectiveness questions. What is the best way to identify a learning framework?

Southern Hemisphere has been experimenting with this with our amazing clients – Comic Relief “I define Me Initiative” and APHRC’s “Immunisation Advocacy Initiative”, we would like to share our lessons with you and process with you. We will also share what a learning framework could look like, and some participatory methodologies for designing and reflecting on a learning framework.

The objective of this course is to

- familiarise people with the Theory of Change process and as a means to develop a learning framework
- increase the capacity of the development sector to utilise learnings for program improvement.

What’ve we been up to! (First half of 2019)

Southern Hemisphere successfully concluded 7 evaluations in 2019.

We’ve done it again, a happy client.

“From inception to finalisation of the report, Southern Hemisphere involved all of the stakeholders identified during the inception phase. Southern Hemisphere were professional in their approach and conducted a rigorous and robust analysis that we will happily publicize widely. Thank you team Southern Hemisphere for all of your efforts and providing us with an independent assessment of our Khaya Lam Land Reform Project that will no doubt be highly beneficial in helping us to raise the profile of our property titling project.” FMF Director

- Mid-term review of the [MasterCard Foundation Scholars Program in Africa](#)
- Endline study of the [Roger Federer Foundation’s Community Development Projects in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)
- Diagnostic evaluation of [Community Based Worker Systems](#) in South Africa for the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME)
- Impact Study on the Khaya Lam Land Reform Project implemented by the [Free Market Foundation](#)
- Mid-term Evaluation of the [GIZ](#) Capacitation of Technical Vocational Educational and Training (TVET) College Lecturers teaching Life Orientation

implemented in partnership with [DHET](#) and [HEAIDS](#)

- Summative Evaluation of the Promoting youth and civic engagement and advocacy to build safer communities through youth-led radio initiatives and community radio stations projected implemented by Children's Radio Foundation.
- End of project evaluation of the Comic Relief funded project on Informal Settlement Upgrading of CORC