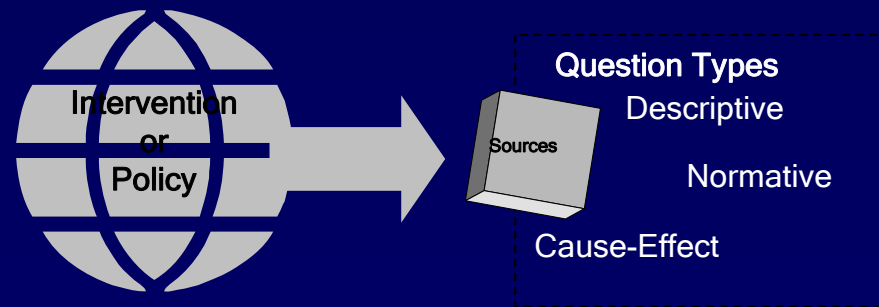
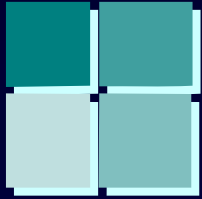


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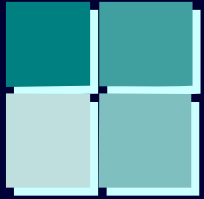
Module 5: Evaluation Questions





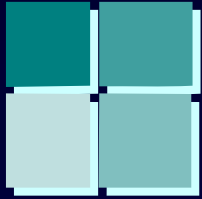
Introduction

- Sources of Questions
- Three Types of Questions
- Identifying and Selecting Questions
- Keys for Developing Good Questions
- Suggestions for Developing Questions



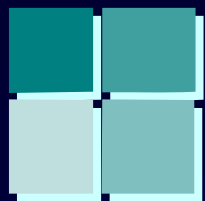
Evaluation Questions

- Give direction to an evaluation
- Critical element to help make decisions
- State what you want to learn
- Must be in terms you can measure



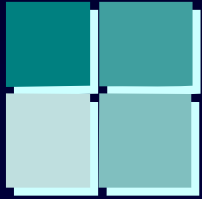
Sources

- Questions, concerns, and values of stakeholders
- Evaluation “models,” frameworks, and approaches such as heuristic (trial and error)
- Models, findings, or important issues raised in the literature in the field
- Professional standards, checklists, guidelines, instruments, or criteria developed or used elsewhere
- Views and knowledge of expert consultants
- The evaluator’s own professional judgment



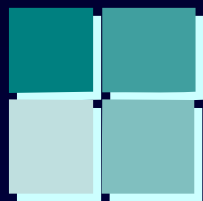
Three Types of Questions

- Descriptive questions
- Normative questions
- Cause-Effect questions



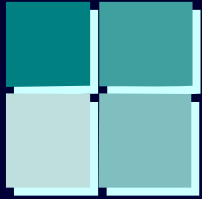
Descriptive Questions

- Represent “what is”
- Characteristics:
 - seek to understand or describe a program or process
 - provide a snapshot of what is
 - are straight forward questions, such as:
 - who? what? where? when? how? how much/many?
 - can be used to describe:
 - inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes



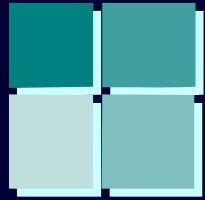
Examples of Descriptive Questions

- Who receives the program?
- What are the characteristics of the program?
- Where is the program delivered?
- When was the program implemented?
- How do the participants feel about the program?
- How much did the program cost?
- How many women participated in the program?
- How were participants selected?



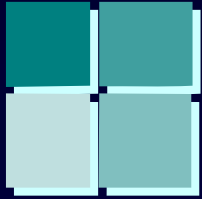
Normative Questions

- Compare “what is” to “what should be”
 - are we doing what we should be doing?
 - are we hitting our target?
- Similar to questions asked in performance auditing
- Measuring against a stated criteria



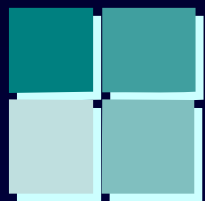
Examples of Normative Questions

- Did we spend as much as we had budgeted?
- Did we reach our goal of admitting 5,000 students per year?
- Did we vaccinate 80% of children as planned?
- Did we meet our objective of draining 100,000ha of land?
- Was the process for selecting participants fair/equitable?



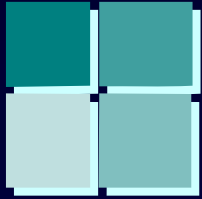
Cause-Effect Questions

- Determine what difference the intervention makes
- Attempt to measure what has caused change
- Impact or cause-effect seek to determine the effects of a program
- Ask whether the desired results have been achieved
- Ask whether it is the intervention that has caused the results



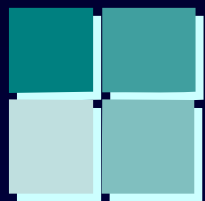
Examples of Cause-Effect Questions

- Do program participants have new skills attributable to the program?
- Do they have better paying jobs because of the program?
- Is the poverty rate reduced because of the program?
- Did draining the land result in the anticipated increased crop production?
- Did it increase income for the farmers?



