## Session 1. Introduction to the workshop

1. The objectives of the workshop
2. Participant introductions
3. The trend towards more complex development interventions
4. Challenges for evaluation
5. Participants share experiences with complex evaluations
6. Overview of the workshop program

## Session 2. Brief introduction to complex program evaluation

1. **Simple, complicated and complex programs**
2. **The dimensions of complexity** [Note: an intervention can be affected by several – or all – of these dimensions]
   - Scope and scale of the intervention:
   - Organizational:
   - Contextual:
     - Many factors in the local, regional and national settings [e.g. economic, political, socio-cultural, security, natural environmental, historical] influence design, implementation and outcomes.
   - Behavioral:
     - The intervention is trying to produce complex behavioral changes
     - The nature of the intervention or context means that subjects will respond in ways that are difficult to predict, and perhaps to measure and understand.
   - Attribution/contribution/substitution:
     - Difficult to define a counterfactual
     - Difficult to isolate the effects of a particular agency
   - Attention will also be paid to the ‘other side of the coin’: interventions that look like they are complex but in fact are not.
3. **The challenges for evaluation**
   - **Challenges relating to program design**
     - Intervention covers whole country or sector – no comparison group
     - Multiple components with complex interactions
     - Non-linear causality
     - Program included many different interventions intended to produce multiple outcomes
     - Goals are often on a higher level than the interventions
     - Program components operate differently in different settings
   - **Evaluation issues relating to data availability**
Multi-component programs tend to collect only limited monitoring data which is of little use for evaluation. Multiple agencies with different monitoring and reporting systems.

c. Evaluation issues relating to the nature of causality
   - Low level of certainty on outcomes
   - Outcomes are unpredictable
   - Non-proportional relationships between inputs and outcomes

d. Evaluation issues relating to political and contextual factors
   - Multiple contextual factors that operate differently in different situations
   - Pressures from clients to simplify the evaluation to produce quantifiable inputs and outcomes – evidence-based evaluation
   - Multiple agencies with different methodologies

10:40 – 11:00 Break

11:00 – 12:15 Session 3: Group exercise/discussion: Identifying different kinds of complexity in program interventions

Participants will be divided into groups and will be asked to discuss which interventions should be considered simple, which complicated and which are complex.

Option 1. Some groups will be given descriptions of several different kinds of development interventions, some of which have mainly been implemented in developing countries while others have been used in both developing and developed countries. They will discuss as many of the interventions as they can cover in 35 minutes.

Option 2. Groups will be given two cases with more detailed descriptions and they will select one to discuss.

12:15 – 12:30 Questions and discussion on the morning sessions

12:30 – 2:00 Lunch

2:00 – 2:45 Session 4 An in-depth look at complexity: Part 1

1. What do we mean by a “system”?
2. The nature of complex systems
   a. Many independent heterogeneous parts
   b. Non-linear (causal relationships)
   c. Non-proportional relationships
   d. Unpredictable outcomes
   e. Adaptive and self-organizing
   f. Interdependence
   g. Emergence
3. The implications of complexity for program evaluation

2:45 – 3:30 Session 5 An in-depth look at complexity: Part 2

1. Perspectives on complexity and implications for complexity evaluation
   a. [argumentative trials] Using conventional approaches to complexity evaluation
b. The systems perspective  
c. The realist perspective  
d. Developmental evaluation [the pragmatist approach]  

2. Responses to complexity evaluation  
   a. Applying conventional evaluation designs and applications of existing frameworks  
   b. Combining existing methods in innovative ways  
   c. Using program theory  
   d. Innovative methods to discover hidden populations  
   e. Impacts of multiple interventions and systems of outcomes  
   f. Focusing on sequencing of program activities  

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<td>3:50 – 5:00</td>
<td>Session 6: Overview of approaches for evaluating complex interventions</td>
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1. Experimental and quasi-experimental designs  
   a. Unpacking complex programs so that certain components can be assessed using these designs.  

2. Theory-based evaluations  

3. Participatory evaluation methods  
   a. Most significant change  
   b. Participatory group consultation techniques such as PRA  
   c. Focus groups  

4. Qualitative techniques:  
   a. Case studies  
   b. Holistic analysis of a community or group and the context within which it operates.  
   c. Longitudinal analysis of households/communities etc over the lifetime of the intervention  

5. Expert judgments  
   a. Concept mapping  
   b. Key informant interviews  
   c. Rating scales  

6. Portfolio analysis  

7. Integrating different methods into the evaluation design  

8. Alternative ways to define the counterfactual (like hypothetical-question surveys, using counterfactual history approaches etc)  

