



WITHIN AND ACROSS CASE COMPARISON OF DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION IN USAID

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Before we begin,

- Has anyone evaluated an evaluation?
- Has anyone conducted comparisons across cases?



Our agenda today,

- Introduction to MERLIN
- Introduction to DEPA-MERL
- Our evaluation methodology
- Our preliminary findings
- Questions for us



What is MERLIN?

MERLIN is an endeavor led by the U.S. Global Development Lab and in partnership with the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning and the Bureau for Global Health.

It aims to source, co-design, implement and test development solutions that innovate on traditional approaches to monitoring, evaluation, research and learning (MERL).

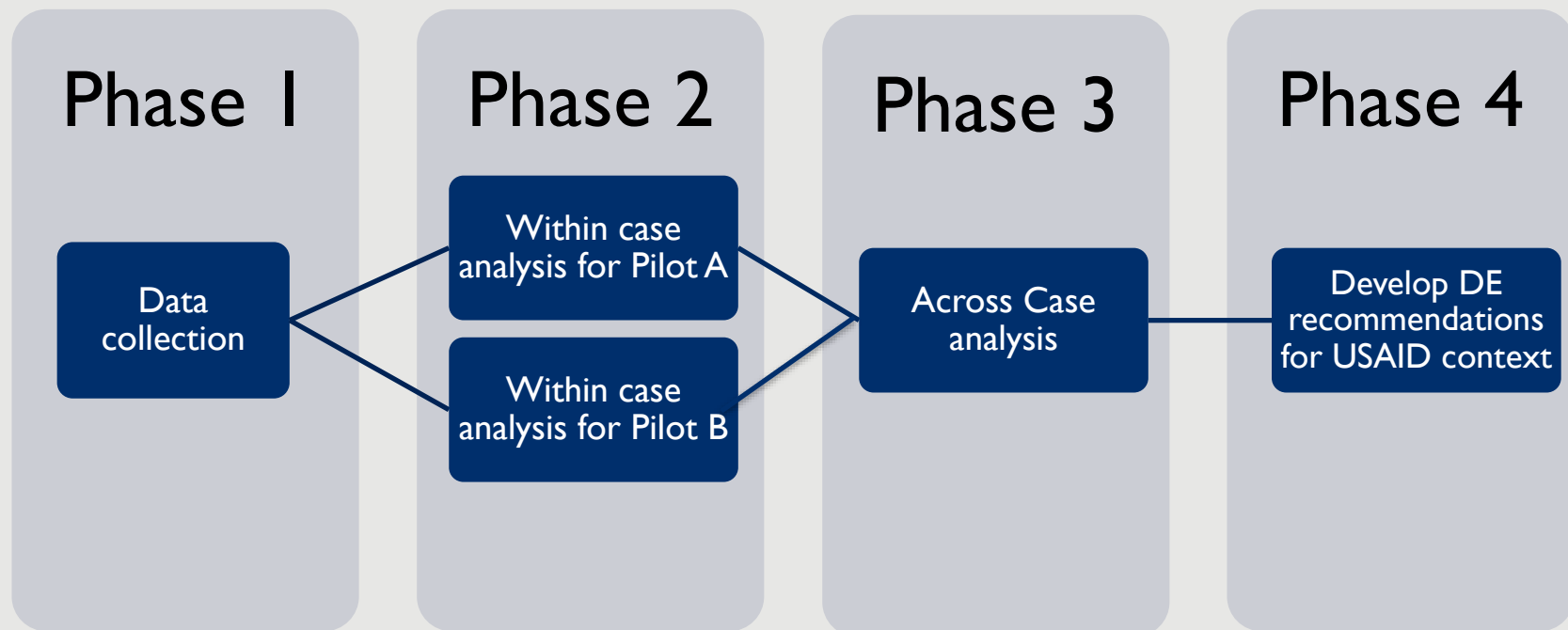


What is DE?

- Supports the continuous adaptation of development interventions
- Provides evaluative thinking and timely feedback to inform ongoing adaptation in complex dynamic situations
- Collaborative process with the DE stakeholders



Our approach to within and across-case analysis



An introduction to our research questions: Beginning with RQ I

- How is DE able to capture and promote use of emergent learnings in support of ongoing development of programming in a complex system in the USAID context (across the various pilots)?
 - Within each pilot, what are the outcomes and, when applicable, their corresponding adaptations? How were such adaptations enabled by DE?

Methodology for RQ I	
Data Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Embedded Evaluator's log• Monthly reflection interviews with Embedded Evaluator
Data Collection Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outcome Harvesting
Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualitative analysis of harvested outcomes• Across-pilot analysis

A Preliminary finding from RQ I

Emergent Learning

- Based on interviews, the EE identified that the backbone organization did not have the capacity to serve grantees needs. Additionally, there was confusion on the roles and responsibilities of the backbone organization

Recommendation

- EE developed a solution and shared the recommendation in the Partners Report to DE buyers

Implementation

- Leadership accepted the proposed solution and developed a plan highlighting a new governance structure which leveraged strengths of key partners (including the backbone organization)

An introduction to our research questions: Next, RQ2

- What are the barriers and enablers to DE implementation in the USAID context?

