DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH METHODS

Week 8, Lesson 2: Monitoring and Evaluation

Development Research Methods
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What we will cover in today's lecture

1. Managing and supervising research for development work
2. Research planning
3. Monitoring and evaluating research

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Table 1 Management and research supervision

Management supervision	Research/professional supervision
Clarify aims and objectives	Ensure professional standards are met
Ensure proper with senior managers, facilitating wider use of the research	Assist with identifying relevant literature
Ensure progress towards aims and objectives	Assist in making links beyond the immediate area with relevant researchers and others
Set time-scales and targets	Draw on experience to assist in planning time-scales
Deal with resources issues	Advise on research methods
Manage research advisory groups	Ensure people with appropriate knowledge are invited onto advisory groups
Facilitate links with partner agencies	Consider emotional responses to the process of the research, and their consequences for the work
Support participatory processes	Advise on methods of analysis
Support the process of working out recommendations from findings	Assist in dealing with ethical dilemmas
Ensure feedback to policy-makers and/or community members in an appropriate format	Assist with writing for academic audiences

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Checklist for managing research for development work effectively

- ✓ Progress towards aims and objectives is going well
- ✓ A set of ‘milestones’ along the way are planned for and then achieved
- ✓ Written materials are clearly expressed and appropriate to their audience
- ✓ Process of negotiating access to participants is handled tactfully
- ✓ Appropriate partner agencies have been informed of, or involved in, the research
- ✓ An advisory group is convened as appropriate
- ✓ People are being kept informed of progress
- ✓ If the research is intended to be participatory, there is evidence that people feel that they are able to participate, and value this process
- ✓ Disadvantaged sections of the population in question are being included
- ✓ Formalities have been properly observed
- ✓ Reports include an appropriate balance between description and analysis
- ✓ Ethical standards are being upheld
- ✓ Finally, remember to give positive feedback to the researcher, whenever possible – research can be a lonely business