<p>| 5:00 – 5:30 | Questions and discussion on day 1 |</p>
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| 9:00 – 9:30  | **Session 7: Theory-based evaluation [TBE] and its contribution to complexity evaluation: Part 1: Helping to understand what is being evaluated** | 1. Defining TBE  
   a. The theory of change  
   2. Examples of TBE  
   3. Constructing a TBE  
   a. Reconstructing a theory based model when the program does not have one  
   4. What can TBE contribute to solving problems of complex impact evaluations  
      a. Helping define an operationalize key performance indicators  
      b. Use TBE to define the counterfactual  
      c. Helping interpret the findings of an impact evaluation |
| 9:30 – 10:00 | **Session 8: Theory based evaluation Part 2: Understanding the intervention and how it is intended to work** | 1. Assessing how effective the intended mechanisms are likely to be  
   2. Defining and evaluating mechanisms  
      a. Situational mechanisms  
      b. Action formation mechanisms  
      c. Transformational mechanisms  
   3. Case studies illustrating mechanisms  
   4. Mechanism experiments  
   5. Assessing during project implementation how effective a mechanism is likely to be |
| 10:00 – 10:30| **Session 9: Potential applications of new information technologies for evaluating complex programs: A brief introduction** | 1. Smart phones  
   2. Tablets  
   3. Mapping  
   4. Qualitative data collection and analysis  
   5. Satellite data  
   6. Big Data |
| 10:30 – 10:50| **Break**                                                               |                                                                      |
| 10:50 – 11:30| **Session 10: Case study of a complex program evaluation: the Ottawa Tobacco cessation program** | This may describe an evaluation that had developed a methodology for assessing complexity, or it may describe an upcoming evaluation of a complex program where the presenter requests recommendations from other participants. |
| 11:30 – 12:30| **Session 11: Group activity : Designing and using theory-based evaluation (TBE)** | Participants will be divided into groups. Each group would review a TBE that has already been developed. They will be asked to critique the model and to discuss how it can be used at different stages of the evaluation. They will also be asked to assess the strengths and limitations of TBE as a tool for assessing complex interventions. |
| 12:30 – 2:00 | **Lunch**                                                               |                                                                      |
| 2:00 – 2:45  | **Session 12: Review of applications of experimental and quasi-experimental** |                                                                      |
**methods in complex evaluations**

1. Experimental and quasi-experimental designs
2. Pipeline designs
3. Statistical analysis of comparator countries
4. Citizen report cards and opinion surveys
5. Applying quantitative designs
   a. At the project level (when a conventional comparison group cannot be identified)
   b. At the level of complicated programs
   c. At the level of complex interventions

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<th><strong>Session 13: Applications of participatory and qualitative methods in complex evaluations</strong></th>
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<td>1. Realist evaluations</td>
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<td>2. PRA and other participatory techniques</td>
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<td>3. Qualitative analysis of comparator countries</td>
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<td>4. Comparison with other sectors</td>
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<td>5. Expert judgment</td>
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<td>6. Key informants</td>
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<td>7. Public expenditure tracking</td>
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<td>8. Portfolio analysis</td>
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| 3:30 – 3:50 | **Break**                                                                                   |

| 3:50 – 4:30 | **Session 14: Evaluating the complexities of the gender mainstreaming approach**            |

| 4.30 – 5.00 | **Session 15: The use of systematic reviews/synthesis studies on interventions to help evaluate complex programs.** |
|             | A brief overview of current trends in synthesis (systematic reviews such as 3ie/Campbell collaboration), realist synthesis and combinations. |

<p>| 5.00 – 5:30 | <strong>Session 16: Open session</strong>                                                                  |
|             | We will discuss questions or issues identified by the participants                           |</p>
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| 9:00 – 9:45  | **Session 17:** Participant presentations on complex evaluations with which they have been involved  
               Several participants who had responded to the e-mail survey will make presentations on their evaluations. Many of the evaluations are still in process and the session will provide an opportunity for the group to present comments and suggestions on the evaluation designs. |
| 9:45 – 10:30 | **Session 18:** Case study: Evaluation of a complex gender awareness program to prevent violence against women in El Salvador |
| 10:30 – 10:50| Break                                                                   |
| 10:50 – 11:30| **Session 19:** A more detailed look at strategies for evaluating complex programs  
               1. Unpacking complex programs  
               2. Expert judgment  
               3. Portfolio analysis  
               4. Case-based methods |
| 11:30 – 12:30| **Session 20:** Plenary discussion of strategies for evaluating complex programs |
| 12:30 – 2:00 | Lunch                                                                   |
| 2:00 – 2:45  | **Session 21** Groups exercise                                           |
| 2:45 – 3:30  | **Session 22** Group exercise continues                                  |
| 3:30 – 3:50  | Break                                                                   |
| 3:50 – 4:30  | **Session 23:** Group presentations and discussion of group exercise     |
| 4:30 – 5:15  | **Session 24:** What have we learned from the workshop?                  |
| 5:15 – 5:30  | Workshop evaluation                                                     |