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**Conference Paper**

## Development of Evaluation Systems – Evaluation Capacity Building in the Framework of the New Challenges of EU Structural Policy

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**DEVELOPMENT OF EVALUATION SYSTEMS –  
EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE  
NEW CHALLENGES OF EU STRUCTURAL POLICY**

Silke N. Haarich (INFYDE, S.L.)<sup>\*</sup> and Jaime del Castillo Hermosa (University of the Basque Country)<sup>\*\*</sup>

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## *ABSTRACT*

The paper presents the changing role of evaluation for public policies and the increasing importance of comprehensive evaluation systems for more effective and learning public institutions. In this context, evaluation systems are becoming an essential element of governance and democratic processes.

Within the framework of the current EU Structural Policy and its new challenges (enlargement, new priorities, regional policy paradigm), the creation and the development of evaluation capacities and comprehensive evaluation systems becomes increasingly an instrument for organizational learning and policy improvement. In this context, the development of evaluation systems is not only fundamental for the new member states, but also for countries with a poor evaluation culture or a fragmented evaluation system.

However, evaluation still lacks the necessary resources and infrastructure to become an accepted and integrated governance tool, despite the growth of the European Evaluation Community and the take-off of several National Evaluation Societies in the past years. Unexploited potentials exist on the supply side (evaluators, skills, training, dialogue), but also on the demand side (commissioning, data monitoring, use of evaluations) of the evaluation system. Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB), as an approach for the development of evaluation systems, is the integrated and planned development of skills, resources and infrastructures and the intentional shift towards an evaluation culture in an organization, department or government. Nonetheless, getting to grips with the institutionalisation of the discipline of evaluation and the building of an ongoing evaluation capacity turns out to be extremely difficult: Which are concrete measures of ECB? Who is responsible for the measures, for the implementation? What are the target groups? When has the ECB been successful? are only some of the questions that come up.

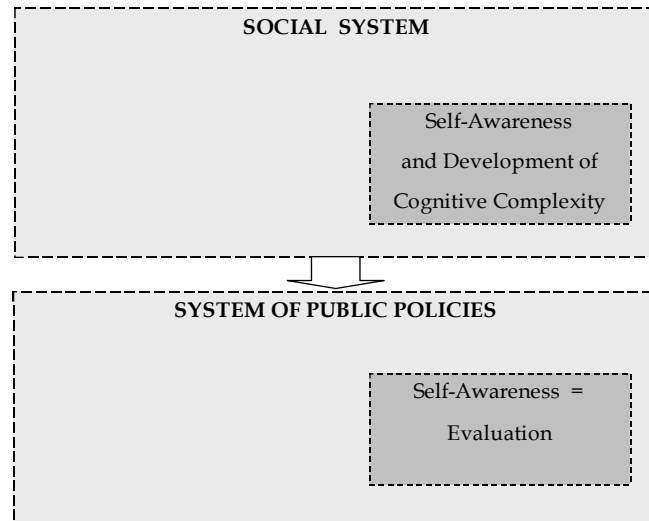
## *THE ROLE OF EVALUATION IN PUBLIC POLICIES*

The field of public policies lives currently important changes. The rapid evolution of social (ageing population, migration, growing unemployment) and economic factors (globalisation, rationalisation, etc.) in our society as well as the emergence of more and more legitimate interests and opinions (global and supranational organisations, regions, civil society, media, ecological and cultural groups, etc.) contribute to the fact that the system of public policies becomes every day more complex and multifaceted. Within this system the need for public policies to present positive results, to be efficient, to account for the resources used and to be continuously improved increases, too.

The monitoring and evaluation of public policies in concrete policy fields or on a general administrative level offers the possibility to develop all this functions. Evaluation, understood in this article as the

“careful retrospective assessment of the merit, worth, and value of administration, output, and outcome of government interventions, which is intended to play a role in future, practical action situations” (Vedung 2000:3)

represents an important mechanism in the framework of public policies. Seeing the public policies (or one public policy field) as a complex social system, monitoring and evaluation stand for the cognitive function of the system. Evaluation introduces the feature of self-awareness into the system and allows it to take decisions based on past experiences.



Thus, apart from the widely known purposes of accountability and basic knowledge advancement, the purpose of intervention improvement and policy learning is crucial for the system to adjust to change and to develop over time (ENGEL and CARLSSON 2002).

