

# **Participatory Evaluation in a Remote Environment**

**Elizabeth DiLuzio**

# What is Remote Participatory Evaluation?

Participatory evaluation is a way to meaningfully include stakeholders in the questioning of their environment; in the identification of challenges, issues, and patterns; and the generation of collective action based on their findings... while engaging through video conferencing, email, chat, and other virtual collaboration platforms.

# What is Participatory Evaluation?

*“on”*

## **Information Extraction**

Evaluator is in the driver's seat of the evaluation plan and makes all of the decisions, community provides the data.

*Relationship between evaluator and community: “On”*

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## Self Mobilization

Community is in the driver’s seat of their own evaluation plan and makes all of the decisions, evaluator is a resource for knowledge and skills along the way.

*Relationship between the evaluator and community: “By”*

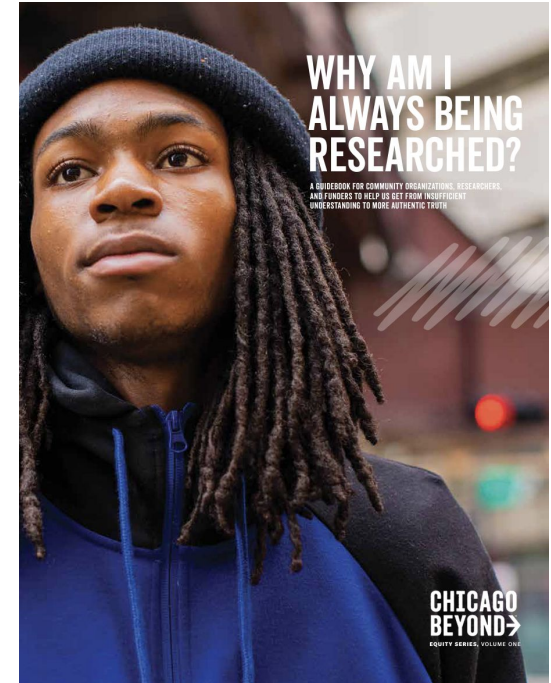
Adapted from Harris (2017) and Burns, Cooke, & Schweidler (2011)

# Cultivating a Participatory Mindset

Tips from [Why am I Always Being Researched?](#)

by Chicago Beyond

- Design research to serve the community purpose
- Refuse to participate in research that perpetuates the researcher as “brains” and the community as “brawn” stereotype
- Insist that the discussions about the community happen with the community
- Gain consent through transparency
- Learn what the organization wants to learn, and why
- Shape research so producing value for the community is central





# Cultivating a Participatory Mindset

## Tips from [Liberating Structures](#)

- Include and Unleash Everyone
- Practice Deep Respect for People and Local Solutions
- Build Trust As You Go
- Emphasize Possibilities: Believe Before You See
- Engage In Seriously-Playful Curiosity
- Never Start Without Clear Purpose(s)

LS Menu 	Wicked questions 	What' debrief 	Min specs 	Heard, seen respected 	What I need from you 	Integrated autonomy 
Design elements 	Appreciative interviews 	Discovery and action dialog 	Improv prototyping 	Drawing together 	Open space 	Critical uncertainties 
1-2-4-All 	TRIZ 	Shift & share 	Helping heuristics 	Design storyboards 	Generative relationships 	Ecocycle 
Impromptu networking 	15% solutions 	25 - 10 crowdsourcing 	Conversation café 	Celebrity interview 	Agree/certainty matrix 	Panarchy 
9-whys 	Troika consulting 	Wise crowds 	User experience fishbowl 	Social network webbing 	Simple ethnography 	Purpose to practice 

# Why engage in Participatory Evaluation Remotely?

- Can increase participation
  - Eliminates the barrier of travel
  - Reduces the barrier of time
  - Participation can be asynchronous
- Can create a safer environment
  - Allows stakeholders to participate in a setting that is comfortable to them
  - Individuals can choose to not be seen

# Factors to Consider When Choosing a Remote Engagement

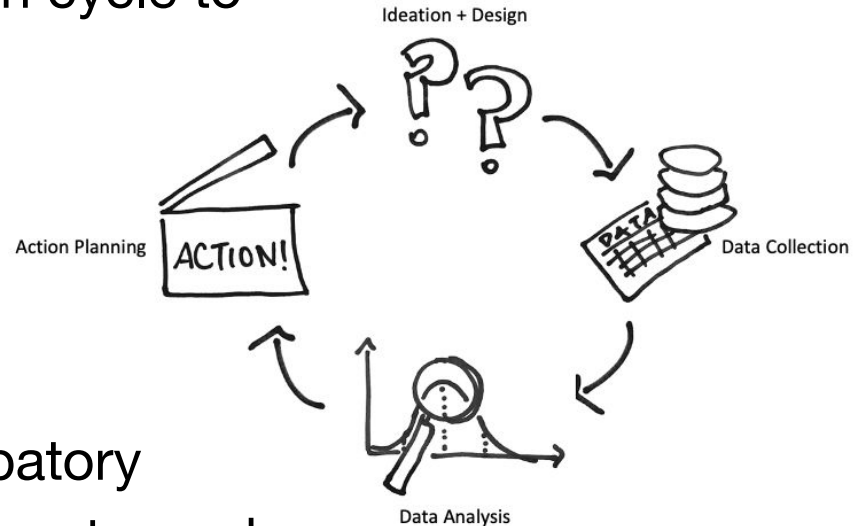
- Technological challenges
  - Skill
  - Access
  - Comfort
- Traditional values of the stakeholder groups
  - Value communing
  - Value breaking bread together

