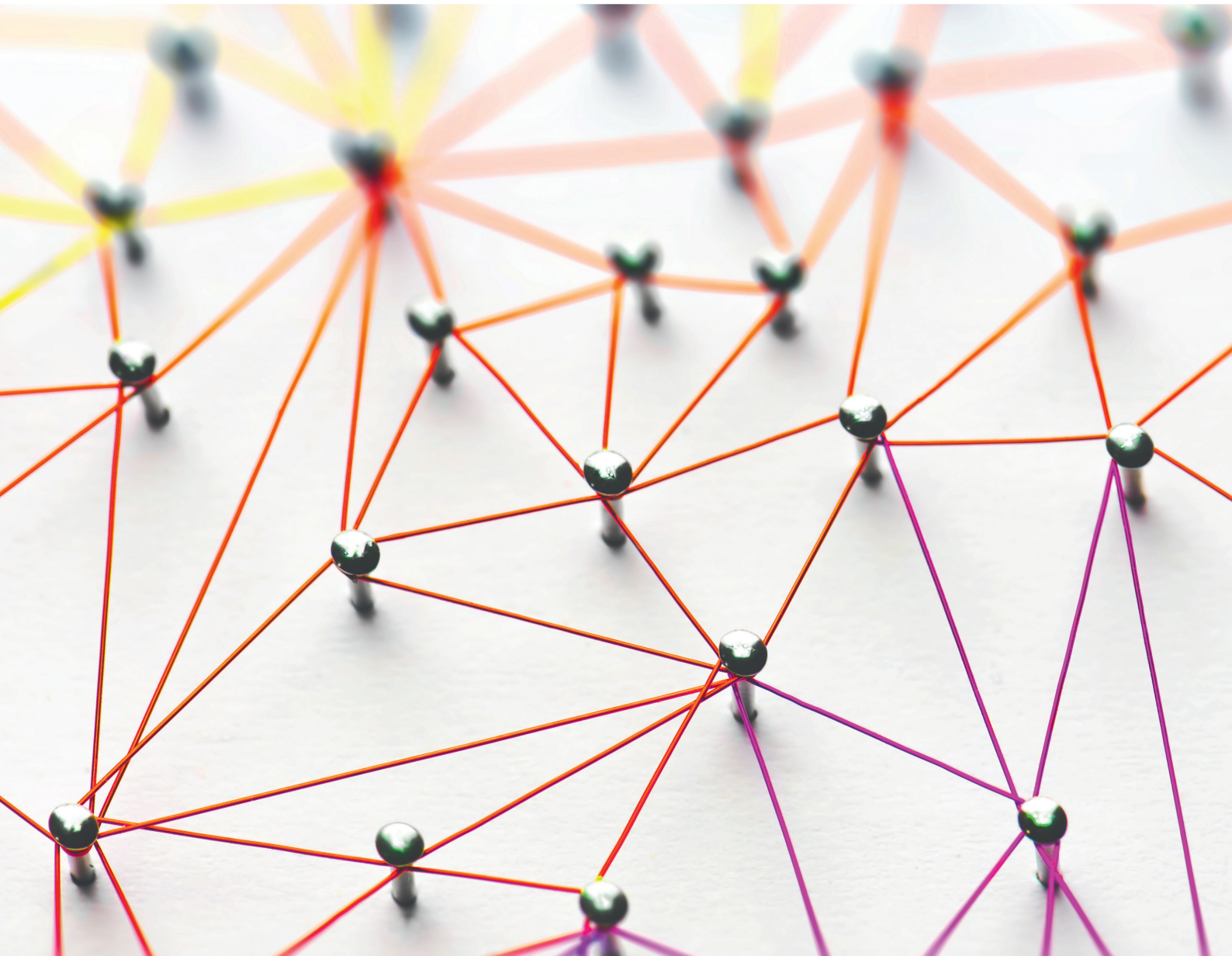




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Evaluation of multisectoral policies: Review and lessons for lifelong learning





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INTRODUCTION

The UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, guided by the Education 2030 Framework for Action (FFA), enjoins UNESCO Member States to ‘ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’ through the achievement of 10 targets (UN DESA, 2022). The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) plays a pivotal role in this regard through its support to Member States in three main areas: policy support, capacity development and research.

It is important to acknowledge that lifelong learning (LLL) and education are main drivers of sustainable development and make a critical contribution beyond SDG 4, impacting on all 17 SDGs. In addition to education (SDG 4), for example, it is linked to issues surrounding gender (SDG 5), health (SDG 3), decent work (SDG 8), climate action (SDG 13) and inclusive cities (SDG 11).

This underscores the intersectoral characteristics of LLL and highlights the inaccuracy in viewing it as the domain of any one sector. For this reason, UIL has recently published *Making Lifelong Learning a Reality: A Handbook* (UIL, 2022), which has been developed to broaden Member States’ understanding of LLL as a multisectoral issue that demands a multisectoral policy response.

As noted in the handbook,

the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda are intended to represent an integrated policy response to urgent challenges. This means that the key dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social, cultural and environmental – must be considered holistically, as interconnected parts of equal importance. Failure to progress in one area of the agenda will hamper progress in the others. The capacity of LLL to build bridges between different types and levels of education and learning, between different actors and institutions, and, crucially, between different life spheres and policy contexts, therefore becomes particularly relevant (*ibid.*, p. 21).

The present review was commissioned to complement the handbook and the toolkit, with a sharper focus on evaluation. Preliminary research undertaken by UIL suggests that evaluation practices in the field of LLL are uneven or, more often, non-existent. For UIL, this is both a policy gap and a strategic opportunity.

While the handbook provides guidance to Member States on how to design and implement intersectoral and multisectoral policies in the context of LLL, UIL believes it is equally important to give Member States guidance on how to conceptualize the evaluation of such policies. In many jurisdictions, the practice of applying a multisectoral lens to policy design generally, and to LLL in particular, is an emerging area.

Numerous factors enable and facilitate multisectoral and intersectoral action, including political will; good governance; a clear mandate; sufficient resources, data and evidence; and the capacity and capability to design and implement innovative approaches to policy development. Without these factors, it can be hugely challenging for Member States to convince a diverse set of stakeholders of the benefits of cross-sectoral collaboration. This report is thus intended to serve as a guiding document to help Member States plan, design and implement evaluations of LLL policy initiatives, identify what works well and what doesn’t, and thereby inform policy-makers’ decisions for strengthening their efforts in this regard.

Approach

In collaboration with UIL, the following questions were used to guide this review:

- Which approaches and frameworks are recommended in the literature and/or used by Member States for evaluating complex, holistic, multisectoral policies, including LLL policies?
- What lessons can be learned from the literature to guide Member States' practices for evaluation of multisectoral policies, including LLL policies?
- What strategies or approaches should Member States consider when evaluating multisectoral policies?

The authors undertook a scan of published literature on evaluating multisectoral policies and held a small number of interviews and conversations with evaluation practitioners from New Zealand and those operating in international contexts to gather their experiences and reflections.

PART 1 – Lifelong learning: An integrated approach to sustainable development

This section of the report highlights the importance of considering lifelong learning (LLL) as an integrated, holistic policy process to promote sustainable development. The discussion clarifies the core elements of UNESCO’s definition of lifelong learning and presents the case for why there is an urgent need for lifelong learning to be a guiding principle across multiple sectors, including education, civil society and the labour market. Part 1 builds on the ideas presented in UIL’s *Making Lifelong Learning a Reality: A Handbook*.