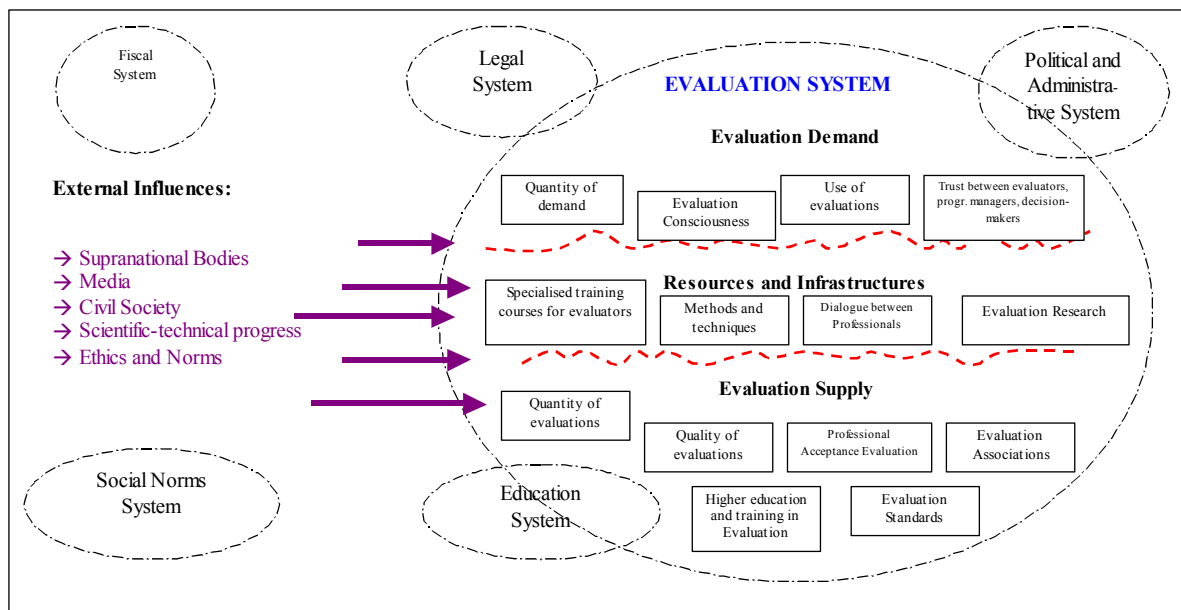
The importance of evaluation in the field of public policies is becoming more and more visible. The integration of ‘**evaluation systems**’ at local, regional, sectoral or national level is part of wider adjustments in the framework of the New Public Management wave or in the framework of compulsory regulations linked to EU Structural Funds or other public budgets.

### *THE SYSTEMS VIEW OF EVALUATION*

Understanding evaluation “*as the systemic solution*” (OLEJNICZAK 2002:2) within the framework of public policies as wider social systems, evaluation itself represents a social subsystem with its own elements, interrelations, and context.

Thus, in order to be able to develop or improve an evaluation system in a certain context, one must be aware of the different elements and interrelations to act on. The following model of an evaluation system describes in a reduced and simplified way the particular characteristics of the system:

## Model of an Evaluation System



The evaluation system model counts with two layers of elements and relations, on the one hand the context of the system and its external elements, on the other the endogenous elements and subelements.

The system is built into a wider **context** of social interaction. Especially, the interdependence with other systems such as the education system, the legal, the political, and the fiscal system, as well as the system of social norms interact with the evaluation system through creating legal obligations to evaluate, university courses for evaluation, etc. In the environment of the evaluation system we also find various **external influences** that could shape or affect this system. DERLIEN (1990) and TOULEMONDE (2002) stressed the importance of external factors for the development of certain evaluation activities and networks. Among these external influences the following are especially worth to be mentioned:

- *Supranational bodies and organisations*: organisations such as the World Bank or the EU could take a leading role in developing evaluation when linking monitoring and evaluation to financial support and donations.
- *Civil Society*: civil society is supposed to be the final user and beneficiary of public policy evaluations. Through an increasing number of interest groups, society is a main stakeholder in evaluation, and demand more and more participative approaches to evaluation.
- *Media*: mass media make the world more transparent, they allow wider dissemination of evaluation results and could act as the voice of the public, demanding assessment of impacts and evaluation of public expenditure.

- *Scientific and Technical Progress*: this kind of progress helps to develop new and better methodological tools and to integrate stakeholders more actively in evaluation processes (Internet).
- *Ethics and Norms*: varying social norms and ethics could demand or inhibit the use of certain methodologies or the publication of evaluation results.

Regarding the **endogenous elements**, the system is based on the **demand** and the **supply** of evaluation processes and reports. This approach was already adopted in other studies, which analysed regional or national evaluation systems (BOYLE and LEMAIRE 1999, MACKAY 1998). In addition, **resources (technical, human, material) and infrastructures** support the evaluation activities on the supply and the demand side and link those two elements.