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Research Planning Timetable

An example

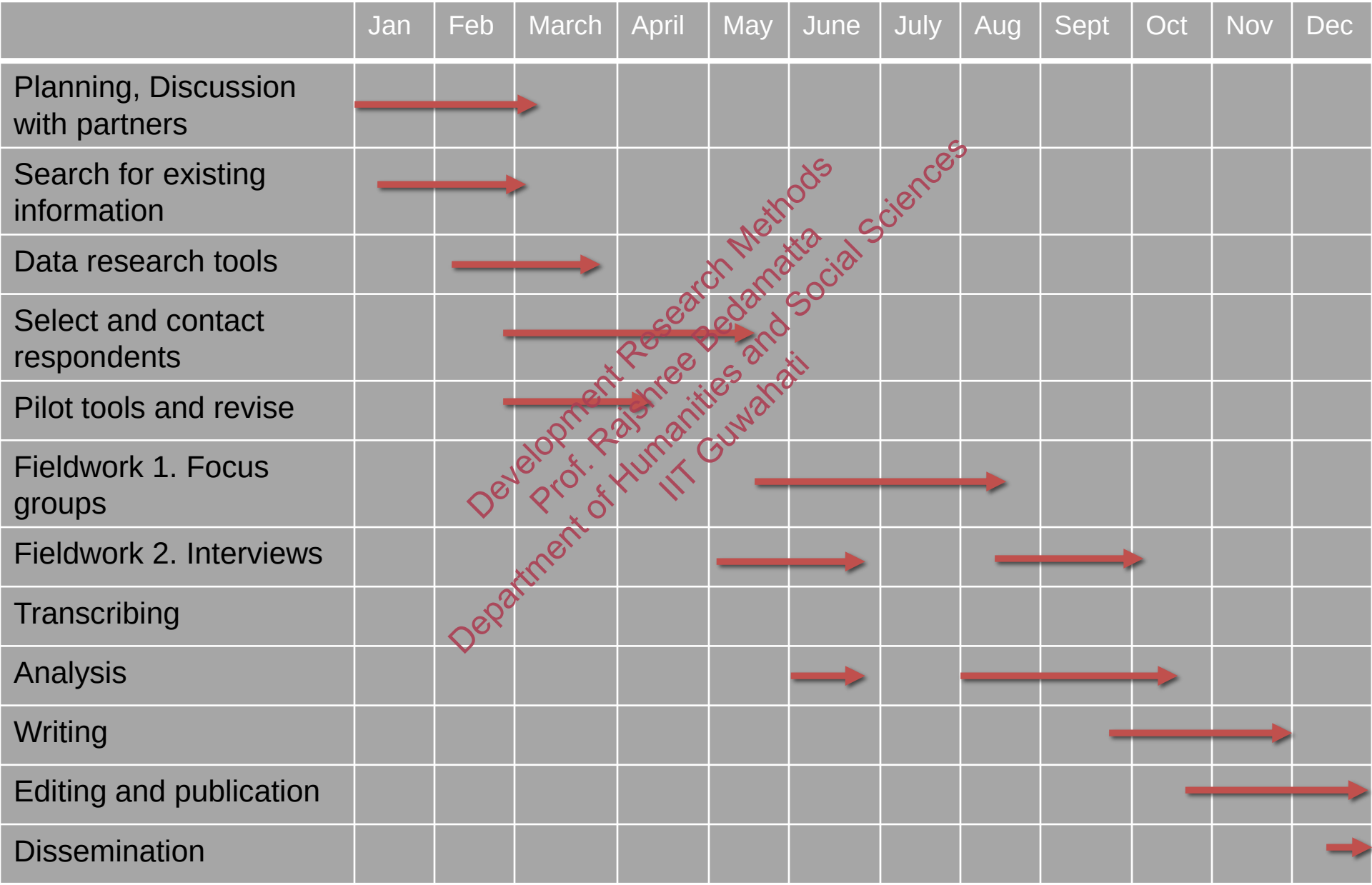


Table 2 Research Planning

Task	Time Required	People Required	Costs
Clarifying the focus, setting questions			
Literature survey			
Drafting research tools			
Plot study			
Selecting and contacting respondents			
Fieldwork			
Transcribing (if needed)			
Analysis			
Report writing			
Commenting and editing			
Design and printing			
Presentations			
Total			

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Table 3 Project Budget Example

No.	Items	Unit	Quantity	Unit cost	Budget
1.0	**Personnel**				
1.1	Researcher				
1.2	Research Advisor				
2.0	**Travel and accommodation**				
2.1	Hiring of vehicle				
2.2	Accommodation for field work				
3.0	**Project implementation**				
3.1	Materials (printing, documentation, data management)				
4.0	**Net project cost**				
5.0	**Institute overhead**	20 % of 4.0			
5.1	Project cost (incl. overheads)				
6.0	**GST**	18% of 5.1			
7.0	**Grand Total**				

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Checklist on Managing Participatory Research

- ✓Consider facilitating participation in the different elements of the research process
- ✓Allow enough time for real participation at each relevant stage of the process
- ✓Reflect on why you are encouraging participation and what participating community members will gain from their involvement
- ✓Allocate sufficient staff time to support participating community members
- ✓Consider and resolve any issues in relation to remuneration for participants
- ✓Take account of social inequalities amongst the group you hope to involve
- ✓Make links between the participatory project and other relevant work in your agency, to maximize learning Relating to funders

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Checklist for Effective Research Management

- ✓Provide management supervision and research supervision
- ✓Make a careful estimate of the time research will take – this is usually underestimated
- ✓It is important to allow enough time for contacting respondents, and, in participatory research, for winning the trust of stakeholders
- ✓There is great value in building up organizations' research capacity – consider this as an element of the objectives of projects, and work out appropriate ways of involving people
- ✓Participatory research is likely to need both research staff and staff who are familiar with the group you are working with to commit substantial time to a project
- ✓Make sure you understand what a funder wants from its grant-giving, and exactly what its remit is, before you write an application

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Table 4 Evaluating success against objectives

	Achievements	Limitations	Issues to consider
Objective 1			
Objective 2			
Objective 3			
Objective 4			

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Table 5 Does your project meet quality standards for research for development work?

