

# Reflections on ECB



Anita M. Baker, Ed.D.  
Evaluation Services



Bruner Foundation  
Rochester, New York

# Evaluation Capacity Building - Israel

From July through October, 2014, Bruner Foundation consultant Anita Baker worked together with evaluation consultant Gila Melech, Tel Aviv, to develop and share Evaluation Capacity Building strategies including:

- Translation of Bruner Foundation Evaluation Manuals and Training Session Materials Including Agendas, Powerpoint Slides and Activities (jointly supported by the Bruner Foundation and the Rothschild Caesarea Foundation).
- Development of a conference presentation and training materials for Israeli Evaluators, Funders and NGO professionals.

The planning work culminated in a week-long series of on-site meetings and training sessions (see following) and plans for ongoing follow-up and collaboration. This presentation highlights information presented to and feedback from NGO participants (see end).

# Evaluation Capacity Building - Israel On-site Agenda, 10/20 - 10/23/2014

	Monday 10.20	Tuesday 10.21	Wednesday 10.22	Thursday 10.23
Morning	Arrive – 7:00 AM	Behaaracha Raba Conference Presentation: Evaluative Thinking Center for Educational Technologies, Ramat Aviv, Tel Aviv	Enosh 9:00 – 1:00 12 people	Workshop for NGO's with Midot 9 – 12:30, 35 people
Afternoon	Meet with G. Melech, Israel Visit organizer final Planning, ECB – I	BREAK	Matan 3 – 6 5 people)	<a href="#">Reflections on ECB with professionals*</a> <a href="#">Kibbutzim Seminar, Tel Aviv</a> 3:30 – 7:00
Evening		Meet with Forum of Foundations Reps	Dinner with Visit organizer, Enosh Exec. Director	** Depart

Following includes the agenda and presentation materials shared with ECB professionals, and some feedback regarding the session.





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## **AGENDA: Evaluation Essentials**

15:30 Introductions

16:00 **Reflections on ECB**

Evaluation Terminology (Evaluation, Eval Thinking, Evaluative Capacity)  
Indicators of Evaluative Capacity, Why important to orgs  
How we have worked to build evaluative capacity

16:45 **Discussion**

1. Q/A
2. What are your thoughts/experiences of ECB?
3. How else can the Bruner Foundation support the work?

17:30 **Results of the Retrospective Study**

Who participated  
Results summary  
Results details  
Recommendations to grantmakers

18:30 **Discussion – ECB in Israel, strategies, ideas, getting beyond barriers**

\*Attendees included: 6 independent evaluation consultants, 5 evaluators working for evaluation firms or institutions, 4 professionals from governmental offices or institutes (Welfare, Social Security, Davidson Institute, 3 representatives of philanthropic foundations, 3 professionals working in internal evaluation units, 2 professionals from Midot (infrastructure organization), 3 ECB professionals, 1 large NGO manager.



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# What is Program Evaluation?

Thoughtful, systematic collection and analysis of information about activities, characteristics and outcomes of programs, for use by specific people, to reduce uncertainties and inform decisions.



# Evaluation Capacity



The ability to do evaluation.

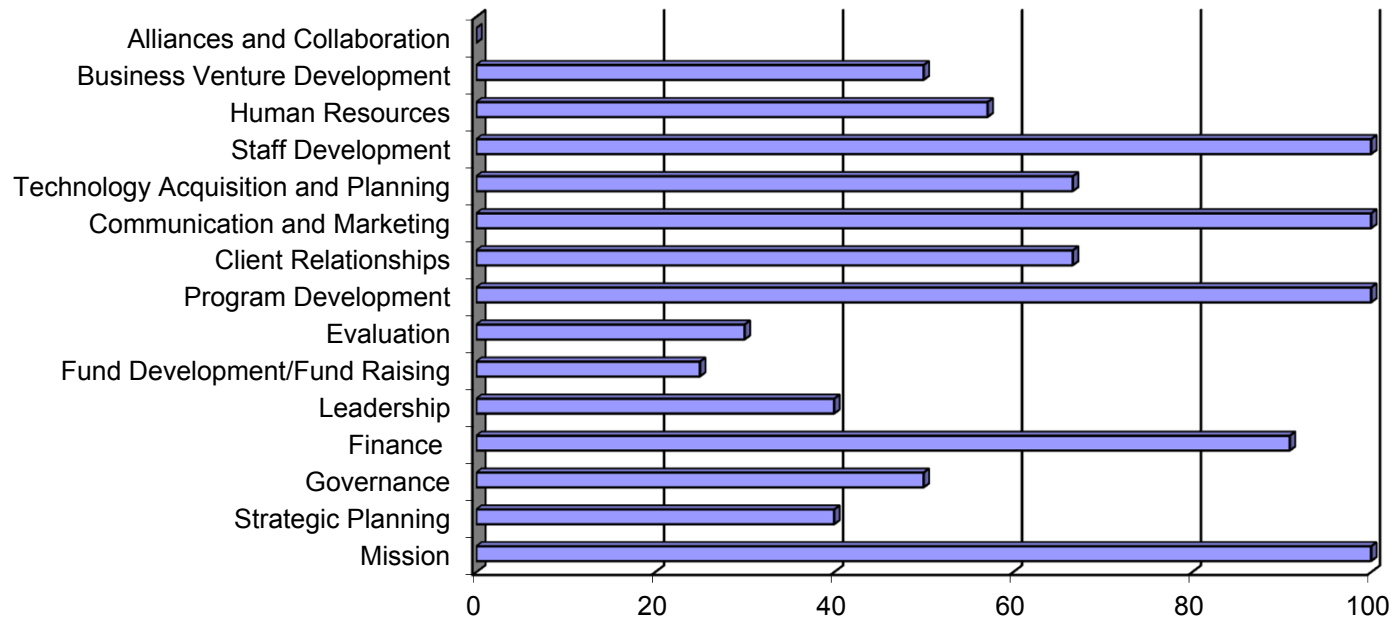
Involves proficiency in:

