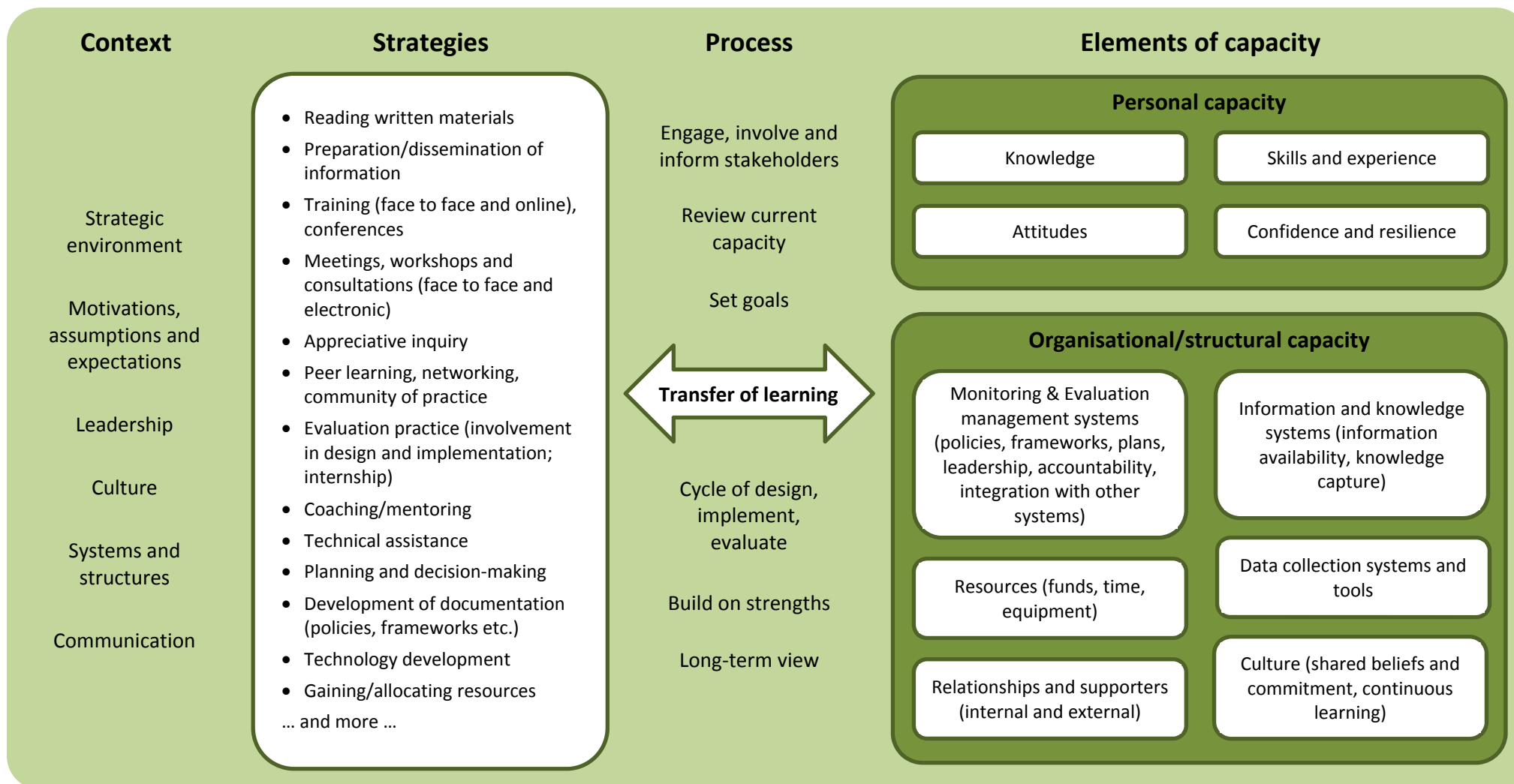


Evaluation Capacity Building model v3



Notes

Purpose

The Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) model has been developed for use within the CLC Outcomes Measurement and Evaluation Capacity Building Project conducted collaboratively between the Federation of Community Legal Centres (FCLC) and Lirata Consulting between April 2016 and November 2017.