# The Evaluation Cycle

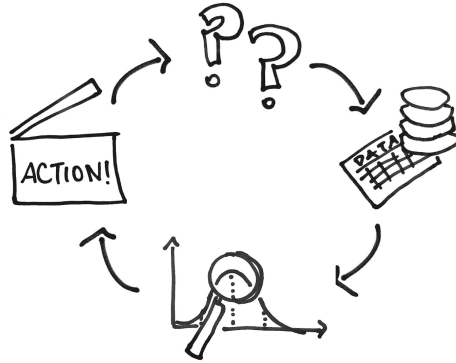
Today, we will consider the evaluation cycle to consist of 4 phases:

1. Ideation + Design
2. Data Collection
3. Data Analysis
4. Action Planning

By intentionally incorporating participatory methods into each phase, we can grow towards a more participatory evaluation.



# Phase 1: Ideation + Design



# Why incorporate participatory methods in the Ideation + Design phase?



- Better alignment with critical issues faced by the community/program
- Increased acceptance of the project
- Increased motivation to be involved in subsequent stages of the evaluation

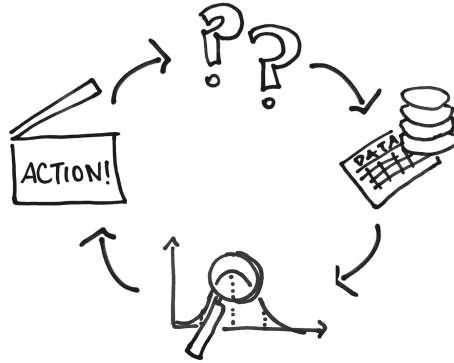
# Ideation + Design



Ways to include stakeholders remotely:

- Locate the people who should be participating in the evaluation
- Help the group get to know each other and connect on common ground
- Clarify how elements of a program are related to the bigger picture
- Clarify the purpose and importance of the evaluation
- Identify the evaluation questions

# Phase 2: Data Collection





# Why incorporate participatory methods in the Data Collection phase?



- Enhanced recruitment and retention of data providers
- Increased reliability of data collection tools and results
- Increased ability to properly address sensitive issues

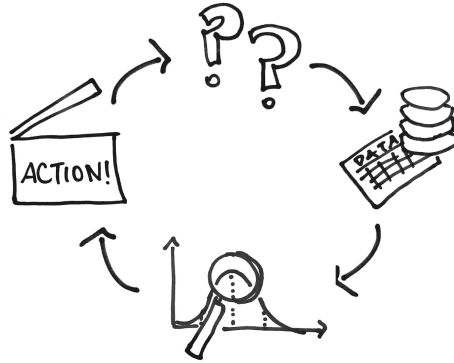
# Data Collection



Ways to include stakeholders remotely:

- Lean on the untraditional evaluation approach to collect data from stakeholders untraditionally
- Train stakeholders to administer surveys
- Be sure to include synchronous and asynchronous data collection methods so that more and more diverse people can be involved

# Data Analysis



# Why incorporate participatory methods in the Data Analysis phase?



- Increased validation of results
- Increased accuracy of the interpretation of the results
- Enhanced ability to translate the results into appropriate action

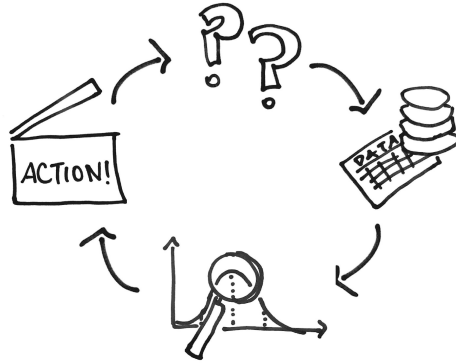
# Data Analysis



Ways to include stakeholders remotely:

- Include synchronous and asynchronous methods of analysis and reflection
- If hosting a live event, share the data to be analyzed ahead of time
- Use only one collaboration platform per meeting

# Action Planning



# Why incorporate participatory methods in the Action Planning phase?



- Increased ability to sensitively report on results
- Increased likelihood of sustainable and desirable change

# Action Planning



How to incorporate stakeholders remotely:

- Facilitate the generation of actionable ideas
- Foster strategic planning
- Encourage reflection on progress to date and deciding what adjustments are needed



# Resources

- [Participatory Evaluation: Theories + Methods for Remote Work](#) (quick guide)
- [AEA365](#) (a blog-a-day for evaluators), search for keyword “participatory”
  - [Level Up: Growing Your Approach to Participatory Evaluation](#) (AEA365 blog)
  - [Where Do I Begin?: Using Best Practices in Culture Change to Incorporate Participatory Evaluation Into Your Work](#) (AEA365 blog)
- [Liberating Structures](#)

# Resources

- [Why am I Always Being Researched?](#) (Chicago Beyond)
- [Designing Participatory Meetings and Brownbags](#) (USAID)
- [Stakeholder Engagement and the Work of SEI: An Empirical Study](#)

Questions?

# Contact Information

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fresh spectrum