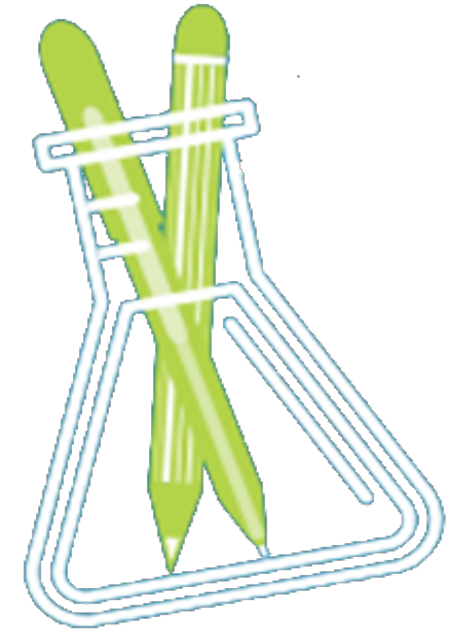


Measuring and Evaluating Determinants of Public Administration Productivity

Bureaucracy Lab

Development Impact Evaluation | Global Governance Practice

October 22-25, 2019, Brussels, Belgium



WORLD BANK GROUP
Equitable Growth, Finance & Institutions

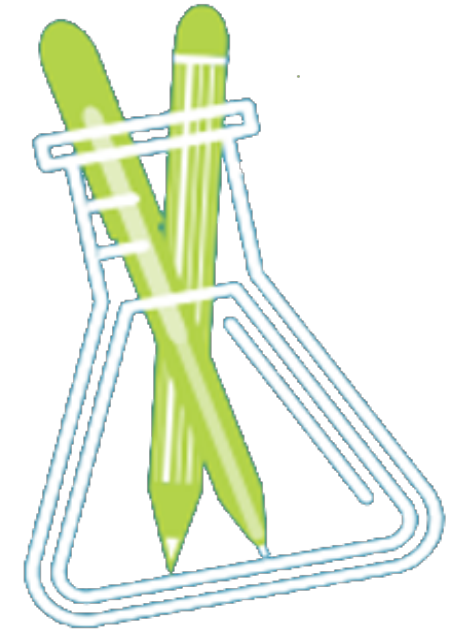
Power Up! Practical considerations in IE design

Michael Carlos Best
Columbia University

Bureaucracy Lab

Development Impact Evaluation | Global Governance Practice

October 22-25, 2019, Brussels, Belgium



WORLD BANK GROUP
Equitable Growth, Finance & Institutions

1. Objectives

- Ambitious Impact Evaluations (IEs) have a panoply of goals
 1. **Designing** novel approaches to widespread policy challenges
 2. **Implementing** potentially several approaches simultaneously
 3. Designing implementation to permit policy **evaluation**
 4. Learning what works in *this* context and why
 5. Trying to learn how *generalizable* results are and why
- Trying to meet all goals challenging
- Try to identify challenges that exist in many settings, not just this one
- Try to design interventions that could be replicated in other settings
- Collect lots and lots of data
 - On why things work, not just whether they work. Mechanisms help us think about generalizability
 - Stakeholders' predictions at project start: What will work and why?
How big predict effects will be?



2. Timeline & Outputs

- Different planning horizons:
 - Budget cycles
 - Electoral cycles
 - Academic dissemination timelines
- Pressure to show “it” works. Now.
- Output Timeline
 - Short-run outputs (3-6m): Summary/Analysis of baseline data. Pilot intervention
 - Medium-run outputs (6-18m): Midline results / mid-course correction
 - Longer-run outputs (18-30m): Final report / Policy note / Academic paper



3. Personnel churn

- All participants are stepping outside their comfort zone (exciting!). Building a team with trusting relationships is crucial.
- Nevertheless, institutionalize project to protect it when individuals move on.
- Ex1, Bureaucratic churn: Field experiment with Pakistani tax administration fell apart after head of tax admin removed.
- Ex2, Political churn: Field experiment with procurement authority in Amazonas, Brazil fell apart after secretary of finance replaced after election.
- Ex3, Bureaucratic churn: Field experiment over 3 years worked with 5 different heads of procurement regulator. Rebuilding relationship each time
- => Codify project in MOU so that successors have something to look back on



4. Team

- Ambitious IEs require a deep symbiosis
 - Researchers deeply embedded in implementing agency
 - Officials deeply embedded in research team
- Ambitious IEs require coordination among several parts of implementing agency
 - Crucial to have support from top of agency to coordinate and provide broad guidance
 - Equally crucial to have input from mid-level and front-line staff for details of IE design and implementation
- Ambitious IEs require researchers and officials to work together on *all* stages of evaluation: Intervention design, implementation, data gathering, analysis



5. Communication

- Ambitious IEs create large teams to work together. Keeping everyone on the same page is crucial.
- 3 Working groups
 1. Steering Committee: top management and reps from other groups. Give overall guidance, troubleshooting to project. Make big decisions.
 2. Technical Committee: Mid-level/front-line staff, research team. Hash out design details, oversee implementation/evaluation
 3. Research team: Research team (including officials when possible/necessary). Detailed work on IE.

Meeting Frequencies

Group	Design/Startup	Implementation/Evaluation
Steering Committee	monthly	quarterly
Technical Committee	biweekly	monthly
Research team	weekly	biweekly



6. Managing Logistics

- Implementing an intervention is often a logistical challenge, especially if rollout is staggered/randomized.
- Punjab: Turned out departments didn't track implementation of part of one treatment to offices -> had to survey the offices to find out when/if received that treatment component!
- Process tracking is key here. Who did what, when, who knew etc.
- Field coordinators (research staff embedded full/part time in implementing agency) are indispensable here.