There is growing consensus that lifelong learning – available to all, at every stage and in every life sphere – is key to addressing the multiple and interlinked global challenges faced by Member States today. Increased mobility, demographic changes, the climate crisis, technological advancement and, most recently, the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic signal an urgent need to foster adaptation, creativity and, most importantly, learning that continues throughout life. Individuals can no longer navigate their life course with only the skills and knowledges they acquired at school, college or university. The emergence of a more holistic concept of ‘lifelong learning’ is therefore to be expected. More and more, lifelong learning is seen as a means to foster people’s capacity to deal with the myriad changes they experience and to build the future they want. In its policy handbook, UIL presents a broad, holistic view of LLL, stating:

LLL is rooted in the integration of learning and living, covering learning activities for people of all ages, in all life-wide contexts and through a variety of modalities that, together, meet a wide range of learning needs and demands (UIL, 2022, p. 17)

This concept implies that an individual’s life course can no longer be divided into a period of preparation followed by a period of action, but rather that learning extends across the whole lifespan. Rethinking LLL beyond the conceptual boundaries of education makes it possible to reconnect learning with the larger, more complex challenges that society faces today.

Essential elements of LLL

While there are a number of different definitions of LLL that respond to different contexts, UIL's handbook identifies five elements that support a comprehensive understanding of the concept (ibid., 2022, p. 18).

- **All age groups:** LLL is a process that starts at birth and extends across one's lifespan. It provides people of all ages and origins with learning opportunities and activities responding to their specific needs in different life and professional stages.
- **All levels of education:** LLL is about linking all levels and types of education, building adaptable pathways between them. This includes early childhood care and education, primary and secondary school education, higher education, adult and non-formal education, and technical and vocational education and training.
- **All learning modalities:** LLL includes formal (institutionalized, leading to recognized qualifications), non-formal (institutionalized, alternative or complementary to formal education, usually not leading to recognized qualifications) and informal (not institutionalized, on a self-directed, family-directed, community or socially-directed basis) learning.
- **All learning spheres and spaces:** In addition to schools, the learning universe of LLL includes families, communities, workplaces, libraries, museums and other online and distance-learning platforms. Promoting LLL involves building bridges between the formal education sector and non-formal and informal learning environments in order to create new opportunities for very diverse learning needs.
- **A variety of purposes:** LLL is both people-centred and human rights-based. Its purpose is to provide people with opportunities to develop their full potential throughout life, regardless of their starting points; to acknowledge a wide range of learning needs and demands; and to contribute to the development of an advanced economy and inclusive society. Providing equitable and inclusive lifelong learning opportunities means responding to the needs of diverse learners.

LLL and the Sustainable Development Goals

The need for a holistic and broad definition of LLL has, to some extent, been fuelled by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 4, in particular, urges countries to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' (UN DESA, 2022), thereby placing LLL at the heart of educational policies and programmes. SDG 4 has been explicitly formulated within an LLL perspective, yet, LLL and education are crucial to achieving all 17 SDGs. English and Carlsen (2019) highlight the centrality of LLL to a number of SDGs, including health and well-being (SDG 3), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), responsible consumption and production (SDG 12) and climate change mitigation (SDG 13), and the implications this has for policy design and implementation.

The goals and targets of the Education 2030 Agenda is an invitation to Member States to take a multi-sectoral approach and consider the economic, social and environmental dimensions as part of any policy development process. A 'multisectoral approach' implies addressing a problem from multiple angles and involving various sectors of governance, namely government, civil society, the private sector, community organizations and individuals (Salunke and Lal, 2017). Such an approach is required when the problem being addressed is beyond the scope and resources of a single sector and/or when the nature of the policy issue is such that it requires holistic responses. Adopting such an approach presents significant challenges for policy-makers and for LLL policy, the latter of which remains for the most part on the margins of national policy-making despite its potential benefits.

There is therefore a need to broaden Member States' understanding of LLL so that they see it as a practice that addresses complex issues situated at the intersection of different policy domains. In their report on the UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme, Miletto et al. (2017) note that, in developing countries where agriculture is the dominant sector of employment, a link exists between water scarcity (caused by climate change), youth unemployment, emigration and gender inequality. Water scarcity fuels unemployment, which then forces young people to move in search of work. This, in turn, places a significant burden on the women who remain, deepening the existing gender disparities in these communities.

UIL has an important role to play through its support for representatives of UNESCO Member States working at both national and local level to strengthen LLL in policies, plans and programmes. LLL issues are complex and multifaceted, and LLL policies cut across different policy domains, making it challenging for any single agency to drive the much-needed transformation. Member States therefore need to adopt approaches which integrate LLL into their development agendas across different policy domains. Applying a multisectoral approach to LLL policy also requires effective and robust intersectoral collaboration – across government agencies and between government and non-government entities, including national and international development organizations, businesses, unions, libraries and cultural institutions.

Why evaluation matters

At the most basic level, evaluation is part of the process of knowing and understanding if the efforts invested (i.e. by government, donors, NGOs, etc.) to effect change through projects and/or programmes and/or policies are working well or not, why, for whom, and under what circumstances. In modern societies, governments are expected to justify their decisions and actions to a wide range of stakeholders. Evaluation is critical for ensuring the policies that are designed and implemented by governments are improving the lives of their citizens. In its 2020 publication *How Can Governments Leverage Policy Evaluation to Improve Evidence Informed Policy Making*, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) highlights that 'policy evaluation is a core instrument of sound public governance that can contribute to avoiding policy capture, fostering learning and promoting accountability' (OECD, 2020, p. 5).

Within the literature, evaluation commonly has three purposes, to: (1) render judgement, (2) facilitate improvement and/or (3) generate knowledge. Chelimsky (1997) distinguishes these three purposes by the perspective that underpins them: judgements are underpinned by the accountability perspective, improvements are informed by a developmental perspective and generation of knowledge operates from the perspective of academic values. While evaluations can, and often do, fulfil all three purposes, it is helpful to identify the primary intended use as this ensures the evaluation can deliver successfully on the expectations placed upon it.

It must be noted that evaluation is a key component of a policy-making process; however, most evaluations tend to focus on a programme, project or policy that falls within the mandate of a single government agency. With respect to evaluating LLL policy, UIL's handbook identifies the following key characteristics of effective LLL policies: a comprehensive vision, aligned to national and local contexts, based on evidence, underpinned by participatory processes and financially viable (UIL, 2022, p. 178). These can be seen as enabling conditions. Determining whether these enabling conditions are in place and how well they are working is the first step in any evaluation inquiry.

PART 2 – Current approaches and practices for evaluating complex, multisectoral policies

This section begins with a look at some of the innovative approaches and practices used globally by a range of stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, donors and Member States, for evaluating holistic, multisectoral approaches to policy development. The discussion offers rich insights into the different ways in which we can conceptualize an evaluation of a multisectoral policy. It has been informed by a scan of the literature and conversations with experienced evaluation practitioners from New Zealand and overseas. This is by no means an exhaustive list however: we have selected a small number of distinct approaches to broaden our collective understanding of evaluating multisectoral policies. A fuller list of evaluation approaches can be found in Annex 1 of this report.