Each element, as can be observed in the model, are divided into various subelements that again can be translated into qualitative and quantitative indicators. So, for example, the ‘*use of evaluations*’ is one subelement of the element ‘*evaluation demand*’ which can be observed in terms of the *No. of published evaluation reports (or % of total)*, the *No. of evaluation which are actually used for decision-making*, the *No. of metaevaluations*, etc.

The use of detailed subelements and concrete indicators allows to analyse in-depth and to monitor existing evaluation systems, in order to detect weak areas and lacking elements. In fact, a profound analysis of the baseline situation is crucial for the elaboration and set-up of adequate development measures, since each evaluation system (local, regional or national) is different and has its own history, context, and influences. But indicators are also a useful tool for monitoring progress, measuring achievements and assessing performance while developing an evaluation system.

The whole set of the evaluation system’s endogenous elements and subelements can be described as the capacity of the evaluation system or *evaluation capacity*. The development and improvement of evaluation systems is therefore necessarily linked to the approach of evaluation capacity building.

## *HOW TO DEVELOP EVALUATION SYSTEMS?*

In the vast majority of current approaches to develop or strengthen evaluation systems at regional or national level, this activity is described as **Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB)** (see also BOYLE and LEMAIRE 1999, COMPTON/BAIZERMAN /STOCKDILL 2002) or, in some cases, as Evaluation Capacity Development (THE WORLD BANK-OED 2002), as Evaluation Capability Building (MCDONALD/ROGERS/KEFFORD 2003), or as Mainstreaming of the Evaluation Function (DAVIDSON 2001).

“ECD is a systemic approach to the improvement of country institutions concerned with the monitoring, evaluation and reform of public sector activities and programs.” (The World Bank-OED 2002:36)

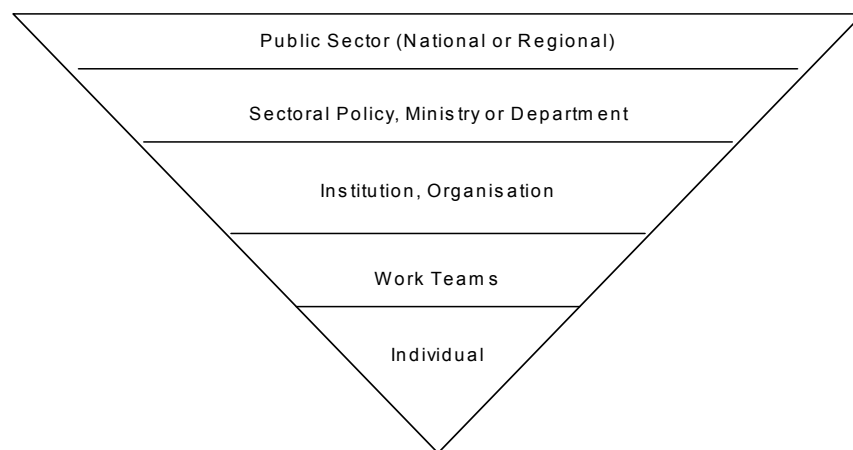
The general approach is very comprehensive and requires further definition as regards level and object of capacity building, time-frame, final and operative objectives, involved actors, etc.

“ECB is a context-dependent, intentional action system of guided processes and practices for bringing about and sustaining a state of affairs in which quality program evaluation and its appropriate uses are ordinary and ongoing practices within and/or between one or more organizations/ programs/sites.” (Stockdill/Baizerman/Compton 2002:8)

ECB, also certainly linked to carrying out evaluation activities and elaborating evaluation reports, must be seen as an action field in itself, which has to do with evaluation, but also with organizational learning, institutional and competence development, professionalisation of evaluation, analytical and methodological research, and, last but not least, with and reforms of the public sector and approaches of new public management.

Ideally, ECB takes place simultaneously at various levels. It can have an influence on personal skills, social and institutional skills, as well as on cultural and relational aspects, etc. in a given institution, region or country.

### Levels of ECB



The two main action lines of ECB at the moment are the work at country-level or at organisational level. The first field is mainly represented by organisations such as The World Bank and its work in less developed countries, but also by national initiatives to develop evaluation systems (see the cases of Australia and Canada, MACKAY 1998 and CEE 2001). The second field includes the work at organizational level and is a current topic in U.S. sectoral organisations and federal agencies. In any case, ECB at a certain level must consider capacity building at the inferior levels to be effective, i.e. activities at organisational levels have to be accompanied by measures to strengthen team and individual skills. ECB requires, thus, a systemic view, not only with regard to the different elements of the evaluation system (demand, supply, resources, infrastructures, other influences), but also regarding the different administrative levels.

