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People-focused evaluation

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This paper outlines the 'People-Focused Evaluation' (PFE) Approach. This approach has recently been used in both overseas development and the Australian Public sector. It is particularly well suited for developing practical internal monitoring and evaluation systems for projects that aim to encourage practice change and capacity building. Having a strong program logic element, PFE helps groups clarify their project design. However, unlike the logical framework, PFE uses targeted stakeholders as the organising construct. PFE uses straightforward non-conceptual language, and invites participants to develop a 'home-grown' monitoring and evaluation framework that they can understand and own. The hands-on approach offers a very human and accessible approach to monitoring and evaluation.

PFE frameworks are created in a workshop process. After defining high level goals, participants conduct a form of stakeholder analysis involving network mapping, which leads to the development of between 1 to 5 stakeholder groups. Once defined, a visual program logic model is explicated for each of these groups. Three generic theories of change are offered to help participants consider the theory that underpins their intervention for each group. From here onwards, all methods of evaluation, monitoring tools and formats are developed with reference to the identified stakeholder group. Even project objectives are developed with reference to stakeholders. While this approach draws on the 'outcomes mapping' technique', 'contribution analysis', and Sue Funnell's program logic approach, there are also some significant differences that will be discussed in this paper. PFE offers a unique, inclusive approach to project design and evaluation that will appeal to many practitioners.