Multisectoral and intersectoral action involves bringing together agencies and institutions across sectors and across perspectives to develop long-term policy solutions to complex problems. This type of collaborative action has gained momentum and acceptance; nevertheless, its implementation varies significantly, with a range of existing frameworks, models and approaches emerging, each with varying definitions, focuses and aims, structures and expectations about what constitutes success (Mahlangu, Goudge and Vearey, 2019). It is therefore necessary to first understand the nature of the multisectoral action, as it poses a substantial evaluation challenge: How can we evaluate broad-based, multisectoral policies in a way that is meaningful and useful for Member States and which guide decision-making and future actions? How do we know if a multisectoral action is, in fact, contributing to policy coherence in ways that improves outcomes for all?

The practice of evaluating multisectoral policies, like the practice of taking a multisectoral approach to LLL policy development, is an emerging area. Given its growing importance, however, it is timely to promote evaluation approaches so as to encourage and shape Member States' practices and behaviours. Therefore, based on a literature scan drawn from a range of contexts, the authors have identified a small, discrete set of practices to enhance Member States' understanding of the ways in which multisectoral policy approaches can be interpreted and evaluated. It is hoped that Member States will use these examples as a starting point for discussions with context-relevant stakeholders to decide if and how these approaches can be adapted to suit their particular needs.

Collective action for collective impact

‘Collective impact is the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem’ (Kania and Kramer, 2011, p. 36).

Since the publication of the seminal article ‘Collective Impact’ in the Winter 2011 edition of the *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Stanford PACS, 2011), the approach has gained tremendous traction as a way to achieve large-scale, sustainable change.¹ Collective impact (CI) emerged from a belief that cross-sectoral coordination and collaboration – and not isolated interventions by individual organizations – are key to affecting large-scale social change. CI occurs when a group of actors from different sectors commit to a common agenda for solving a complex social or environmental problem.

It is more than a new way of working together; CI is a structured approach to problem-solving that necessitates five core conditions (Kania and Kramer, 2011, pp. 39–40):

- A common agenda, wherein all participants have a shared vision for change, including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed-upon actions;
- Shared measurement systems, which collect data and measure the results consistently for all participants to ensure efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable;
- Mutually reinforcing activities, whereby participants engage in activities in line with their area of expertise in a way that supports and complements the actions of others;
- Continuous communication to ensure consistent and open dialogue between participants, to build trust, ensure objectives are met and create a common sense of purpose;
- A backbone support function to manage collective impact by deploying dedicated staff with specific skillsets to coordinate the work of participating organizations and agencies.

Since the concept of CI has gained in popularity, questions of how to adequately evaluate such initiatives have naturally arose. Evaluations of specific interventions have traditionally focused on results to determine whether an intervention has been successful or not. However, because CI initiatives involve multiple activities, programmes and agencies operating in mutually reinforcing ways, relying on a snapshot of a given intervention at a point in time is unable to tell the whole story.

In their article ‘Learning in Action: Evaluating Collective Impact’, Parkhurst and Preskill (2014) suggest that ‘rather than trying to isolate the effects and impact of a single intervention, collective impact partners should assess progress and impact of the change-making process as a whole’ (ibid., p. 17). CI is a process; it is not a solution. It includes assessing the quality and effectiveness of an initiative’s structure and operations, the ways in which the systems that influence the targeted issues are changing, and the extent of progress towards the initiative’s ultimate goal(s). The emphasis of the evaluation will shift as the CI structure matures – so while in the initial stages the evaluation might assess the strength of the initiative itself (i.e. the robustness of the CI structure and how it is operating to achieve the defined goals), a subsequent focus may be on the influence of the initiative on targeted outcomes.

¹ For example, the Collective Impact Forum, an initiative of the global consulting firm FSG and the Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions, was set up in 2014 in response to growing interest in the collective impact (CI) approach. The Collective Impact Forum is an expanding network of like-minded individuals coming together from across sectors to share knowledge and experience to encourage further adoption of the CI approach. See <https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/about-us>.

Collective impact initiative in practice: Vibrant Communities in Canada

Vibrant Communities is a multi-tier, collective impact initiative that facilitates local efforts to reduce poverty and promote quality of life in communities across Canada. Launched in 2002 by a Canadian NGO, Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement, Vibrant Communities comprises 13 linked regional collective impact initiatives and works with more than 50 communities. Each of these communities has its own locally designed initiative with a multisector leadership team, community leaders, policy-makers and funders, all of whom participate in a membership-based learning community to share their experiences and offer mutual support and guidance.

As of 2013, Vibrant Communities has:

- made an impact on the lives of over 200,000 local residents by advocating for increased income and better access to food, shelter, transportation, skills and knowledge;
- amended over 50 policies and systems to advance poverty reduction efforts, including ensuring the involvement of vulnerable communities in programme design and changing the way poverty reduction initiatives are funded;
- engaged around 4,000 partners, including businesses, government, local experts and NGOs, among others, in national CI efforts;
- mobilized CAD\$23 million (approx. EUR 17.5 million) for poverty reduction.

Vibrant Communities has been able to achieve these goals through the leadership provided by its backbone organization, Tamarack, which works in close partnership with its national sponsors. Vibrant Communities' CI approach can be further demonstrated as follows:

- Vibrant Communities shares an overarching goal of connecting 100 cities and communities to address poverty for 1 million Canadians. Its common agenda outlines five core principles to guide its vision across regional collective impact initiatives: (1) poverty reduction, (2) comprehensive thinking and action, (3) multisectoral collaboration, (4) community asset-building and (5) community learning and change.²
- Each regional CI initiative has a localized evaluation plan and outcome-tracking template that contributes to a national evaluation system.

² To find out more about Vibrant Communities, visit <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/#practices>

- The complex nature of poverty reduction means a set of linked interventions is required. Each regional theory of change is determined by its local context but is linked to the overarching Vibrant Communities national goal through the five core principles outlined in the common agenda.
- There is a strong focus on continuous communication to share lessons learned and refine strategies. Stories of inspiration, innovative ideas and new resources are distributed through electronic weekly newsletter and interactive platforms.
- Tamarack's role as the backbone organization focuses on administration and coordination across the regional collective impact initiatives.

A systems approach to evaluating complexity

'A system is a collection of entities that are seen by someone as interacting together to do something' (Morris, 2005)

A multisectoral approach to policy development is often a response to complexity; that is, issues that are situated at the intersection of different public policy domains. Many problems facing the world today cannot be adequately addressed with a piecemeal approach and instead require more comprehensive, holistic interventions. There is a need to think and act beyond one area of expertise or mandate to understand how collective action contributes to achieving the SDGs. Systems thinking can help us in this endeavour.

Williams and Hummelbrunner (2010) describe systems thinking as a 'means of making sense of not only a tree and the forest that contains it, but also the landscape in which the forest is embedded and the soil and the atmosphere that provide important resources for the tree's functioning' (ibid, 2010). While there is no single agreed-upon definition of a 'system', there is general agreement that it is characterized by (see Annex 2):

- interrelationships; that is, the nature and scope of the interactions across sectors (public and private sectors, NGOs, formal and informal networks, etc.);
- perspectives; that is, the ways in which the 'intervention' is understood and how it impacts key actors in the system;
- boundaries; that is, the limits that determine what is inside and outside of a system.