1. asking questions
2. determining data required to answer questions
3. collecting data using appropriate strategies
4. analyzing collected data and summarizing findings
5. using and sharing findings



# Evaluative Thinking

Evaluative Thinking is a type of reflective practice that uses the five key evaluation skills in areas other than programs or initiatives.



# What Are Key Components of Evaluative Thinking?

1. Asking questions of substance
2. Determining data needed to address questions
3. Gathering appropriate data in systematic ways
4. Analyzing data and sharing results
5. Developing strategies to act on findings





# Evaluative Capacity

The combination of evaluation skills and evaluative thinking.

Evaluative Capacity requires a commitment to doing and using evaluation in programs, strategies, and initiatives *as well as* a commitment to using those same skills in other aspects of organization work.



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**Capacity Building**



# Key Tenet of Bruner Foundation Investments

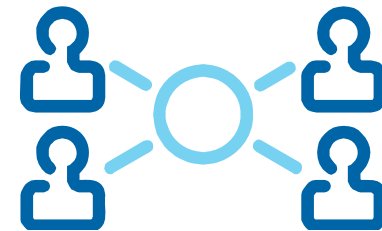
*Evaluation capacity used well, supports programs, strategies, and initiatives that in turn lead organizations to better deliver on their missions and better meet the needs of those they serve.*

The Bruner Foundation has invested in Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) for more than 20 years.

# How is Evaluative Thinking Related to Organizational Effectiveness?

- ★ *Organizational effectiveness is the ability of an organization to fulfill its mission through a blend of sound management, strong governance, and a persistent rededication to achieving results.*

Grantmakers for Effective Organizations



# Indicators of Organizational Evaluative Capacity

- ✓ Internal Motivation
- ✓ Competence
- ✓ Mainstream Function
- ✓ Strategic Use of Evaluation Results
- ✓ Sufficient Quantity, Good Quality
- ✓ Availability of Resources

Adapted from the Evaluation Capacity Assessment Instrument ECAI



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# Organizational Evaluative Capacity

## What Do You Look For?

### ✓ Internal Motivation

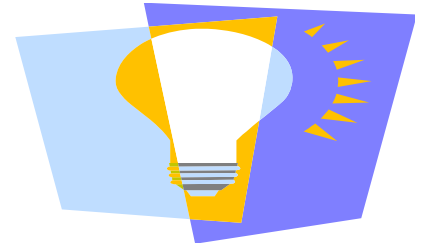
- Do organization leaders want to do evaluation?
- Do organization staff want to do evaluation?
- Does the organization board want evaluation done?

# Organizational Evaluative Capacity

## What Do You Look For?

- ✓ Internal Motivation
- ✓ Competence
- Do organization leaders and/or staff know how to do evaluation?

# What Can ECB Trainees Do?



## ➤ Design Evaluations

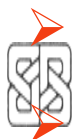
- ✓ Clarify the Purpose
- ✓ Specify Questions
- ✓ Select Data Collection Methods
- ✓ Specify Timelines and Level of Effort
- ✓ Estimate Cost of Evaluation
- ✓ Commission Evaluation for their Organizations

## ➤ Assess Evaluative Thinking in their Organizations for 15 Different Capacity Areas and Think about Responses/Actions

## ➤ Develop, Assess and Use Logic Models

## ➤ Document Program Implementation/Service Delivery (recruitment, retention, target populations, information tracking)

## ➤ Design Surveys, Identify/Fix Bad Surveys, Determine How many Surveys are Needed, Develop Survey Administration and Analysis Plans



## Design and Conduct Interviews, Observations and Record Reviews

## Involve others in Evaluation (RIPPLE)

# Organizational Evaluative Capacity

## What Do You Look For?

- ✓ Internal Motivation
- ✓ Competence
- ✓ Mainstream Function
- Who actually does evaluation?
  - All/any staff
  - Dedicated staff
  - External consultants
- Does leadership support or hinder evaluation?