The purpose of the model is to provide consultants and participating CLCs with a guide to:

- The elements of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) capacity that may be seen as a focus within the project
- A range of strategies that could be adopted for capacity building within the project
- A set of contextual and process considerations which will influence how capacity building work is undertaken.

The model may be useful in supporting conversations within organisations about the meaning of ECB.

The model aims to provide a generic framework for ECB. It is not intended that the project will adopt all strategies or address all elements of capacity identified in the diagram.

Source

The Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) model has been adapted from: H. Preskill & S. Boyle. 2008. 'A Multidisciplinary Model of Evaluation Capacity Building.' In *American Journal of Evaluation*, Vol. 29 No. 4, pp. 443-459.

The model has been adapted by Lirata Consulting to more clearly differentiate strategies from capacity elements, and to give additional emphasis to some elements of capacity including confidence and resilience, data collection systems, relationships and supporters. This model recognises that capacity is not simply about the competence of individuals, but about the context in which they work which can create barriers or opportunities for them to exercise their competence.

Please refer to the original article for a thorough and informative discussion of many elements of the model.

Model components: Context

All ECB efforts (and all M&E work in general) occurs within a context. The most important context is the organisation within which the work is occurring – key considerations include leadership, culture, organisational systems and structures, and communication processes which may either enable or hinder capacity development.

All ECB efforts start with (a set of) motivating reasons, assumptions and expectations which shape how the work will proceed. It is useful to identify these early on.

There are also external contextual factors including the strategic environment in which the ECB effort occurs, which will influence both the resourcing and attention available for ECB, the outputs that will be produced and the focus of efforts at different times.

Model components: Strategies

A wide range of strategies are available for developing M&E capacity. These range from individual learning approaches (e.g. reading written materials) to group and community learning processes (training, community of practice, workshop and so forth). Some strategies involve building a common understanding or agreement amongst stakeholders (consultation, planning, decision making) while others focus on strengthening resources for evaluation.

Practice is a key element of capacity building and can be fostered through hands-on participation in M&E activities, potentially supported by peer learning or coaching/mentoring approaches.

Model components: Process

ECB strategies will be most effective when applied in a planned manner, based on an assessment of baseline M&E capacity, identification of strengths and gaps, and setting clear goals. Activities can then be conducted within a cycle of designing, implementing and reviewing both ECB efforts and M&E activities more broadly, for learning and improvement.

Identifying, engaging and informing key stakeholders is key, particularly in the development of organisational capacity. Anyone who will need to contribute to M&E to make it successful will need to be involved in the process in some way.

ECB efforts should aim to build on existing strengths where possible, and should recognise the long-term nature of capacity building and the need for regular maintenance and renewal of capacity building efforts to ensure that gains are sustained.

If ECB is working well then learning from ECB activities should be transferred into personal and organisational capacity, which in turn should inform the choice of ECB strategies that are used and the sophistication with which they are applied.

Model components: Elements of capacity

The outcome of successful ECB strategies will be an increase in one or more elements of evaluation capacity for an organisation.

Some elements of capacity are personal – the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and emotional resilience (confidence, ability to have tough conversations and persist in the face of adversity) of individuals.

Other elements of capacity are collective – they relate to the structures, processes and systems of organisations. These elements include:

- Systems for management of M&E (including policies, procedures, M&E frameworks, plans, delegated responsibility, integration with other organisational systems e.g. planning)
- Resources (principally funds and staff/volunteer time)
- Relationships and supporters (internal to the organisation as well as external)
- Information and knowledge management systems that can capture, store and make available information about M&E in general and about the organisation's M&E learnings in particular
- Data collection systems and tools (which can have a huge impact as enablers or barriers to M&E efforts)
- Organisational culture regarding M&E, including shared beliefs, attitudes, level of commitment, the extent to which staff see M&E as part of their “business as usual”, and the broader culture of learning, reflection and inquiry within the organisation.

Model: Components reinforce each other

Many aspects of the model are mutually reinforcing. A combination of strategies will work better than a single strategy in isolation. Personal and organisational capacity tend to be mutually reinforcing (individual capacity will be higher when supported by organisational culture and systems, and the organisation's M&E systems will be stronger where supported by sound individual knowledge and skills).

Although it is possible to work on elements of capacity in isolation, for the most sustainable results a range of strategies should be combined to target a range of elements of capacity.