Systemic evaluation has been put forth as a potential approach to help address issues of complexity and prioritize issues within the interconnected domains for sustainable development. It builds on the ideas presented in *Developmental Evaluation* (Patton, 2010) and is based on the premise that every intervention is an opportunity for learning and understanding how we can influence desired social change. It moves away from the idea of conducting evaluations primarily for accountability against pre-specified planned results towards an acceptance of the reality that 'we do not know what we do not know' during design and implementation processes (ibid.).

Systemic evaluation is designed to assess the interconnectedness between the elements that operate within existing economic and social structures. It begins by asking questions to ascertain the context relevant to an intervention, the outcomes that are expected and the opportunities for learning and growth. During an

evaluation, other issues may come to light – for example, the external effects of the intervention, spillover from other efforts or policies, uncontrolled events (such as political conflict or environmental disasters) or the involvement of facilitators/inhibitors of change that may or may not have been part of the original plan. Such issues are then incorporated to ensure a complete and full understanding of the intervention and the expected outcomes

Inclusive systemic evaluation: A new approach by UN Women

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, also known as UN Women, developed an innovative evaluation approach to help address complexities and prioritize issues within selected interconnected domains for sustainable development, namely, gender equality, environments and marginalized voices. The approach, entitled Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Equality, Environments and Marginalized Voices (ISE4GEMs) (Stephens, Lewis and Reddy, 2018), entails a four-step action plan:

- Step 1 – Preparation and design: Evaluators are encouraged to (a) create the ‘boundary’ story of the system (i.e. a narrative based on a system’s content, context and different stakeholder perspectives), (b) define the evaluation boundary; and (c) design the evaluation, including the key questions, methods and tools.
- Step 2 – Data collection: Qualitative and quantitative data from all those involved in the system, including practitioner reflections, are gathered.
- Step 3 – Analysis, interpretation and reporting: The data from Step 2 are analysed using principles of systemic triangulation, a ‘systemic theory of change’ (STOC) that describes the change process from multiple perspectives is developed, and a report is written.
- Step 4 – Capacity development: The capacities of evaluation stakeholders to think systemically and perform intersectional analysis are developed.

Partnering for sustainable development: Multisectoral collaboration as the evaluand

Cross-sectoral collaborations are an important mechanism for addressing a number of development challenges. Such collaborations provide a platform for information sharing and coordination between sectors and, crucially, the sharing of responsibilities (Kickbusch and Behrendt, 2013). They also promote innovation, reduce duplication and create opportunities for leveraging the knowledge, expertise and resources that rests within different agencies.

Nevertheless, multisectoral collaborations are also complex and challenging, requiring stakeholders to rise above their institutional ways of operating to find new ways of working together. Collaborations are a social

process, and change happens at ‘the speed of trust’ (Moreno, Gaines and Evennou, 2013). However, a recent review of existing frameworks, models and approaches to multisectoral action indicated that there has been more focus on the design of multisectoral collaboration, with very limited reflection on the implementation process and its challenges (Mahlangu, Goudge and Vearey, 2019). Most frameworks list the process elements – such as building trust and managing conflict – without clarifying how to put them into practice. This limitation according to Wood and Gray (1991) is the ‘black box’ and the least understood part of collaboration.

Collaborations are fundamentally a different way of working and thus require a more nuanced approach to evaluation. The focus of collaborations is usually on building relationships and the processes that enable organizations to work together in different ways to produce creative or innovative solutions to complex problems. Consequently, when evaluating collaborations, a focus on assessing the quality of these relationships and understanding how they facilitate and/or inhibit both the collaborative endeavour and its ability to achieve outcomes is critical.

Assessing the effectiveness of a collaboration entails looking at the relationships and the processes involved, the level of participation and engagement of collaboration members, and how well the structures of the collaboration allow participants to contribute to and influence its work and outcomes. Understanding and following the evolution of this collaborative endeavour is therefore a critical step when considering evaluation approaches – it sets the foundation for effective delivery of multisectoral policy efforts. Celebrating small wins, as the collaboration evolves, is critical for building trust.

Working collaboratively to address family and sexual violence in New Zealand

In response to the advice received by its Social Wellbeing Committee, the New Zealand Government established the Ministry for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence, a joint venture to effectively address family violence and sexual violence and reduce fragmentation in current accountability arrangements. The joint venture consists of 10 government agencies and is responsible for the whole-of-government response to family violence and sexual violence. The chief executives of the 10 agencies form the joint venture board and are individually (through the work of their agency) and collectively responsible for the committee’s performance. The Social Wellbeing Committee oversees the joint venture and a lead minister is responsible for the day-to-day oversight. In addition to working across government agencies, the committee works with relevant stakeholders, drawing on their knowledge and expertise. In essence, the Ministry for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence is a new working arrangement that relies on the commitment of agencies to navigate the tension between their individual and collective interests.

In June 2021, the Controller and Auditor-General of New Zealand was tasked with leading a review to assess how the joint venture was progressing with particular

focus on whether the collaborative arrangement was supporting the agencies to work effectively together and the extent to which the joint venture was successful in creating a shared vision and an ethos of shared responsibility and accountability. The quality of the collaboration and the accountabilities associated with it were seen as a precondition for achieving the government's ambitious endeavour of an effective whole-of-government response to family violence and sexual violence. Therefore, in addition to the focus on the structural innovation, facilitated through the creation of the joint venture, the review also recognized that cultural and behavioural changes were needed to support the implementation of new and innovative ways of working and thinking.

The review findings offer rich insights into the key achievements and challenges of implementing multisectoral collaboration. More specifically, the review found that, in order to truly achieve the transformation sought through the establishment of the Ministry for the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence, the agencies involved needed to move beyond cooperation and coordination of their individual activities towards integration and cross-agency action. Understanding the extent to which participants shared a sense of purpose, collective ownership, and an understanding of their respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities were found to be critical to the ministry's success.

Nevertheless, the review concluded that the joint venture was effective in that it produced whole-of-government budget packages and prioritization of initiatives. Resourcing was also identified as a key determinant of sustaining the joint venture: access to sufficient and appropriate resources was necessary to deliver the change it was set up to achieve.

Source: OAG, 2021

The multisectoral response to HIV/AIDS in South Africa

South Africa's multisectoral collaboration, as a central tenet of its national response to HIV/AIDS, has evolved over time. Beginning with the National AIDS Plan (NAP) developed in 1994 under the leadership of the National AIDS Convention of South Africa (NACOSA) to the current National Strategic Plan (2017–2022) (NSP), the principles of multisectoral action have been at the core of the national response.

As with the previous iterations of the NSP, the current plan calls for multisectoral action, and mandates AIDS councils at different levels (national, provincial, district and local municipality levels) to coordinate the implementation of the response.

An analysis of efforts in Mpumalanga Province, in eastern South Africa, found significant implementation challenges however, including a lack of representation from all sectors in the collaborative structure, the absence of systems to support the sustained participation of members, insufficient operating procedures and guidelines, a lack of capacity and capability to coordinate the work of the collaboration, no support from political leadership and, perhaps most importantly, limited access to financial resources.