Another main characteristic of ECB is that it normally does not feature short-term activities, but – quite the opposite – it requires a long-term and incremental perspective. ECB could integrate short-term measures, such as seminars, training courses, or study visits. However, it should not forget that the measures should be continued, included in a wider action plan or framework, and affecting different levels of the evaluation system (experts or civil servants that will be carrying out evaluations, technicians that will have to prepare primary or monitoring data for the evaluations, stakeholder that will be involved in evaluation processes, politicians that will use the evaluation results). The integrated, long-term and widespread action is the key to effective and sustainable capacity building.

ECB measures are not clearly defined. There is no general recipe, no unique or best approach. On the contrary, like evaluation in itself, ECB depends always on the context of the institutions or general evaluation system, as well as on the concrete objectives and priorities of the ECB strategy in each case. ECB, more than a single thing, represents a wide array of dynamic processes, multiple strategies, processes, and practices, where single measures even will have to be modified and adapted over the general process. To integrate the mechanism of evaluation into decision-making structures, ECB requires more than understanding the methods of evaluation, hiring evaluators, or increasing the number of evaluation reports. A deeper shift in the culture and mind-set is needed for evaluation practice to prosper.

For the development of a conceptual framework of ECB measures, a wide range of different existing ECB initiatives – at institutional, sectoral, country level, in less developed and developed countries – has been identified and analysed.<sup>1</sup>

The results of this analysis and comparison of different approaches are presented in the table on the following page. They have been structured according to the elements of the evaluation system (demand, supply, as well as links and infrastructure) and on five basic activity areas of ECB, identified by MILSTEIN and COTTON (2000): learning from experience, resources and support, professional development, organisational environment, and motivational factors.

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<sup>1</sup> This analysis was conducted by one of the authors in the context of her doctoral thesis. 13 cases of ECB were analysed.



**Conceptual Framework of ECB Measures**

	MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS	ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS	LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE
EVALUATION DEMAND (PUBLIC SECTOR, NON-PROFIT, ETC.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a legal basis for evaluation</li> <li>• Create incentives for development and use of evaluation</li> <li>• Awareness-raising on utility of evaluations</li> <li>• Integrate formally evaluation in all programmes and projects</li> <li>• Create procedures to integrate evaluation results in decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop “champions” and competence centres in the field of evaluation</li> <li>• Create specific jobs for evaluators (new job profiles)</li> <li>• Create specific agencies, units or departments for evaluation</li> <li>• Disseminate information about these agencies, units, and departments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise in-house training and workshops on evaluation</li> <li>• Organise intensive seminars on evaluation</li> <li>• Promote on-going training in evaluation topics and methodologies</li> <li>• Elaborate and disseminate educational, practical material and didactic support for trainers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistical and monitoring support systems</li> <li>• Elaborate and offer evaluation manuals</li> <li>• Offer consulting and technical assistance for in-house evaluators</li> <li>• Build support or training agreements between institutions, organisations, universities</li> <li>• Create institutional mechanisms such as Technical Groups, integrating all stakeholders to be involved in evaluation processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elaborate metaevaluations and thematic/horizontal evaluations</li> <li>• Identify, value and disseminate best in-house evaluation practices</li> <li>• Present and disseminate best evaluation practices in other institutions</li> <li>• Learn from study visits to other institutions or organisations</li> <li>• Support the publication of evaluation reports and results (Internet, paper, CD-ROM)</li> </ul>
LINKS AND INFRA-STRUCTURES -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elaborate and disseminate an ECB Action Plan agreed by all involved stakeholders</li> <li>• Foster research on new evaluation methods, techniques and tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and strengthen research centres and institutes that do research in the field of evaluation</li> <li>• Integrate the universities in evaluation research and evaluation activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise specialist courses, summer schools and seminars on evaluation</li> <li>• Organise on-line courses for evaluators</li> <li>• Create and maintain web sites, on-line libraries, virtual manuals about evaluation and related topics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install and promote the use of electronic support (software, hardware)</li> <li>• Create on-line data bases and monitoring data</li> <li>• Develop common indicators</li> <li>• Develop discussion lists and boards on evaluation in Internet</li> <li>• Create and strengthen documentary centres on evaluation</li> <li>• Disseminate training material</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange of experiences on conferences and seminars</li> <li>• Initiate an open dialogue between evaluators and public sector in Internet, seminars, working groups</li> <li>• Strengthen the publication of professional journals, professional networks, newsletters, etc.</li> <li>• Use new forms of dissemination (Internet, CD-ROM, new languages)</li> </ul>
EVALUATION SUPPLY (EVALUATORS, UNIVERSITIES, ETC.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value good practices in evaluation</li> <li>• Foster the use of quality standards in evaluation</li> <li>• Create quality certificates for evaluators</li> <li>• Acknowledge good practice of evaluators and integrate it in employee’s professional assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop “champions” and competence centres in the field of evaluation</li> <li>• Include evaluation in job profiles and job offers</li> <li>• Update current job profiles</li> <li>• Create professional profiles for evaluators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create university degrees in evaluation</li> <li>• Create postgraduate studies in evaluation (Master, etc.)</li> <li>• Integrate evaluation as a subject in other degrees</li> <li>• Strengthen internships and “on-the-job” training for evaluators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and extend professional associations</li> <li>• Strengthen the networking between evaluators and between associations</li> <li>• Incentive publications written by evaluators (national)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate the evaluation system and the evaluation activities in a certain area</li> <li>• Value and disseminate good practices and model studies</li> <li>• Elaborate and disseminate ‘success stories’</li> </ul>

