

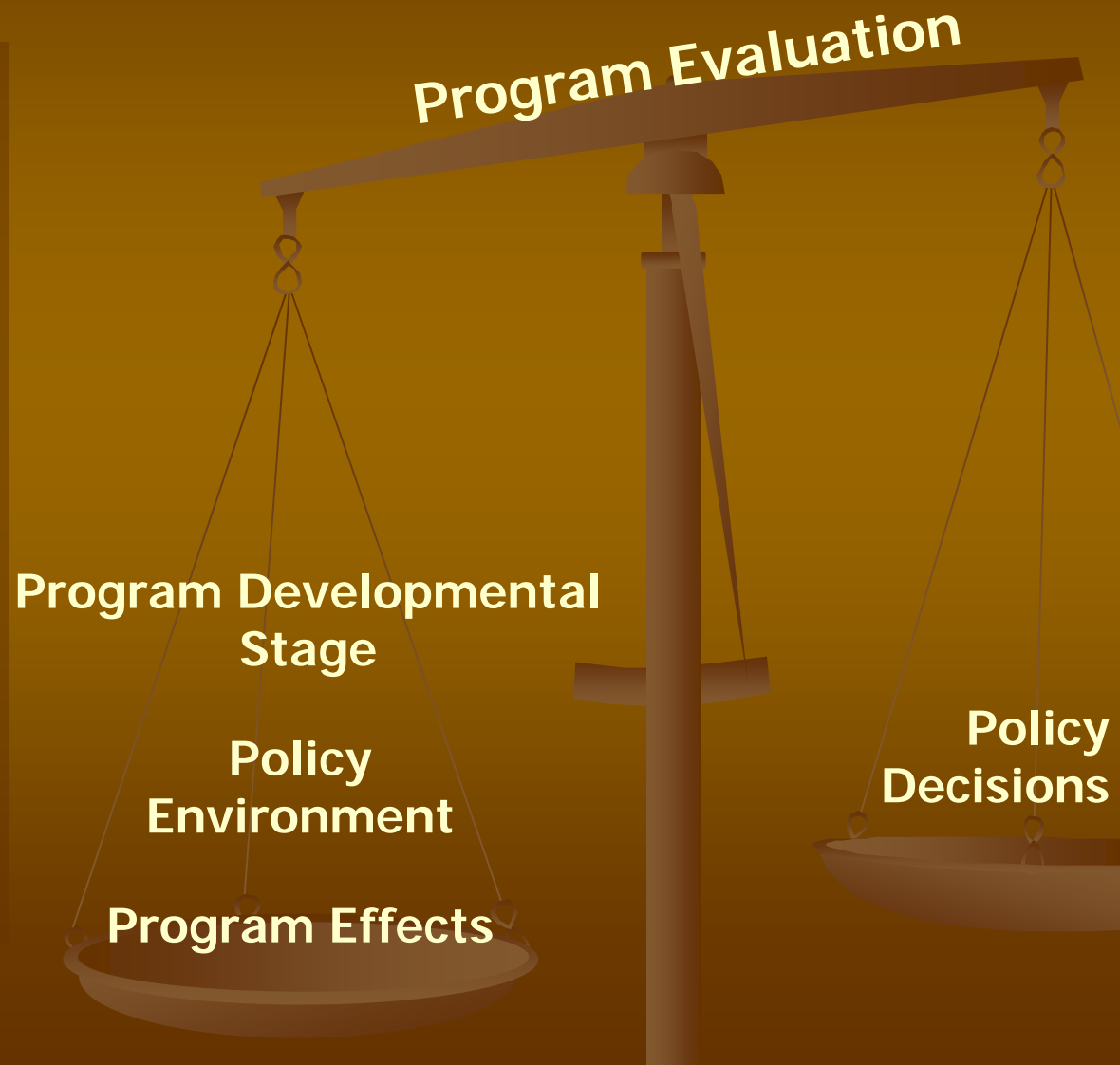


The Intersection of the Stages of Program Development and Evaluation: Using Program Monitoring and Evaluation to Support the Development of Effective and Efficient Programs