The evaluation concluded that effective multisectoral action in this instance called for the strengthening and stabilizing of the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) structure, investing in building the capacities of the council, and creating an enabling environment for success through political leadership, support and resourcing.

Source: Mahlangu et al., 2017

Using the strategy to frame the evaluation

Strategies and action plans appear to be the most used procedures for facilitating multisectoral and intersectoral action. For example, a 2018 World Health Organization (WHO) mapping of Europe for a report, *Multisectoral and Intersectoral Action for Improved Health and Well-being for All*, revealed that, in the majority of cases, multisectoral and intersectoral action for health and well-being took one of three forms: strategies and action plans (in 15 countries), long-term multisectoral and intersectoral initiatives (in seven), and permanent structures (in six countries). These categories were not mutually exclusive and were used in the study to highlight the primary form or mechanism of intersectoral action (WHO/EURO, 2018).

Given that most multisectoral policy initiatives are underpinned by a strategy that is developed in dialogue and cooperation between key ministers and government officials, it is opportunistic to use the strategy and the associated action plan as an evaluand that is, as the focus of the evaluation. The strategy articulates the goals and objectives, and the action plan usually allocates the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, and identifies timelines to guide implementation. However, given the diversity of programmes and initiatives that could potentially be implemented under the auspices of a strategy, developing common outcome measures is not always feasible. It may therefore be more useful to see the strategy as an artefact that expresses the intent and outcomes sought through the multisectoral efforts of those involved. The evaluation can then be used to determine the extent to which the strategy enables and/or hinders multisectoral action and guides policy coherence, both in design and implementation. This involves not only monitoring progress against the actions identified in the strategy (i.e. Are we making progress against the action plan?) but also evaluating the extent to which the strategy has contributed to reprioritizing the work programme of policy agencies to increase coherence and/or avoid duplication.

Using participatory mechanisms to promote health in Iceland

Faced with demographic changes and other major challenges, the Prime Minister of Iceland established in 2014 the Ministerial Council on Public Health. The main role of the council was to promote dialogue and cooperation between ministries, harmonize overlapping thematic areas and prepare a comprehensive health policy accompanied by an action plan. In addition to the council, a public health committee was also established under the authority of the Minister of Health and included stakeholders from a wide range of sectors: unions, public health centres, universities and associations.

Using participatory mechanisms to bring together diverse voices and perspectives, the council and committee were able to facilitate a shared understanding and a sense of ownership to develop the draft strategy. The development of a shared strategy also allowed the council to earmark funding from the state budget for health promotion projects. An evaluation plan was included in the strategy to help track progress against its intent and actions.

Source: WHO/EURO, 2018

Evaluating Australia's Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2000–2004

The Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2000–2004 was launched in April 2000 by the Australian Government to help build family and community capacities to deal with challenges and take advantage of opportunities, with a special focus on those at risk of social, economic and geographic isolation. The strategy consisted of seven linked initiatives to provide funding and support for projects in the community and six broader initiatives. The strategy was not just about providing funding to organizations but about developing a social coalition between government and community groups to work together to strengthen families and communities. The evaluation report of the initiative provides useful insights into using a strategy as an evaluand (CIRCLE at RMIT University, 2008).

To provide a common framework for monitoring and accountability, a workshop was held in 2000 to develop an outcomes hierarchy 'to articulate the links between strategy outputs and higher-level outcomes against which the strategy receives

its budget appropriations' (Falk, 2002, p. 21). This outcomes hierarchy informed the development of strategy performance indicators and later also served as the conceptual framework for the evaluation.

The evaluation was designed to investigate the overall achievements of the strategy, the factors that contributed to these outcomes, and the main learnings for future policy and practice. Some of the questions explored through the evaluation focused on examining the extent to which the strategy:

- contributed to family and community strength in the short-, medium- and long-term;
- produced unintended outcomes (positive and negative);
- helped and/or hindered the initiatives to achieve their objectives;
- contributed to the achievement of outcomes in conjunction with other initiatives, programmes or services in the area.

Source: CIRCLE at RMIT University, 2008; Falk, 2002

PART 3 – Lessons learned for guiding the evaluation of multisectoral policy, including LLL policy

This section draws on some of the lessons that can be learned from a scan of current approaches and practices used for evaluating multisectoral policies in other sectors and considers its application in the context of lifelong learning. These lessons are intended to serve as reminders when thinking about evaluating multisectoral approaches to LLL policy.

Defining the scope or object of the evaluative inquiry

A scan of the literature indicates that there is no one-size-fits-all model for evaluating multisectoral policy initiatives. With so many diverse actors, so many different levels of work (strategic, institutional, programme, initiative) and so many moving parts, it is important to develop a bespoke model or approach that is relevant for each context. The evaluation approach that is deployed ultimately depends on the scope and nature of the evaluative inquiry and the stage of development of the policy. This, in turn, drives the evaluation questions and the data-collection strategy.

The many elements, scales and timeframes of an LLL policy, and potentially limited resources, makes it imperative to ensure there is clarity around the scope or focus of any evaluative inquiry and that multiple perspectives and views are taken into account. It is necessary to establish what matters to the stakeholders and identify their priorities before embarking on an evaluation. Based on the literature, it appears that evaluation of an LLL policy can occur at three levels:

1. At the strategic level. An evaluation can potentially focus on (a) an LLL policy development process, asking whether the LLL policies of Member States reflect the criteria set out for effective LLL strategies or policies, and/ or (b) the quality of the collaboration and the extent to which the collaborative structures help and/or inhibit participants from contributing to and influencing the work and outcomes sought by the collective. Evaluative inquiry at this level could also include a focus on the quality of the institutional strategy and leadership. The broad-based definition of LLL policy means there are multiple pathways for progressing LLL, multiple agencies and providers, and multiple levels at which LLL policy can and must be implemented to have impact. A strategic approach to evaluation can help in assessing the extent to which the enabling conditions are in place and working well to facilitate progress towards outcomes.

2. At the institutional level. Evaluative inquiry can also assess the extent to which formal education institutions have embarked on the much-needed internal reforms to transform into LLL institutions and respond to the needs of diverse learners who may have previously been neglected. Areas of transformational change include institutional strategy and leadership, partnerships, teaching and learning processes, learner support systems and services, staff development, and organization of learning spaces. Similarly, Member States should evaluate the extent to which non-formal and informal learning environments are operating in ways that are aligned with national aspirations for lifelong learning.

3. At the programme and initiative level. A number of discrete evaluation projects can be undertaken by different providers at the local level, focusing on assessing the quality, relevance and effectiveness of programmes and initiatives. At this level, given the proximity to learners and communities, it may be possible to assess outcomes achieved for learners, including their contribution to enhancing the quality of their own learning.

Flexible, adaptive approaches to evaluation

Traditionally, evaluations of specific interventions have focused on their results to determine whether (and how) they have ‘worked’. However, as noted previously, multisectoral policies involve multiple actors, multiple activities, programmes and initiatives, and multi-level governance structures, all of which interact with each other in a variety of ways. Moreover, they aim to change and transform the LLL policy system. As a result, merely taking a snapshot of a given activity, programme or initiative’s effectiveness at a single point in time does not tell the whole story. Evaluations need to take into account the policy-making process as a whole; this includes assessing the quality and effectiveness of its structures and operations, and determining how the multisectoral collaboration is influencing the work and actions of all those involved in the policy-making process. In other words, a focus on both process and outcomes of an evaluation is necessary.

