

Influencing for learning

a challenging add-on

1
quality

Purpose and design

Accountability-oriented, complex and prescribed framework.

action Communication Internal Reference Group (IRG)

Participation

Variable and depending on roles NGO staff, generally low

action Participation Dutch NGOs in workshops organized by researchers

action Meetings participating Dutch NGO's (PARTOS)

Planning

Rigid and unrealistic for reality programs

action Limited influence Dutch NGOs: evaluation commissioning outsourced; timing related to grant framework

Quality of the evidence

Unquestioned by NGOs

Elements country studies questioned by synthesis team

High quality qualitative causal analysis

action Feedback rounds reports (IRG)

Analysis and Presentation

Meta-level analysis no recommendations

Country reports emphasizing quantitative studies

Bulky rather inaccessible reports

action Feedback evaluators (IRG)

Evaluators

Limited communication during evaluation but open for follow-up discussion

Fruitful mix evaluators (qualitative, quantitative)

action Involvement evaluators in Partos workshops 2016.

Mechanisms for follow-up

Embargo on publication report hampered external dissemination

action Partos workshops 2016 : 1 day workshops. 5 webinars on selected themes. Book as summary. Sub-reports on Partos website: www.mfs2.partos.nl

2
external

Protecting reputations and funding

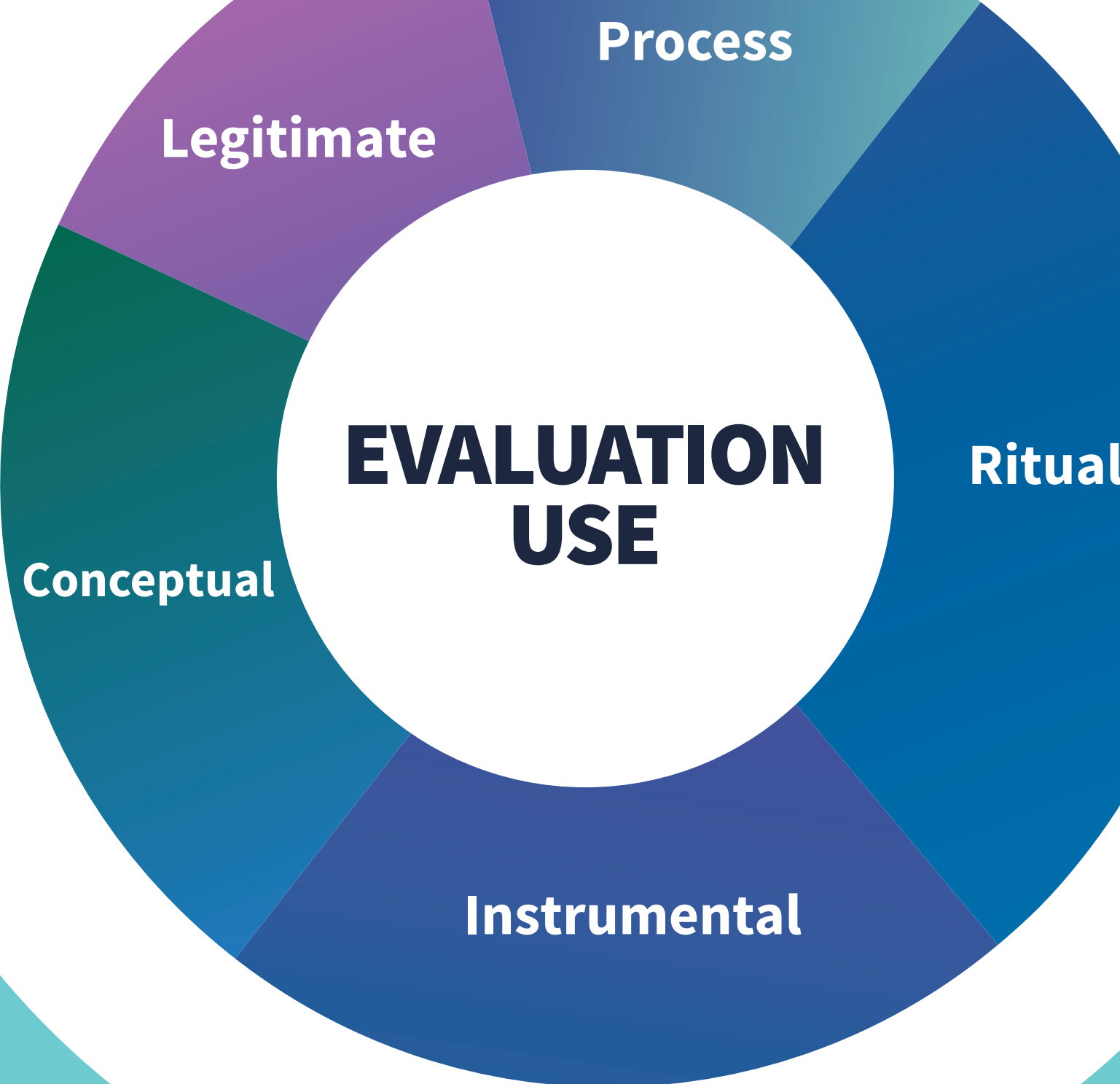
Hardly/no reactions from public, government