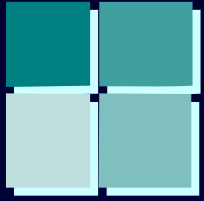
Determining Cause

- Need to have the following:
 - logic model or program theory: the connection between the intervention and outcomes should make sense
 - time order: the interventions should come before the outcome
 - co-variation: both the intervention and the outcome should have the ability to change
 - elimination of rival explanations: need to be able to establish if it is the intervention, rather than other factors, that explain the changes



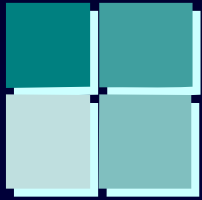
Choosing Questions

- Two phases:
 - divergent phase: develop a comprehensive list of questions
 - convergent phase: narrow down the list



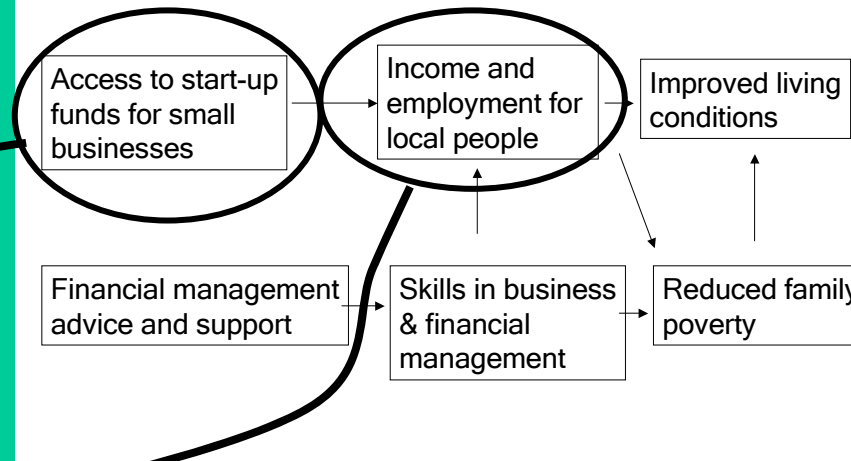
Divergent Phase

- Generate questions
- Examine the questions
- Organize the questions
 - classify each question as it fits into the labels of your model or framework