Collaboration lies at the heart of a multisectoral approach to policy development and it takes time to establish and embed these partnerships, which traverse the boundaries of formal, non-formal and informal education, involving private sector and civil society, different levels of government and, sometimes, demanding international cooperation. Under these conditions, it may be unreasonable to expect significant progress against learner outcomes during the early stages of multisectoral policy implementation, when the stakeholders involved are focusing primarily on internal processes, building relationships, designing, developing and implementing infrastructure (e.g. strategic action plans, working group structures, information systems), and taking collective action towards their shared goals. At this stage, a formative ‘process evaluation’ focus is more appropriate.

As the multisectoral ‘system’ matures and the core conditions are stabilized, and as partners begin to implement actions defined in the action plan, it may be feasible to track progress towards learning outcomes. In addition, there will be a need to explore how, to what extent, and why the implementation process is (or isn’t) progressing and where the roadblocks are. By providing insights and data that help to answer these questions, evaluation serves an important complement to other key monitoring mechanisms that have been put in place by different stakeholders.

Looking at contribution rather than attribution

Multisectoral policy approaches are designed to respond to complex problems through collaboration and joint action. In this scenario, the design of the policy and the quality of the collaboration assume great significance. The challenge is in demonstrating and disentangling the contributions of different actors to the success or failure of these efforts. Traditionally, evaluations have used some form of controlled comparison to estimate what happens with the policy in place versus what would have happened without it. However, such controlled experiments are expensive, require time and expertise and, more importantly, lack sufficient baseline data to enable such assessments.

Rather than attempting to isolate the effects and impact of a single agency or action, it is far more useful to focus on the change-making process as a whole. The concept of ‘contribution analysis’ (Mayne, 2012) has much to offer when thinking about evaluating multisectoral policy efforts. Contribution analysis is an approach to

identifying the contribution that an intervention or policy has made to a change or set of changes. It was developed in recognition of the difficulty in assigning attribution to a specific intervention. This difficulty is often the result of (a) the discontinuity that can occur between an activity and the eventual desired outcome; (b) external factors, which often influence the changes brought about through such interventions; and (c) the many different interventions that are sometimes necessary to bring about a single change.

Used alongside theories of change, contribution analysis can help tell a compelling story of how change at each level contributes to change at further levels. Applying the principles of contribution analysis can help policy-makers to shift their expectations from thinking in silos to thinking about the impact of their collective action. Further, it can be used both for learning, to improve performance of the collective and accountability, as well as several other monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Building evaluation capability through monitoring and evaluation systems

For lifelong learning to be a driver of sustainable development, it needs to be mainstreamed into public policies and implementation strategies at national, provincial and local levels, and across different sub-sectors of the education system, i.e. across ministries, public and private stakeholders, civil society, local governments, and learning providers and communities. Efforts to achieve structural and policy changes will not be effective without the creation of a system for regular data collection and analysis involving all stakeholders. In this scenario, instilling a culture of monitoring and evaluation³ within and across the different layers of policy design and implementation can yield rich dividends for policy-makers.

A well-designed monitoring and evaluation system can help to assess whether and how outcomes are being achieved and respond to stakeholders' growing demand for outcomes. Nevertheless, building such a system requires commitment, time and resources. Considering the complexity and intersectoral reach of LLL policy, it may be worthwhile for Member States to invest in a bespoke monitoring and evaluation system that is anchored in an evaluation strategy, with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, adequate funds, and established protocols for data flows and management. Such a system can help to generate the appropriate information at the appropriate level and at the appropriate time, and individuals or agencies can be tasked to synthesize the information at regular intervals to inform future action. For an evaluation of LLL policy, information on the interrelationships between the education sector and other sectors is also needed. Such information might focus on how LLL can be applied to healthcare, childcare, job-seeking, increased productivity and other aspects of life and work that may be invisible to policy-makers. In such instances, both quantitative and qualitative information is needed to ensure effectiveness of LLL policies, and a well-designed monitoring and evaluation system can serve as a knowledge repository.

Garnering the support of leadership is essential for fostering ownership and sustaining efforts for continued change. There is the potential for fragmentation in monitoring and evaluation efforts of multisectoral policies; a multi-level governance mechanism should therefore be established within existing governance structures to oversee and track implementation. Placing clear responsibility for monitoring and evaluation within the governance structure will also help ensure a coherent and effective evaluation plan is in place that is endorsed by stakeholders and designed to meet their needs. In addition, it can also contribute to capacity-building for the institutional actors involved in the implementation of LLL policy.

³ Monitoring is defined as a 'continuous process of collecting and analyzing data to compare how well a project, program, or policy is being implemented against expected results' where as evaluation is 'an assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results' (OECD, 2002, pp. 21–22, 30).

Participatory approaches to evaluation

As noted in UIL's handbook, LLL policies need to be 'politically feasible to ensure the support of relevant stakeholders and the general public and to increase the likelihood of enactment, opportune implementation and evaluation' (UIL, 2022, p. 55). Fostering good relationships based on trust and open communication has been identified in the literature as a key success factor. Policy-making thus needs a participatory process that is underpinned by consultation and dialogue with all relevant stakeholders. It is therefore critical that any evaluation of LLL policies also mirrors the same principles and is designed to be participatory. Identifying, involving and securing the support of key stakeholders will not only strengthen implementation of the evaluation, it will also enhance credibility of the evaluation and contribute to evaluation use (Weiss, 1998; Patton, 2010).

The quality of multisectoral and intersectoral collaboration lies at the heart of the multisectoral policy development process. Any evaluation of multisectoral policy therefore needs to include an assessment of how well the collaboration is working to bring about the desired shifts in behaviours and practices with respect to LLL.

Parkhurst and Preskill (2014) suggest a three-step approach to evaluating the progress of multisectoral collaboration, which comprises (1) a developmental evaluation at the beginning, followed by (2) a formative evaluation as the collaboration evolves and, finally, (3) a summative evaluation at the end of the process to assess outcomes. Applying these considerations would promote inquiry into:

- Relationships and processes: How committed are the members to the collaboration? How do they advance the aspirations of the collaboration within their own organizations? What is the level of trust between members? How are power relations managed?
- Participation levels: Do all members participate in the collaboration in terms of decision-making and resource provision? Are there any barriers to participation and how are these addressed?
- Structure and control: How tight or loose is the structure and is it fit for purpose?

Allocating sufficient resources

Just as turning LLL vision into policies and programmes requires an associated cost and financial framework, evaluating LLL policies and programmes also requires dedicated financial and human resources. As noted earlier, designing a monitoring and evaluation system for policies aiming to achieve multiple goals and working across a wide range of sectors is a complex task. Without dedicated resources, stakeholders will struggle, as information on LLL policies and their effects come from different data sources. Stakeholders' capacities and capabilities for monitoring and evaluation will also vary; for some, identifying relevant evidence pertaining to different aspects of lifelong learning, i.e. provision, access, participation, completion, quality of provision, funding, learning processes and learning will prove challenging.

