

“What PRS Monitoring and Evaluation could learn from evaluation theory and practice”, Nathalie Holvoet, IOB-UA

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“Political Economy of PRS Monitoring”, David Booth, ODI

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- Insights from evaluation theory, practice, literature (broadly defined) are not fully exploited
 - failing to use insights → worsen the constraints + undermine technical soundness
 - Exploiting insights more fully → produce marginal changes
- Conflation among monitoring and evaluation
 - Increasing focus on monitoring at the expense of evaluation
 - Evaluative analysis:
 - .insights into reasons for success and failure
 - .important for learning, improvement
 - E: more demanding than M but there are (potential) champions

- Trade-off among accountability & feedback/learning
 - Different principles, different actors, different methodologies
 - Important in set-up of M&E unit (see Bamberger and Valadez)
 - Scope for improvement of some donor M&E activities (e.g. sector reviews)

- Appropriate level of (recipient government) accountability (PAF)
 - Activities and outputs
 - .inputs: not ambitious enough
 - .outcomes/impact: unrealistic and counterproductive (non-enforceable)
 - Need for implementation monitoring & process evaluation

BUT

- Results monitoring and impact evaluation are needed as well
 - .in case of innovative activities/experiments (learning about causal linkages) (see CGD)
 - .in case of technically strong governments that are not necessarily pro-poor, inclusive
- But: demanding + public goods argument: need for resource pooling (see CGD)

➤ Politics of M&E

- M&E: sensitive issue → incentives to curtail independency
- Evidence in context of projects and presumably higher at meso, macrolevel

BUT

✓ **Apparant denial of the political & institutional embeddedness of M&E in donor behaviour (↔ one of the starting assumptions)**

- readiness to align without a more comprehensive (political & technical) diagnosis of M&E

WHEREAS

- M&E alignment is itself not politically neutral
- Worsen political constraints and undermine technical soundness

✓ **No plea in favour of non-alignment but for**

- Coordinated use of assessment frames that combine technical & political issues (e.g. readiness assessment Kusek and Rist)
 - .Identify strong & weak points
 - .Identify entry points for change at the margin (change incentive structures)
 - .capacity building (analysis) of (semi)-independent M&E demand and supply actors
 - .support information dissemination
 - .use the information yourself (triangulate)
 - .enlarge policy space & scope for agency of independent M&E actors (policy dialogue)
 - .safeguard bell-ringers