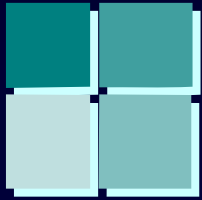
Example of Classifying from Logic Model

Logic Model for a Micro-Lending Program

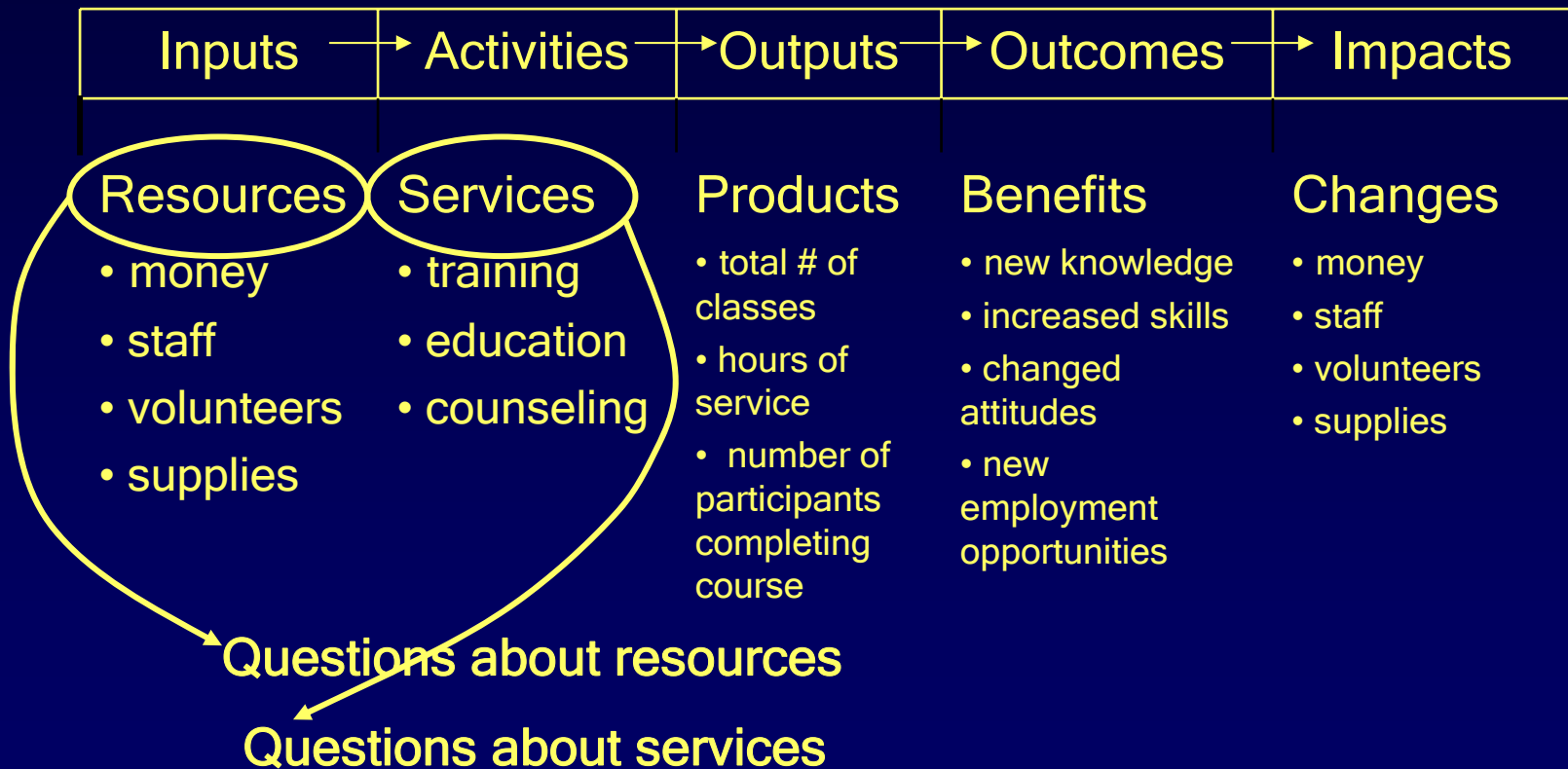


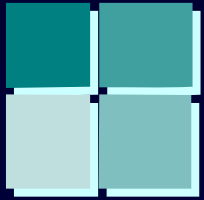
Questions about access to start up funds for small businesses

Questions about income and employment for local people



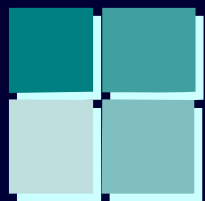
Example of Classifying from a Program Outcome Model





Convergent Phase

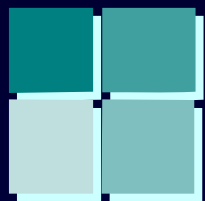
- Working with stakeholders, select the best questions
- Eliminate interesting but not essential questions



Suggested Criteria to Narrow Down to Essential Questions

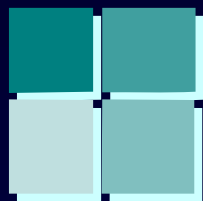
- Who would use the information? Who wants to know? Who will be upset if this evaluation question is dropped?
- Would an answer to the question reduce present uncertainty or provide information not now readily available?
- Would the answer to the question yield important information? Have an impact on the course of events?

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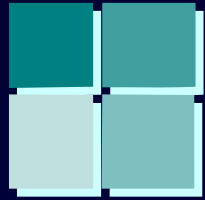
Suggested Criteria (cont.)

- Is this question merely of passing interest to someone, or does it focus on critical dimensions or continued interest?
- Would the scope or comprehensiveness of the evaluation be seriously limited if this question were dropped?
- Is it feasible to answer this question, given available financial and human resources, time, methods, and technology?



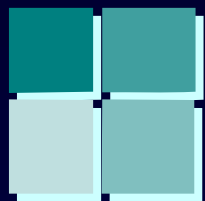
Matrix for Ranking and Selecting Questions

Would the evaluation question...		Question # _____							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 ...
1	be of interest to key audiences?								
2	reduce present uncertainty?								
3	yield important information?								
4	be of continuing interest?								
5	be critical to the study's scope and comprehensiveness?								
6	have an impact on the course of events?								
7	be answerable in terms of ...								



Keys to Building Good Questions

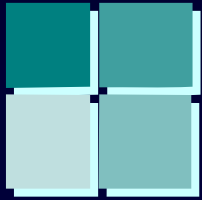
- Begin by identifying the major issues
- Ask the questions that will help you learn if the issues have been affected by the policy or intervention
- Compound questions are *not* good, it is necessary to separate the issues
- Questions about an issue can be addressed using all three question types by adjusting the wording



Writing Better Questions

- There should be a link between each evaluation question and the purpose of the study
- The issues of greatest concern should be addressed by the evaluation questions
- The questions should be answerable; if not, change the question or acknowledge the limitations

(continued on next slide)



Writing Better Questions

(cont.)

- Be realistic about the number of questions that can be answered in a single evaluation
- Focus on the important questions – the ones that must be answered as opposed to those that would be nice to know
- Consider the timing of the evaluation relative to the program cycle:
 - Questions about impact are best answered after the intervention has been fully operational for a few years

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