

Integrating Evaluation into Decision Making: The Mexico Experience

Gloria M. Rubio Soto*

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* With valuable inputs from Gonzalo Hernández Licona's presentation

Outline

- I. Introduction
- II. Legal and Institutional Framework
- III. Building an M&E System
- IV. Using Evaluation Results
- V. Concluding Remarks

Social policy-making process

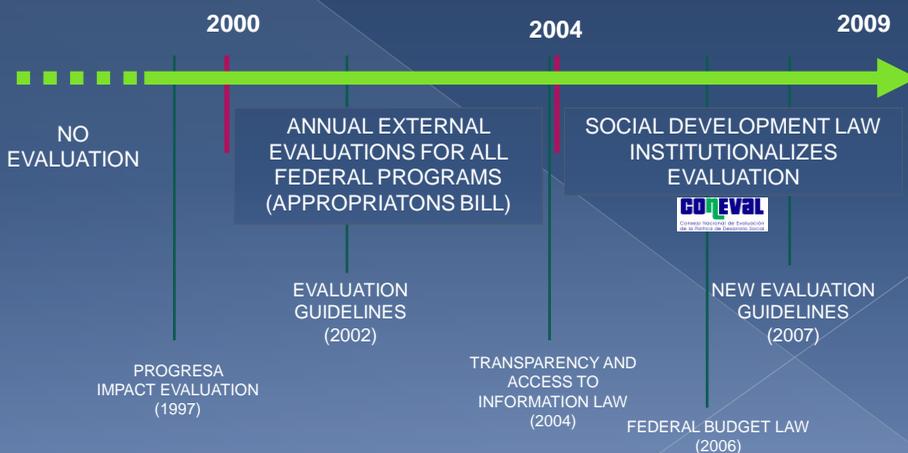


Why evaluate?

- ▶ Supports **learning** about programs
- ▶ Helps **re-designing** and **improving** programs
- ▶ Encourages comparison among programs and supports **efficient use of public funds**
- ▶ Improves **planning, operation and budgeting**
- ▶ Promotes **transparency** and **accountability**
- ▶ Enriches **policy discussion** incorporating rigorous evidence

Legal and Institutional Framework

Changes in Institutional Setting



New Institutional Framework

- Creation of the National Evaluation Council (CONEVAL)
 - > Autonomous institution in charge of poverty measurement and social policy and program evaluation
 - > Integrated by 6 independent academic researchers elected by the National Commission of Social Development; an Executive Secretary appointed by the President; and the Secretary of Social Development
 - > Broader scope for action including federal as well as state and municipal programs

New Institutional Framework

- Performance Evaluation System
 - > Formalizes linkage between planning, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation
- New evaluation guidelines
 - > Better institutional coordination (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Public Management and CONEVAL)
 - > Institutionalizes use of logframes (results matrix)
 - > More realistic evaluation requirements
 - > Multi-year evaluation agendas

Building a Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation System

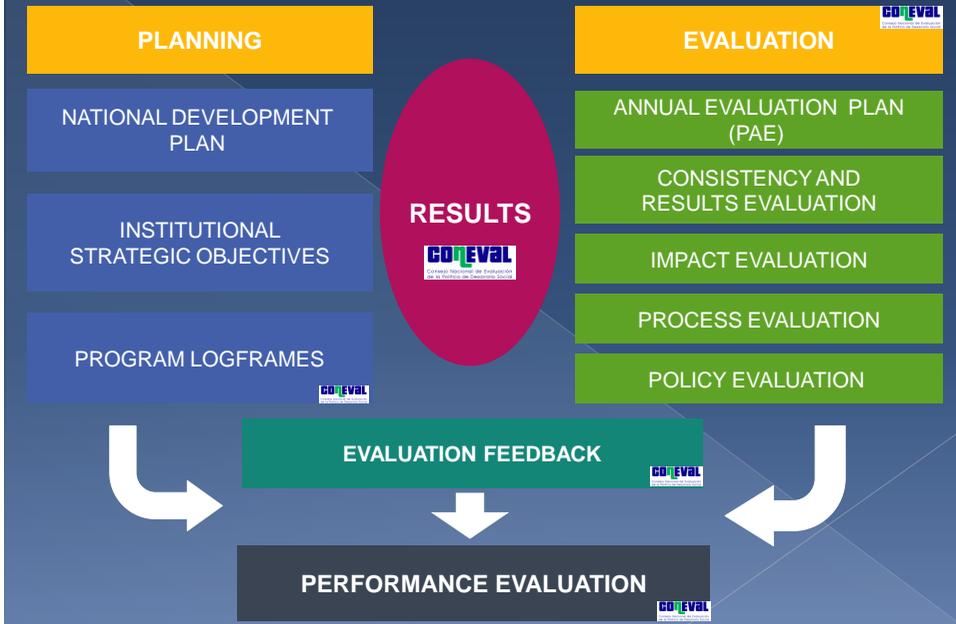
Social Policy Planning: Typical Situation