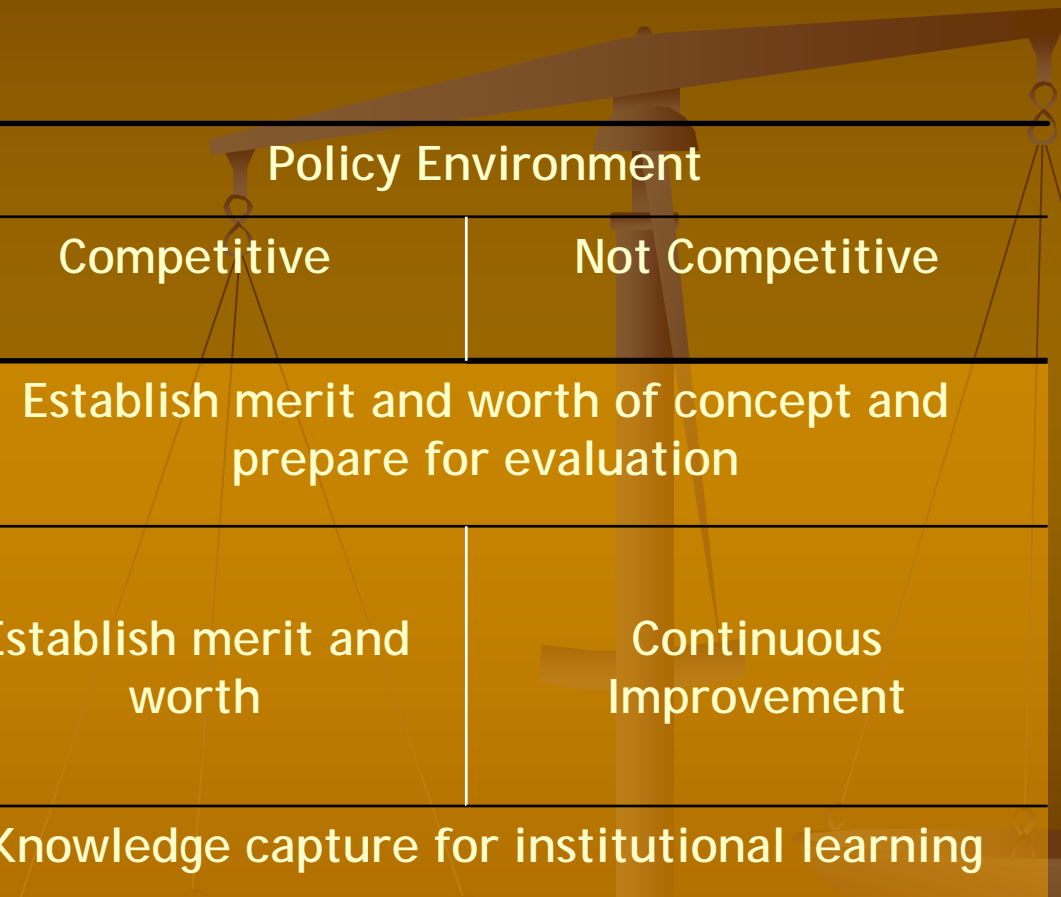
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Conceptual Model

- **GOAL:** Maximize the value of educational investments by adopting a disciplined approach to innovation which
 - provides opportunities for programs to benefit from moving in a deliberate way through the developmental stages and
 - helps ensure we answer the questions appropriate to each stage before moving to the next.



Primary purposes of monitoring and evaluation by developmental stage and policy environment



Program Developmental Stage/Description	Policy Environment	
	Competitive	Not Competitive
Stage 1: Conceptual	Establish merit and worth of concept and prepare for evaluation	
Stage 2: Empirical Pilot	Establish merit and worth	Continuous Improvement
Stage 3: Field Test		
Stage 4: Mature		
Stage 5: Phase Out	Knowledge capture for institutional learning	

Approach

- Build upon the stages of program development and the characteristics of the policy environment to identify monitoring and evaluation questions and activities that enhance both program effectiveness and the efficient use of monitoring and evaluation resources.
- Primary Sources:
 - Program Stages adapted from: Cronbach L. J., Ambron, S. R., Dornbusch, S. M., Hess, R. D., Hornik, R. C., Phillips, D. C., Walker, K. F., & Weiner, S. S. (1980). *Toward Reform of Program Evaluation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
 - Policy Environment Descriptions from: Marks, M. M., Henry, G. T., Julnes, G., (2000). *Evaluation: An Integrated Framework for Understanding, Guiding and Improving Policies and Programs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
 - Evaluative questions adapted from: Jacobs, F. H. (1988). *The five-tiered approach to evaluation: Context and implementation*. In Weiss, H. B., & Jacobs, F. H. (Eds.) *Evaluating Family Programs*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

Definitions: Policy Environments

Policy Environments are independent of program developmental stage and may or may not be competitive.