action Press releases Dutch NGOs and Partos

Pressure from beneficiaries

Limited attention to feedback from Southern partners (with exceptions).

action Rejection findings evaluation by some Southern partners



4
organisa-
tional

Culture of learning

Non-existent; accountability-driven

action Partos workshops 2016: themes based on consultation Dutch NGOs, focusing on learning.

Structure

Complicated organisational structure affected ownership of Dutch NGOs

action Meetings participating Dutch NGOs (PARTOS)

Knowledge management

Focus on accountability, limited knowledge sharing initiatives.

Limited attention/experience of Dutch NGOs in the area of quantitative research restricted learning in this area.

action Partos initiative knowledge sharing (workshops) fairly late in process.

action No specific initiatives on quantitative research.

3
relational

Personal and interpersonal

Distance was norm, but there were exceptions

action IRG facilitated attempts to enter into dialogue, sometimes fruitful sometimes seen as interference.

Role and influence evaluation unit (=IRG)

Seeking relationships and opportunities for learning

action Consultation with Partos on possible events.

action Contacts with evaluators.

Networks, communities of practice

EES presentations

action Initiative IRG

Source Types of use and Factors affecting utilisation: Sandison, P. (2006) 'The utilisation of evaluations', ALNAP Review of Humanitarian Action: Evaluation Utilisation. London: ALNAP/ODI (www.alnap.org/resource/5288.aspx)

Types of use legenda

INSTRUMENTAL USE

Implementation findings and recommendations by decision-makers.

Ministry's new funding framework for Strategic Partnerships builds on lessons from the International Lobby & Advocacy (ILA) study: no pre-defined M & E framework, explicit use of Theory of Change, more attention for capacity development

Some Dutch NGOs and Southern counterparts analyzed all findings relevant to them and gave follow-up.

CONCEPTUAL USE

New ideas and concepts debated and developed over time.

Healthy discussion among Dutch NGO's, evaluators and Ministry about methodological aspects evaluation (Theory of Change, Process tracing, Contribution analysis, Efficiency, attention for baseline, quantitative research).

Dutch academics used findings for publications. Assessment of causal relationship between capacity development and performance of Southern counterparts triggered Dutch NGO's to pay more attention to this causal relationship.

PROCESS USE

Individual learning and changes in behavior resulting from evaluation process.

MDG part: limited process use because of great distance and alienation between evaluators and evaluand.

Capacity development (CD): some process use as Southern counterparts participated in self-assessment.

ILA part: more process use by Dutch NGO's due to intensive dialogue and joint learning sessions with evaluators.

LEGITIMISING USE

Legitimising decision or understanding that the organisation already holds.

Quite positive conclusions about the value of the work of Dutch development organisations and their Southern partner organisations. Dutch organisations used these findings in their communication to general public.

Contributors

Karel Chambille, Peter Das, Yvonne Es, Dienneke de Groot, Wouter Rijnveld, members of the Internal Reference Group of the Partos' Joint Evaluations Trust (PARTOS is the Dutch Association of NGOs working in international development. www.partos.nl)

RITUAL USE

Fullfill legal or institutional obligations.

The primary purpose of the MFS2 evaluation was accountability of the Dutch development organizations towards the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