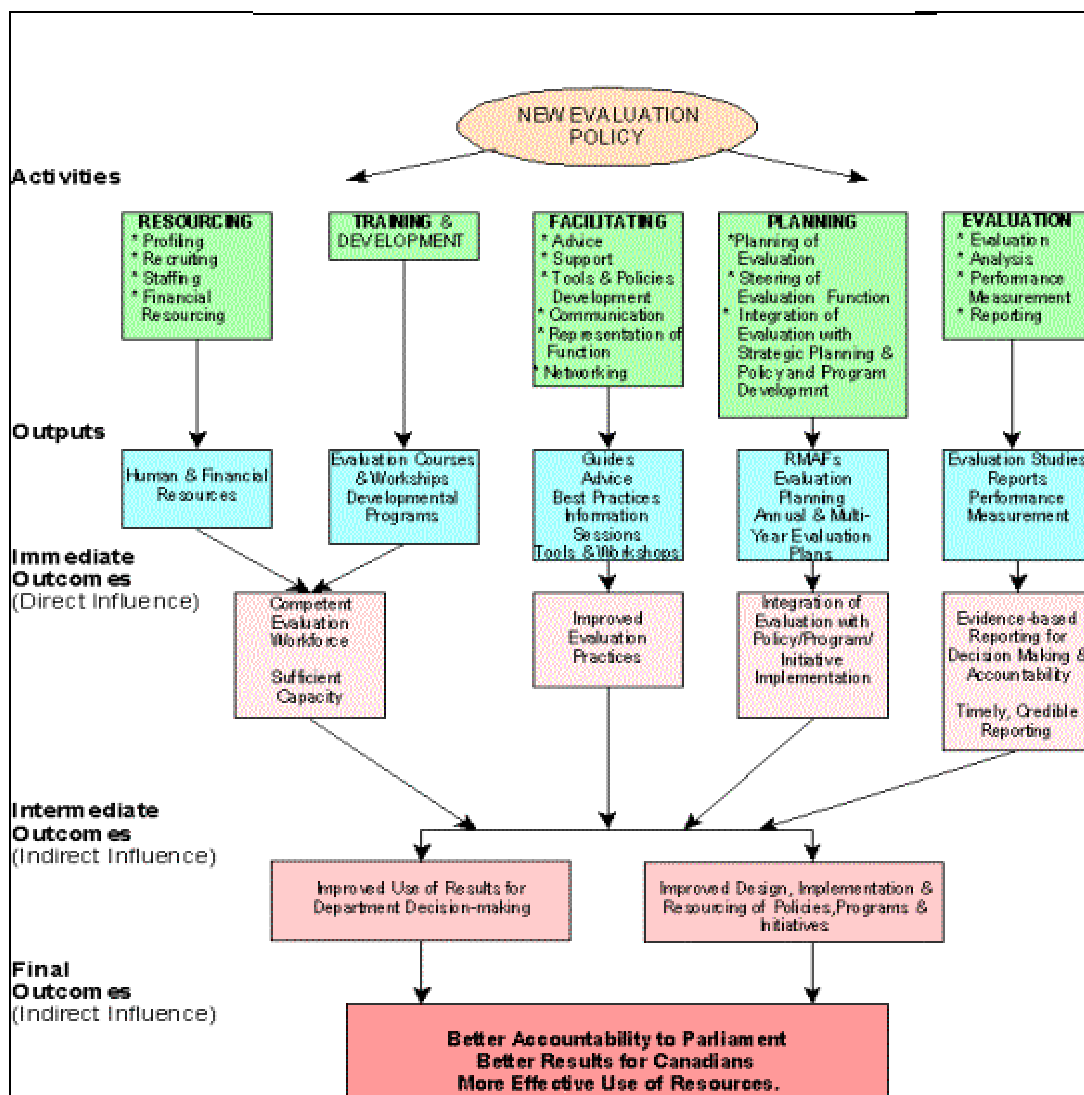
Source: Own elaboration

This list of ECB measures is certainly not exhaustive, but tries to give an overview over existing measures and to structure them according to the main functions and elements of the evaluation system.