Standard	Strengths	Weaknesses	Notes for action
Research Planning • About an important issue • Idea came from 'the researched' •			
Research Processes • Questioned the taken-for-granted • Respectful interaction with respondents •			
Interpretation and analysis • Interpretation was accurate and honestly reported •			
Promoting research findings • Reports concise but include adequate information to assess the research • Appropriate summaries were included •			

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Some ways of getting feedback as a research project develops

- The research Advisory Group should have as part of its role to monitor the progress and impact of the project
- At the end of interviews/focus groups etc, ask respondents how they felt about taking part in the research
- Build in a short evaluation discussion at the end of any group event
- Employ an expert advisor/external evaluator who offers a listening ear and some ongoing evaluation input throughout the life of the project
- Meet together at intervals as a research team, and step back from the day-to-day work to reflect on progress and any difficulties encountered

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Checklist for Evaluating Programme-focused Research

- ✓Ask community members and colleagues what are their criteria for success for the project – sooner rather than later
- ✓Structure your evaluation around the project's aims and objectives, or
- ✓Ask people to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the research project's products and process
- ✓Include questions which invite people to think ahead, to engage with what should happen next
- ✓Do a small survey – on paper or in person – of key people's knowledge of and views on the project
- ✓Look at the learning and development of staff and community members which has occurred through the project, as well as the other outcomes

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Evaluating the Impact of Advocacy Related Research

Policy/Practice Change

Strengthening participation in policy processes

Institutional learning

Financial

- Direct changes in policy – new legislation; new official guidance; revisions to existing policy documents.
- Direct changes in practice – observable different practice by professionals.
- References are made to your research in policy discussions, e.g. during debates; in official documents, etc.
- The issue your research addressed appears on agendas it has previously been excluded from.
- Programmes of work have changed in light of your findings.
- Your research has been reported in relevant publications/programmes.

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Evaluating the Impact of Advocacy Related Research

Policy/Practice Change	Strengthening participation in policy processes	Institutional learning	Financial

- Your organisation/NGOs generally are invited to join in more discussions, or at a higher level.
- Community members/those representing them are given greater access to decision-making bodies – e.g. invited to join important committees.

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Evaluating the Impact of Advocacy Related Research

Policy/Practice Change	Strengthening participation in policy processes	Institutional learning	Financial

- To what extent did people learn – about the issue in question and about research – from this project?
- Evidence that people have gained in confidence as a result of this project

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Evaluating the Impact of Advocacy Related Research

Policy/Practice Change

Strengthening participation in policy processes

Institutional learning

Financial

- What was the balance in terms of costs and benefits? (Should not be calculated too early.)
- Any effect on your and others' ability to attract funding for work in this area?

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Indicators For Monitoring The Effectiveness Of Advocacy Work

Monitoring your target	• Record and observe changes in the rhetoric of your target audience. Are they moving closer to your position, adapting to or adopting any of your language and philosophy?
Monitoring your relationships	• Record the frequency and content of conversations with external sources and target audiences. Are you becoming a source of information or advice?
Monitoring the media	• Count column inches on your issue and the balance of pro- and anti- comment. • Count the number of mentions for your organisation. • Analyse whether media are adopting your language.
Monitoring your reputation	• Record the sources and numbers of inquiries that you receive as a result of your work. • How and where have they heard of your work? • How accurate are their pre-conceptions about your work?
Monitoring public opinion	• Analyse the popular climate through telephone polling, or through commissioning surveys.

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Checklist of Ways to Evaluate Research for Development Work

- ✓Compare achievement to objectives
- ✓Assess the quality of the product and the process
- ✓Compare your project with quality standards
- ✓Ask views of all participants/stakeholders – and let them decide what is important to mention
- ✓The scale of the evaluation effort should be in keeping with the scale of the original project

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References used for this lecture

1. Laws, S., Harper, C., Jones, N., & Marcus, R. (2013). Research for development: A practical guide. Sage.
2. Andrew Sumner and Michael Tribe, International Development Studies: Theories and Methods in Research and Practice, 2008, Sage Publications.
3. Vandana Desai and Robert B. Potter, Doing Development Research, 2006, Sage Publications.

For a comprehensive literature on the topics covered in this lecture it is also suggested that students go through the reference list of the above cited papers.

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