- *New Policy or Program.* Policies or programs may be in pilot stages and may or may not be continued or expanded. In other cases, there may be a long-term commitment to the new policy or program.
- *Opportunities for Funding Options.* A commitment to address a need exists along with realistic options for funding approaches *in addition to* existing programs.
- *Competitive Policy.* Alternative strategies challenge the assumptions on which existing programs were built and create competition.
- *Stable Policy.* Few major shifts under active consideration, anticipated changes are incremental and occur at the margins of programs.

Evaluative Questions for Stage 1: Conceptual

Program Developmental Stage/Description	Questions to be Addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• exploration of concept, development of theoretical model and preliminary plans for implementation.• assessment of needs,• internal and external environmental scans,• analysis best or promising practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) What are the needs or opportunities the program is intended to address?(b) What is the match between the proposed program and the community characteristics and strengths [external environmental scan]?(c) What is the match between the proposed program and the institutional mission, goals, and resources [internal environmental scan]?(d) What potentials exist in the community for collaboration?(e) What is the capacity of the organization to effectively implement the program (including finances and core competencies)?

Evaluative Questions for Stage 2: Empirical Pilot

Program Developmental Stage/Description

- program components are observed in action on a small scale.
- components are readily modifiable
- there may be systematic variation of components to identify those that offer the most promise in the actual program context.

Questions to be Addressed

- (a) Are the intended participants engaged? What barriers, if any, exist to participation by members of the target population?
- (b) What are the challenges to implementation as planned and what adaptations to the original program model have been made?
- (c) If variations on the model or components have been tested, which are most effective and why?
- (d) What does existing evidence say about the potential of the program to achieve the desired effects and what are the unintended effects (both positive and negative)?
- (e) Are further adaptations indicated by the results to date?
- (f) What are the actual and projected costs of operation as any developmental costs fade?
All leading to
- (g) Is a larger-scale test of the program reasonable?

Evaluative Questions for Stage 3: Field Test

Program Developmental Stage/Description	Questions to be Addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a careful assessment of what the program can accomplish under realistic conditions.• program is closely aligned to recommendations from the empirical pilot• some adjustments may continue.• limited scope and duration.	<p>(a) The questions from the Empirical Pilot continue to be relevant as the scope of the program broadens.</p> <p>Additional questions include:</p> <p>(b) Did we obtain the results predicted by the data from the pilot?</p> <p>(c) Have new implementation issues arisen and what are the implications of these if the program is to continue?</p> <p>(d) Are there differential impacts on sub-groups of participants?</p> <p>And, ultimately,</p> <p>(e) Is the program effective and sustainable?</p>

Evaluative Questions for Stage 4: Mature

Program Developmental Stage/Description

- program has successfully passed through the previous stages,
- historical results have demonstrated the effectiveness of the strategy,
- program has a stable budget and organizational niche.

Questions to be Addressed

- (a) Is the program continuing to be effective?
- (b) Are there ways in which we can increase effectiveness?
- (c) Are there ways in which we can increase efficiency?
If resources are available and it is consistent with the institutional mission, the questions asked may go beyond the program itself to include
- (d) What have we/can we learn from the program to increase the knowledge-base and contribute more broadly to theory and practice?
- (e) What are the long-term effects? (These may require multiyear efforts and sometimes intensive and complex data collection to assess.)

Evaluative Questions for Stage 5: Phase Out

Program Developmental Stage/Description	Questions to be Addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• programs may be phased out from any of the stages.• Reasons for termination include, but are not limited to<ul style="list-style-type: none">• effectiveness less than required,• changes in institutional priorities,• need for the program no longer exists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) What were the challenges, if any, encountered by the program? And,(b) What were the strengths and limitations of the program when confronted by those challenges?(c) What are the implications for future programs or other programs with comparable internal or environmental characteristics?

In Conclusion

- Recognize that not all programs begin at the conceptual stage or move through all the stages.
- However, being cognizant of the stages and our choices may help us avoid making poor inferences about the effectiveness of programs by expecting too much too soon or by not expecting enough and allowing programs to stay in a sort of prolonged adolescence.
- A competitive policy environment does not change the evaluative questions as much as it increases the stakes and calls for the use of evaluation methodologies that support the assessment of *relative* merit and worth.
- Understanding the policy environment, particularly when it changes, helps us to plan and conduct evaluations that are aligned the with policy questions related to a program.