An often-neglected need for ECB activities and approaches is the follow-up and evaluation of these activities themselves. For this purpose it is appropriate to carry out the ECB activities according to a logic model, so that activities, results, and impacts can be monitored and amended, in the case of low effectiveness or managerial problems.

A good example for such a logic model is the one that underlies the evaluation policy, which the Treasury Board of Canada implements in all of the governmental branches and agencies.

**Logic Model for ECB – The Case of Canadian Evaluation Policy**



Source: CEE 2001:11

## *AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING*

Seeing evaluation of public policies as a complex system that contains different elements, subelements, actors, any intent to strengthen or improve the functioning of a given evaluation system must follow an integrated approach. The analysis of existing approaches to ECB has confirmed that successful strategies for creating evaluation capacities at institutional, sectoral or general regional or national level involve a wide range of activities, are structured in a clear logic model – which facilitates performance monitoring and evaluation of the ECB strategy itself –, and act on the whole set of relevant actors and groups (evaluators, politicians, administration, society, research centres and universities, etc.).

Nevertheless, the need for an integrated approach makes it even harder to define and structure comprehensive action plans for ECB, since many different fields have to be taken into account and a variety of measures has to be organised. For actors or institutions which are themselves part of the evaluation system, it is even more difficult to become neutral observers and analyse the system from a distance point of view. ECB approaches that are developed only by one part of the evaluation system (supply = association of evaluators, demand = public administration) tend to favour action on the own, best-known part of the system and to neglect complementary support action on the connecting elements between demand and supply. Internal actors in many cases also ignore or underestimate external influences on the evaluation system, which could be easily turned into driving forces and integrated with synergetic effects into an overall ECB strategy<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, the support of external observers and advisors for the definition of a ECB strategy is crucial.

In addition, a profound qualitative analysis of the existing capacities is fundamental, in order to be able to work on existing weaknesses and to strengthen even more the strong points of the system. The adequateness of the measures to the system is one of the key aspects for achieving a positive and durable reaction.

Accordingly, the following steps could serve as a general guide for defining an integrated ECB strategy or Action Plan:

- Step 1: Analysis of the environment of the evaluation system: external influences, other systems (legal, education, etc.), do they favour or hamper evaluation?
- Step 2: Analysis of the current situation, strong and weak point of the elements of the evaluation system by means of concrete quantitative and qualitative indicators.

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<sup>2</sup> The compulsory evaluation of regional policy programmes co-funded by the EU Structural Funds in the EU countries was and still is a major driving force that has triggered evaluation activities and the creation of evaluation systems in several European countries with scarce evaluation tradition. (see also Toulemonde 2002)

- Step 3: Identify clear and measurable objectives and priority action lines for the ECB strategy.
- Step 4: Elaborate an ECB Action Plan with concrete measures, a participative approach, with clearly identified responsible actors, an indicative temporal horizon (short-term, medium or long-term priority).
- Step 5: Carry out the measures according to the ECB Action Plan.
- Step 6: Monitor and regularly follow-up the implementation and the results of the ECB Action Plan.
- Step 7: React to the results of the follow-up and define correcting or follow-up measures if necessary.
- Step 8: Evaluate periodically the elements of the evaluation system, using the indicators of Step 2 and comparing the results with the baseline situation (Step 2).

### *THE CASE OF SLOVENIA*

Parting from the above-mentioned steps, the case of Slovenia has been object to a in-depth analysis<sup>3</sup>. In fact, Steps 1-4 have been carried out, allowing to develop a general analysis of the elements of the Slovenian evaluation system and of the external influences and the general setting in which the evaluation system is embedded. After this analysis, the most important strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation system have been identified, serving afterwards as key points for the elaboration of a possible ECB strategy for Slovenia.

The analysis showed that Slovenia, being a young country with a young independent public sector, has currently a weak evaluation culture. A lot of promising trends and activities are, however, emerging in the country. In spite of carrying out very few evaluation activities, research is undertaken by national economic research institutes (IER) to create general guidelines for the evaluation of regional development programmes. The National Agency for Regional Development (NARD) has developed a complex monitoring system that will facilitate future evaluation of all programmes related to regional and local development in the country.

The first Slovenian evaluators are participating in professional associations (European Evaluation Society) and in international conferences and networks of evaluators. Various public institutions work in internationally supported project on the development of indicators, statistical monitoring data and on evaluation procedures (e.g. in the National Audit Office), in order to increase the data inputs and technical support for evaluations in the future.