PART 4 – Considerations for advancing evaluation practices

This section presents Member States with a potential framework as they explore and think about their own evaluation approaches and practices. It builds on the literature scan and draws on the knowledge and experiences of practitioners. The framework is made up of four phases: (1) understanding the context, (2) designing the evaluation, (3) gathering and interpreting the data and (4) planning for strategic learning and accountability.

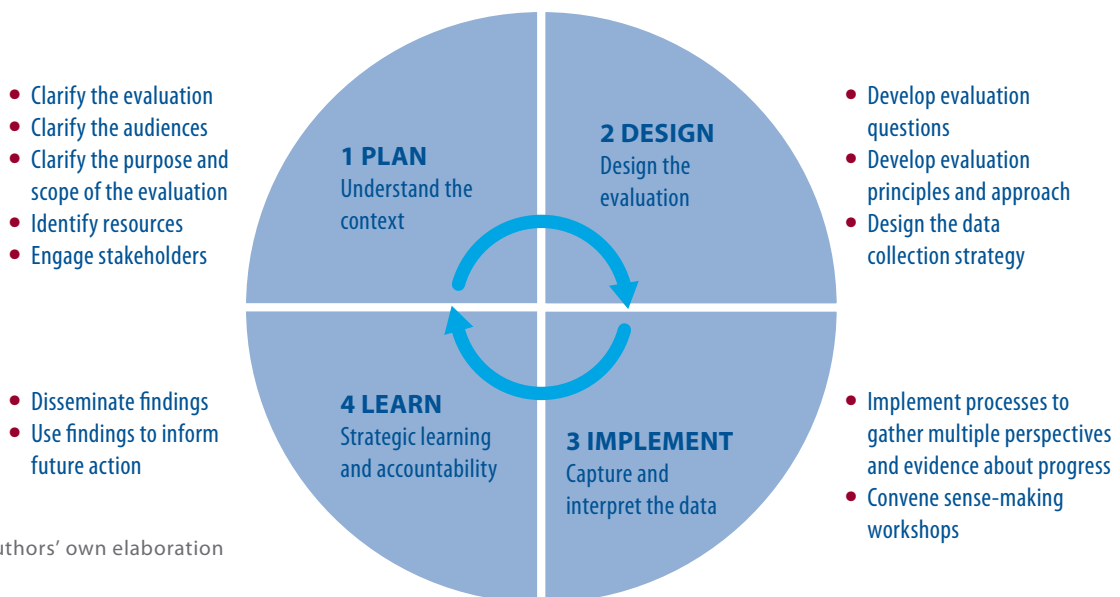
The framework and its components

Based on the scan of the literature and discussions with evaluation practitioners operating in a range of settings (i.e. public policy agencies and independent practitioners) and contexts (i.e. New Zealand and internationally), the authors have developed a framework to help Member States think about their evaluation practices with respect to multisectoral policy, including LLL. The framework can be used to guide planning, design, implementation and learning from the evaluation endeavour, and outlines questions and considerations at each stage of the evaluation process. The framework encompasses four phases (see *Figure 1*):

- 1. Plan:** Understanding the context;
- 2. Design:** Designing the evaluation;
- 3. Implement:** Capturing and interpreting data;
- 4. Learn:** Strategic learning and decision-making.

Given the long time-frames associated with multisectoral action, Member States might want to develop a phase-specific evaluation plan: for example, one for the early years of implementation, focusing on the process, and another for later years, focusing on outcomes.

Figure 1: A framework for evaluating complex, multisectoral policy initiatives including LLL.



Source: Authors' own elaboration

Phase 1: Plan – Understanding the context and the landscape

There is no best way to conduct an evaluation. Each programme, project or initiative will have its own unique desired outcomes and contexts that require careful consideration. For LLL policies, the diverse modalities used will also have important implications for how an evaluation is approached and how different communities and stakeholders are engaged in the evaluation process.

Before embarking on an evaluation, it is important to know what is expected from the evaluation and what will be done with the information that is collected. Planning an evaluation of a complex policy involves extensive analysis and coherence, particularly with regard to its purpose and whose needs it must serve. Key tasks to be undertaken during the planning phase include:

- Clarifying what is to be evaluated, including the context, perspectives and outcomes (known as the evaluand);
- Identifying what constitutes success from multiple perspectives in order to shape evaluative judgements;
- Knowing the purpose of and audience for the evaluation, i.e. Why is the evaluation being undertaken?;
- Clarifying the resourcing and level of investment available for the evaluation;
- Mapping and planning the stakeholder engagement and ensuring it reflects the policy-making process.

Performing these tasks will help evaluators to develop a conceptual framework (also known as a theory of change) that visually illustrates the relationships between the policy outcomes and the actions implemented within the framework of the multisectoral policy. Developing this framework is a consultative and participatory process that brings together multiple perspectives to determine the processes and pathways through which the transformation (i.e. changes in knowledge, attitudes or practices at the individual, institutional or wider community level) is expected to occur. *Figure 2* illustrates a generic theory of change for LLL policy; it is designed to trigger discussion and debate and to help bring a shared understanding of how change can be expected to unfold.

Phase 2: Design – Designing the evaluation

There is more than one way of framing the evaluation. Decisions around its design and focus should result from an interactive process between evaluators and the primary intended users of the evaluation. The following types of questions can be posed during the multisectoral policy process:

- To what extent does the national LLL policy reflect or demonstrate a holistic, multisectoral approach?
- How well set up are the structures to enable cross-sectoral action on the LLL policy?
- Are data collection, analysis and dissemination systems in place?
- How well is implementation going? What is the quality of the collaboration and relationships between the actors?
- How effective are the LLL policies?
- What outcomes are being achieved?

Through a process of discussion and dialogue, evaluators and stakeholders will hopefully arrive at a shared understanding as to the most useful framing for the boundaries of an evaluation at different points in a multisectoral policy's implementation lifetime. Complex policies have longer time frames; the initial stages of the evaluation should therefore focus on mechanisms (i.e. to what extent are the enabling mechanisms in place and working to affect system-level changes), while, in the later stages, focus should shift to assessing

progress against system-level changes (i.e. what is changing in the wider system because of the collaborative work). Key tasks to be undertaken during this phase include:

- identifying core principles that will guide the evaluation;
- selecting and finalizing the evaluation questions, recognizing that different questions will be relevant for different stakeholders over time;
- agreeing on the scale or level at which change should be measured (e.g. by population, targeted group or individual learners/their families);
- selecting the evaluation approach that is best suited to answer the evaluation questions (i.e. Do you want to look at the process or outcomes?);
- developing a data-gathering strategy, including negotiating access to existing data sources and identifying areas where primary research might be required.

If the scope of Phase 1 is identified as ‘multisectoral collaboration’, then the question posed at this stage could be, How and in what ways is the multisectoral collaboration working and what are the factors that appear to help and/or hinder effectiveness of the collaboration? The evaluation approach could draw on principles and processes of collective impact to guide the evaluation. The data collection strategy could then collect and synthesize information from all actors engaged in the collaboration. Additional data could be gathered from participants as well as other partners to assess the effectiveness of the collaborative action.

Given the intersectoral reach of LLL policy, information on the interrelationships between the education sector and other sectors is also needed. Such information might focus on how learning can be applied to healthcare, childcare, job seeking, increased productivity, and other aspects of life and work which may be invisible to policy-makers. Both qualitative and quantitative information is needed to ensure effective LLL policies, along with expertise to ensure thoughtful analysis.