Strengthened focus on Results



Performance Evaluation System



Logframe (Results Matrix)

- ◉ Structured summary of agreed program goals, outcomes, outputs , activities and inputs (results chain), as well as their corresponding performance indicators
- ◉ Basis for the Performance Evaluation System
- ◉ Indicators linked to budget allocation

Consistency and Results Evaluation

- ◉ Desk review -similar to Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART), USA- of
 - > Program design
 - > Strategic planning
 - > Targeting and coverage
 - > Operation
 - > Beneficiary assessments
 - > Results
- ◉ Standardized TORs and evaluation criteria allow comparissons across programs and in different time periods
 - > 2007 – baseline

Impact Evaluation

- Complement ongoing results-based monitoring and other types of evaluation
- Assess causality of a particular intervention
- Selective and strategic – Annual Evaluation Plan (PAE)
 - More time and resources
- Focused on supporting learning and decision-making to improve policy effectiveness

Example: Milk Distribution Program

- ▶ Operated since 1940s
- ▶ Redesigned to strengthen nutrition outcomes through milk fortification (iron, zinc and vitamins)
- ▶ Impact evaluation: Experimental design assessing impact on child anemia, growth and cognitive development
- ▶ Results: 26% reduction in child anemia, at a cost of US\$ 0.7 per child; need to improve targeting
- ▶ Use of results: fortified milk used in other federal and state programs



Using Evaluation Results

Feedback Process

- ▶ Program manager together with evaluation and planning and budget units **develop action plan** to address evaluation recommendations at the program and institutional (ministry) level
- ▶ CONEVAL prepares a report to Congress on evaluation results and government-wide recommendations
- ▶ Progress is revised in forthcoming evaluations
- ▶ Evaluation reports and action plans are available in the internet (www.coneval.gob.mx)

Feedback into Policy-making



Concluding Remarks

Moving Forward

- ◉ First phase (2000-2006): systematic evaluation starts, but unrealistic scope and expectations; impact evaluation and use of results is *ad hoc*
- ◉ New era: improved institutional framework
 - > CONEVAL plays a key role in setting guidelines, promoting quality and discussing results based on cross-sector comparisons
- ◉ Despite substantial progress, a number of challenges lie ahead...

Technical Issues

- ◉ Right balance on what to evaluate, what for, and how
 - > From almost no evaluation to annual evaluation of all programs required by law
- ◉ Lack of data
 - > Weak administrative records for results monitoring
- ◉ Analysis quality
 - > Evaluation results reliability depends on objective, rigorous analysis

Institutional and Administrative Issues

- Reduced evaluators market
- Capacity building in ministries evaluation units
- Institutional arrangements to ensure coordination within and between ministries
 - > Planning, budgeting and evaluation units
 - > Finance Ministry, Public Management Ministry, and CONEVAL
- Cumbersome procurement process
 - > No incentives to better quality proposals
 - > Hard to finance multi-year studies

Political Issues

- Role of Congress
 - > Evaluation only as an accountability exercise vs. management tool too
- Effective policy response to evaluation results
 - > Use of evaluation limited by political constraints
- Generating broader demand for evaluation (public expenditure efficiency and transparency)
 - > Academia, media, tax payers

Thank you