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<sup>3</sup> This analysis was conducted by one of the authors in the context of her doctoral thesis. In the framework of the thesis also the cases of Germany and Spain were analysed and compared in a general benchmarking of evaluation systems. Subsequently, for all three cases priority action fields, objectives and measures of possible ECB strategies were defined. The focus of the analysis was mainly on evaluation of regional policies, but taking the general education and legal systems as a reference.

In general, mainly external bodies that foster directly and indirectly evaluation have influenced the Slovenian evaluation system (EU, World Bank). Major internal efforts to strengthen evaluation could not be found until now. So, although there are now interesting activities that prepare the ground for future evaluations, the national evaluation system is still very immature and needs a comprehensive and long-term approach to be developed.

The following approach is one possible **example of an ECB Action Plan for Slovenia**. It is structured top-down (final goal to particular measures) and focussed especially on evaluation in the field of Regional Policy.

<b>GOAL</b>
Build the overall evaluation system, disseminate basic knowledge and good practices to promote evaluation, strengthen the existing evaluation capacities and improve the links between evaluation professionals.
<b>SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Spread evaluation practice, improve the quality of evaluations and value good practices.</li> <li>2. Establish a labour market for professional evaluators, put evaluation on the agenda of public administrations, research centres, universities and private consultancies.</li> <li>3. Develop and disseminate knowledge about the abilities of evaluators, integrate these abilities in current university courses and degrees and create a specific academic and training offer for evaluators.</li> <li>4. Create resources and technical support mechanisms, establish and exploit better links to other professionals.</li> <li>5. Create instruments that allow an on-going dialogue between evaluation professionals and develop tools that initiate process of professional exchange and learning.</li> </ol>
<b>GENERAL ACTION LINES</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Increase the number of evaluations carried out.</li> <li>1.2 Develop quality standards and general guidelines for the correct elaboration of evaluations.</li> <li>1.3 Publish evaluation reports, develop case studies and show good practices of evaluation processes (design, implementation, data collection, data analysis, assessment), disseminate good practices.</li> <li>2.1 Create evaluation units, university centres and departments, work places related to evaluation.</li> <li>2.2 Establish professional profiles for evaluators and include the evaluation as task in job offers and descriptions.</li> <li>3.1 Develop competence centres and foster the appearance of "evaluation champions".</li> <li>3.2 Disseminate knowledge about the abilities and competences an evaluator should possess.</li> <li>3.3 Integrate these abilities and competences in existing training and education and create specific courses for evaluators.</li> <li>4.1 Develop further electronic monitoring and indicators systems and their use in evaluations.</li> <li>4.2 Elaborate education material, articles, publications, and guides about evaluation in Slovenian language.</li> <li>4.3 Strengthen links to international professional evaluators, universities, researchers and consultancies and transfer knowledge to Slovenia.</li> <li>5.1 Elaborate metaevaluations and thematic evaluations that are not compulsory but help to improve evaluation practice.</li> <li>5.2 Organise conferences, workshops and other events for Slovenian evaluators in order to get to know peers, and to exchange experience.</li> <li>5.3 Create a national evaluation society, which could develop support activities (journals, workshops).</li> </ol>

MEASURES		
¿WHAT?	¿WHO?	¿WHEN?
1.1.1 Establish a legal basis for evaluation of all regional and national programmes.	Ministry for Economy, National Audit Office	Medium-long term
1.2.1 Develop quality standards for the correct elaboration of evaluations of programmes and projects, based on existing American, Swiss and German Standards.	Evaluators Universities, Research Centres, NARD	Medium term
1.2.2 Disseminate and use general guidelines for the correct elaboration of evaluations or programmes and projects.	NARD, IER	Short term
1.3.1 Publish all evaluation reports commissioned by the public administration (on-line, books, CD-ROM, periodically, annually, etc.).	NARD, other Ministries	Short term
1.3.2 Develop case studies and show good practices of evaluation processes (design, implementation, data collection, data analysis, assessment).	NARD, other Ministries	Medium term
1.3.3 Disseminate good practices and case studies (see measure 1.3.2).	NARD, other Ministries	Medium term
2.1.1 Create evaluation units, departments, and work places in the public sector related to evaluation and monitoring activities.	NARD, other Ministries	Medium-long term
2.1.2 Strengthen evaluation as a discipline in universities and research centres (Economics, Social Sciences, Planning, etc.) and create specific evaluation departments.	Universities	Medium-long term
2.2.1 Establish professional competence profiles for evaluators, identifying key competences as the base for measures 3.2.1 and 3.3.1.	Evaluators, research centres, consultancies	Short term
2.2.2 Include evaluation as a task and as an activity field in job offers and descriptions in the public sector, at universities and in private companies (consultancies).	NARD, other Ministries, universities, research centres, consultancies	Short –medium term
3.1.1 Develop competence centres and foster the appearance of “evaluation champions” on the side of evaluation demand (public sector, e.g. NARD) and evaluation supply (research centres, e.g. IER, universities, private companies).	NARD, IER, universities, research centres, consultancies	Medium-long term
3.2.1 Disseminate knowledge about the abilities and competences an evaluator should possess, on the side of evaluation demand, as well as on the supply side.	Evaluators, research centres, consultancies	Short term
3.3.1 Integrate these abilities and competences in existing training and education, create additional practical training (internships, on-the-job-training) and present “evaluation” as a possible job field to students.	Evaluators, research centres, universities, training centres	Short term
3.3.2 Create a specific educational and training offer for (future) evaluators, including master studies, postgraduate, and university degrees.	Universities, training centres, research centres, consultancies	Medium-long term
4.1.1 Develop further electronic monitoring and indicators systems and their use in evaluations. Work further on simple and measurable indicators and the existence of reliable and exact data.	NARD, experts, National Statistics Office	Short –medium term
4.2.1 Elaborate and disseminate articles, publications, and guides about evaluation in Slovenian language.	Evaluators, research centres, consultancies	Short term
4.2.2 Elaborate (translate) and disseminate education and training material in Slovenian language.	Evaluators, research centres, consultancies	Short term
4.3.1 Strengthen links to international professional evaluators, universities, researchers and consultancies and transfer knowledge to Slovenia by means of joint projects twinning, transnational evaluations, training agreements, etc.	NARD, universities, research centres, consultancies	Short term