• Methodology for RQ2	
Data Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monthly reflection interviews with Embedded Evaluator• Embedded Evaluator clinics
Data Collection Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflections coded in NVivo
Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quantitative and qualitative data analysis• Across-pilot analysis

Preliminary findings for RQ2

- Analysis: 10 most frequent barriers and enablers for Pilot 1
- Key takeaways
 - Codes identified as both high barriers *and* high enablers can be targeted by DE implementers to overcome obstacles and enhance DE success
 - For the first 6 months, barriers to DE implementation coded 3 times more frequently than enablers

Rank	Barriers	Enablers
1	Integration of EE	Integration of EE
2	Leadership	DE readiness
3	USAID dynamics	DE value-add
4	DE readiness	DE research question
5	Data sharing	Leadership
6	Procurement mechanisms	USAID dynamics
7	Local & international dynamics	Data sharing
8	EE skills	Understanding of DE
9	Collective impact	Data utilization
10	Funding dynamics	Collective impact



Time period: Jan-June 2017

Preliminary across-pilot findings for RQ2

- Analysis: Comparison of 10 most frequent barriers for Pilot 1 and Pilot 2
- Key takeaways
 - EE integration appears as the primary barrier during the initial months of DE implementation
 - Both pilots faced barriers related to navigating various USAID dynamics

	Pilot 1 Barriers	Pilot 2 Barriers
1	Integration of EE	DE readiness
2	Leadership	Integration of EE
3	USAID dynamics	USAID dynamics
4	DE readiness	Data collection (methods and process)
5	Data sharing	Data utilization
6	Procurement mechanisms	DE value-add (Main source surveys)
7	Local & international dynamics	Leadership
8	EE skills	Funding dynamics
9	Collective impact	DE research question
10	Funding dynamics	Understanding of DE



(Pilot 1: Jan-June 2017; Pilot 2: March-July 2017)

An introduction to our research questions: And lastly, RQ3

- What do key informants' consider to be the value (added or lost) of conducting a DE versus a traditional evaluation approach in a complex setting at USAID?
 - For example: time, utility, monetary costs, scale-up decisions

Methodology for RQ3	
Data Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DE value survey
Data Collection Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Survey distributed electronically to key stakeholders at endline
Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quantitative data analysis• Qualitative analysis• Aross-pilot analysis



Questions?

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Annex

Description of codes (1/2)

Code	Description
Leadership	Some person or an organization enacting within a role designated to them by IP. This includes: 1.) Any reference to a person or organization who is or is not carrying out their assigned roles and responsibilities, including newly assigned roles. 2.) Professional conduct (exhibiting professionalism when interacting with others). 3.) Continued action and support for DE.
EE skills	Any skills needed by a person to function efficiently and effectively as the embedded evaluator within the DE, includes technical and personal. TECHNICAL Skills (ethical research, process facilitation, data review and synthesis skills). PERSONAL skills (humility, respect for stakeholders, relationship building, ability to have difficult conversations, conflict resolutions, tolerance for ambiguity, listening and communication).
Data collection process	This code includes 2 child-codes: 1) Data quality and rigor 2) Methods used for data collection.
Data sharing	Any instance where the data reviewed related to a DE is shared by the EE or IPs to help achieve DE goals. INCLUDES: 1) Time of data sharing (e.g. was data shared before/after an event?), 2) Data analysis and review processes (e.g., Attendance at the data sharing events; was data shared in a participatory manner?, etc). Any change in how data is shared because of DE.
Data utilization	Any instance where data related to the DE is used by the EE or IP as a result of the DE or to help achieve DE goals. INCLUDES: 1) Using data to make decisions – When data is used by the EE/IPs to make decisions related the DE. 2) Any change in how data is used within the program or by IPs that resulted because of the DE.

Description of codes (2/2)

Code	Description
DE readiness	IPs and stakeholders readiness to engage in DE. This includes: willingness of IP staff and key stakeholders to be open to learning and changes in program/ activities/ interventions or ToC, agreement between partners on changes required, readiness to take risk, tolerance for ambiguity. Any language used to describe IP's Buy in to DE.
Understanding of DE	Any reference to the IPs current or changed understanding of the purpose of DE in relation to the DE or IPs. This includes any reference to: How DE is talked about among the IPs and partner organizations, how is DE understood, how is DE communicated with key stakeholders, how are DE terminology and processes understood, and what are the assumptions made regarding scope of DE. Any language used that is useful/beneficial in conducting DE.
Integration of EE	The engagement of the IP with the EE and the integration of the EE into the IP. This includes: Invitations to IP events/meetings and decision making events with EE, IP's perceptions of EE , IP's efforts to integrate EE, EE's efforts to integrate with IP.
USAID dynamics	Any reference to the dynamics between USAID and other DE stakeholders which affect the DE.
Funding dynamics	Any mention of funding in regards to different stakeholders involved with the DE. INCLUDES: funding allocations, changes in funding, funding for IP through USAID and organizations within FCFC and anything else that impacts funding allocations related to DE. EXCLUDES: procurement mechanisms.
Procurement mechanisms	Funding/contracting mechanisms of USAID that help or hinder the DE process. INCLUDES: Any mention of BAA (broad agency announcement).