Figure 2: Generic theory of change for LLL policy

Sustainable and positive change for citizens					Key evaluation questions (illustrative)
Outcomes	For learners and their communities	For formal, non-formal and informal learning institutions/providers	For wider society	For governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What outcomes are being achieved?
System-level changes	Formal educational institutions How and in what ways have formal educational institutions adapted and broadened their activities to become LLL institutions?	Non-formal and informal learning institutions How and in what ways have non-formal and informal learning environments adapted and broadened their activities to foster a culture of learning and lift quality and relevance of learning in these environments?	Flexible learning pathways What progress has been made to promote flexible learning pathways and interconnectedness across learning modalities?	ICTs How and in what ways is ICT being advanced across the different modalities of learning for promoting LLL including through national policies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What system-level changes are evident across the implementation areas? • Is there a national implementation plan? • How well are the collaborative structures working? • How well does implementation leverage ICT?
Enabling mechanisms	Multisectoral collaboration; governance structures; a strategy and associated action plan; capacity and capability; a culture of learning				
Enabling conditions	A comprehensive national vision; aligned to national and local contexts; evidence-based; participatory and appropriate financing policies				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a national policy for LLL? • How well is LLL embedded across the sectors? • Does LLL policy reflect the quality criteria as set out in handbook?

Source: Authors’ own elaboration

Phase 3: Implement – Principles for data capture and interpretation

Answering the wide array of questions posed within the scope of any evaluation of LLL policy necessitates careful consideration of the multiple and complementary evaluation methods and strategies available. A multi-methods design provides an opportunity to gather the breadth and depth of information required to meet the varied needs of stakeholders. Such an approach can provide credible and useful analysis to guide future direction for LLL. Key guiding principles at this stage include:

- data triangulation, which can be achieved through an extensive desk-based review of relevant documents, along with field visits, interviews with relevant stakeholders, and analysis of administrative data held by different stakeholder groups and survey data;
- working collaboratively with members from the governance group to seek their input and guidance at key stages of the evaluation;
- using participatory approaches to encourage active involvement by stakeholders at all levels;
- acknowledging and respecting unique country contexts when analysing results;
- being flexible and adapting methods to emerging issues during implementation;
- using the generic theory of change framework to tease out the context and expectations, with a view to refining and adjusting this during the analytical process;
- maintaining a utilization-focused approach, primarily with regard to ensuring that all stakeholders involved in the multisectoral endeavour are afforded access to any findings.

Phase 4: Learn – Strategic learning and accountability

The idea of adopting a multisectoral approach to the design and implementation of lifelong learning policy is still emerging, and Member States are still coming to grips with what this means for them and how they can go about making this shift. Multisectoral initiatives take shape as they progress, and, as problems reveal themselves and context becomes better understood, interventions and actions become more targeted. Maintaining momentum in this ever-evolving context requires that decision-makers have access to timely, relevant and robust information. As such, it is important to put in place structures and processes that support this process. Building a culture of continuous improvement and learning lies at the heart of these efforts.

- Think about how the information will be used to inform iterative decision-making for policy and programme development and implementation.
- Think about how information will be disseminated across multiple stakeholders and levels.
- Embed learning into the policy's DNA.

Conclusion

The evaluation of multisectoral policy approaches needs to be a multi-faceted, flexible and adaptive process but it does not need to be exhaustive or expensive. Evaluation effort comes in all shapes and sizes, and the scope and scale of the evaluation can be shaped to suit the time, capacity and resources available. Moreover, the focus of the evaluation (including questions, outcomes and measures) will change as the multisectoral policy is implemented and matures. Seamlessly integrating evaluation and learning into the work from the beginning, allowing these processes to evolve over time and using them as a guide for decision-making is the key to success.

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ANNEX 1 – Commonly used evaluation approaches

(Adapted from Better Evaluation’s Rainbow Framework).⁴

Appreciative inquiry

A participatory approach that focuses on existing strengths rather than deficiencies; evaluation users identify instances of good practice and ways of increasing their frequency.

‘Blue marble’ evaluation

A principles-based approach to guide analysis and design of interventions working to bring about systems changes as well as evaluation of those efforts. It is both an approach to evaluation and a way of thinking about all aspects of systems change initiatives and interventions at all levels at which they occur, from local to global.

Case study

A research design that focuses on understanding a unit (person, site or project) in its context, which can use a combination of qualitative and quantitative data.

Collaborative outcomes reporting

An approach that builds on contribution analysis, adding expert review and community review of the assembled evidence and conclusions.

Collective impact

An approach that focuses on an initiative’s different parts and the ways they interact and evolve over time by evaluating the progress and impact of the changemaking process as a whole.

Contribution analysis

An approach for assessing the claims of outcomes and impacts that an intervention has contributed to.

Developmental evaluation

An approach appropriate for evaluations of adaptive and emergent interventions, such as social change initiatives or projects operating in complex and uncertain environments.

Horizontal evaluation

An approach that combines self-assessment by local participants and external review by peers.

Institutional histories

An approach for creating a narrative that records key points about how institutional arrangements have evolved over time and have created and contributed to more effective ways to achieve project or programme goals.

Most significant change

Collects and analyses personal accounts of change, includes processes for learning about what changes are most valued by individuals and groups.

Outcome mapping

Unpacks an initiative’s theory of change, provides a framework for collecting data on immediate changes that lead to longer, more sustainable change, and allows for the plausible assessment of the initiative’s contribution to results via boundary partners.

Participatory evaluation

A range of approaches that engage stakeholders (especially intended beneficiaries) in planning, conducting, and analysing the evaluation and/or making decisions about the evaluation.

Randomized controlled trials

An approach that produces an estimate of the mean net-impact of an intervention by comparing results between a randomly assigned control group and experimental group or groups.

Realist evaluation

A form of theory-driven evaluation that seeks to understand what works for whom, under what circumstances and why, taking into account how context makes a difference to programme results.

⁴ Information about the BetterEvaluation Rainbow Framework is available at https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/rainbow_framework

Social return on investment

Identifies a broad range of social outcomes, not only the direct outcomes for the intended beneficiaries of an intervention.

Systems or systemic evaluation

An approach used to surface, elaborate and critically consider boundary judgments; that is, the ways in which people/groups decide what is relevant to the system of interest (any situation of concern).

Utilization-focused evaluation

Uses the intended uses of the evaluation by its primary intended users to guide decisions about how an evaluation should be conducted.

ANNEX 2 – Systems thinking

Interrelationships

- How significant and valuable are the nature of the key relationships between the different stakeholders?
- How well are the relationships being managed to ensure coordinated and coherent delivery of programmes and strategy components?

Multiple perspectives

- Which stakeholder roles played and continues to play a significant part in the design and implementation the LLL policy?
- How do the different stakeholders view success of the collaborative effort and how does this influence the design of the evaluation?
- What processes were put in place to ensure that perspectives of marginalized groups were taken into account in the development of the policy response?

Boundaries

- Were appropriate decisions made, by the right people, about the diagnosis and development of policy options?
- Were appropriate decisions made about who managed the process?
- How appropriately was the knowledge and skills of stakeholders used to inform the policy design and implementation processes?



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