MEASURES		
¿WHAT?	¿WHO?	¿WHEN?
5.1.1 Elaborate metaevaluations and thematic evaluations that are not compulsory but help to improve evaluation practice, and disseminate them.	NARD, other Ministries	Short –medium term
5.2.1 Create an instrument for exchange and dissemination of information, such as a newsletter, web site or journal for the evaluation community in Slovenia.	Evaluators, universities, research centres, consultancies	Short term
5.2.2 Integrate evaluation as a specific topic/field (methods, presentation of evaluations) in other conferences (e.g. for economists, social scientists, on regional development, rural development, environment, etc.) and organise specific working groups for evaluation in other associations.	Universities, research centres, other scientific and professional associations	Short- medium term
5.2.3 Organise thematic workshops and exchange between evaluators, public sector officials, researchers, and experts (international).	Evaluators, NARD, universities, research centres, consultancies	Short term
5.3.1 Create a national evaluation society, which at the beginning could be an informal working or interest group.	NARD, experts, evaluators	Short term
5.3.2 Develop support activities, create specific working groups, create a web site, support the definition of quality standards and professional competence descriptions, elaborate and disseminate success stories, organise annual conferences, workshops, etc.	A future national evaluation society	Medium term

## *CONCLUSIONS – EVALUATION SYSTEMS AS A TOOL FOR SELF-AWARENESS AND EVOLUTION IN PUBLIC POLICIES*

Public policies present highly complex social systems, which require internal mechanisms for reflection and correction of actions that are not adequate, efficient or effective. The mechanism that represents this function in current public policies is “Evaluation”.

Evaluation itself can be represented as a system, with an evaluation demand (from the public administration), evaluation supply (evaluators, universities), evaluation resources (training courses, methods, journals and publications), and a systems environment (external influences, educational and legal system, etc.).

This evaluation system needs to be equally equipped and active to become useful in the whole decision-making procedure of public policies and to help to improve policy-making correspondingly. That is why the creation of evaluation systems and the building of evaluation capacities

This article presented the main characteristics of ECB, a conceptual framework of existing ECB measures, the preconditions for an integrated approach to ECB strategies, and the elaboration of the framework of a potential ECB action plan for the country of Slovenia.

The analysis of existing approaches to ECB has confirmed that successful strategies for creating evaluation capacities

- involve a wide range of activities,
- are structured in a clear logic model – which facilitates performance monitoring and evaluation of the ECB strategy itself –,
- and act on the whole set of relevant actors and groups (evaluators, politicians, administration, society, research centres and universities, etc.).

The support of external observers and advisors – from outside the evaluation system – for the definition of an ECB strategy is crucial. Moreover, a profound qualitative analysis of the existing capacities is fundamental, in order to be able to work on existing weaknesses and to strengthen even more the strong points of the system.

In short, an integrated approach for ECB is necessary. The example of Slovenia showed that it is not so complex to develop an integrated action plan and concrete measures for building evaluation capacities. It would be, however, much more difficult to complete the Steps and to turn this plan into action. Because, as mentioned before, a deeper shift in mind-set, administrative culture and policy-making structures is needed to turn evaluation really in a tool for self-awareness and evolution in public policies.

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