# Supportive Evaluation Environments

## 1. Promote evaluative capacity

- reward learning
- provide staff time and resources to engage in evaluation
- conduct data collection and analysis
- use data

Adapted from Kramer, 2007



# Supportive Evaluation Environments

2. Directly engage key decision-makers
3. Involve multiple evaluation stakeholders
4. Undertake manageable and straightforward evaluation
5. Use targeted and compelling methods to communicate results

Adapted from Kramer, 2007



# Organizational Evaluative Capacity

## What Do You Look For?

- ✓ Internal Motivation
- ✓ Competence
- ✓ Mainstream Function
- ✓ Strategic Use of Evaluation Results
  - Does evaluation inform organizational decisions?

# Organizations with Evaluative Capacity Use Evaluation Results:

1. To report to funders.
2. To improve services or programs.
3. To get additional funding.
4. To design ongoing monitoring processes.
5. To assess implementation of a program.
6. To assess quality of a program.
7. To improve outreach.
8. To make informed decisions.
9. To train staff.
10. To eliminate un-needed services or programs.



# Organizational Evaluative Capacity

## What Do You Look For?

- ✓ Internal Motivation
- ✓ Competence
- ✓ Mainstream Function
- ✓ Strategic Use of Evaluation Results
- ✓ Sufficient Quantity, Good Quality
  - Is evaluation done according to an organizational plan?
  - Are evaluations rigorous?



# Increasing Rigor in Program Evaluation

- Mixed methodologies
- Multiple sources of data
- Multiple points in time

# Organizational Evaluative Capacity

## What Do You Look For?

- ✓ Internal Motivation
- ✓ Competence
- ✓ Mainstream Function
- ✓ Strategic Use of Evaluation Results
- ✓ Sufficient Quantity, Good Quality
- ✓ Evaluation resources
  - Are there dedicated funds for evaluation?
  - Are there reference materials available?
  - Is there access to Technical Assistance?



# What Should Thoughtful Organizations Do to Obtain Funds for Evaluation?

Usually the cost to do good evaluation is equivalent to about 10 - 15% of the costs to operate the program effectively.

- ▶ Write evaluation costs into project development budgets. Use the money accordingly.
- ▶ Set aside funds for evaluation on a percentage basis into the organizational budget. Develop and follow a plan to use these funds.
- ▶ Obtain funds solely for the purpose of evaluation.
- ▶ Consider sharing and/or pooling resources.





# Evaluation Capacity is Important Because it Can Help Organizations . . .

	Somewhat True	Very True	TOTAL N=97
Build evaluation into the program planning process	7%	93%	100%
Improve their quality of service	7%	93%	100%
Revise programs based on real data	8%	92%	100%
Develop instruments that measure the types of outcomes valued by stakeholders	8%	92%	100%



# ECB Strategies

- Basic evaluation training
- Advanced evaluation training
- Applied learning
- Coaching and technical assistance
- Networking – learning from peers
- Alumni study groups
- Anchoring
- Funding collaboratives/shared governance



HOMEWORK

# ECB Overview

DESIGN  
DEVELOPMENT

- 1) Evaluation Basics: Definitions, Evaluation Terminology, Purposes, Stakeholders, Evaluation Questions, Evaluation Design, Evaluative Thinking
- 2) Logic Models, Evaluation Logic: Outcome, Indicators and Targets
- 3) Documenting Program Strategies/Assessing Implementation, Overview of Evaluation Data Collection Methods, Intro to Surveys
- 4) Surveys - E-surveys, Sampling, Administration Plans, Analysis Plans, Analyzing and Summarizing Findings; Record Reviews
- 5) Observations and Interviews, Methodological Choices, Designing, Coding, Analyzing, Summarizing

Individual Agency Consultations

- 6) Making Methodological Choices, Designing Evaluations, Level of Effort, Timelines, Cost of Evaluation and Budgeting, Intro to Evaluation Reporting, RIPPLE

Final Conference - Design Presentation



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DATA  
COLLECTION

# ECB Overview

DATA  
ANALYSIS

Individual Agency Consultations

- 7) Report Writing, Data Analysis, Effective Use of Pre-Post Strategies, Introduction to Use of Tables and Graphs
- 8) Data Visualization

Individual Agency Consultations

- 9) Evaluative Thinking Revisited

Individual Agency Consultations 2 Sessions

- 10) Proof and Attribution, Peer Review, RIPPLE Planning

Individual Agency Consultations

Final Conference - Results Presentation



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# Importance of ECB Training Strategies

<b>% of Respondents who Indicated the following were important.</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>TOTAL N=97</b>
Opportunities for coaching and consultations from a professional evaluator	14%	86%	100%
Opportunities to conduct guided evaluation during the training	15%	83%	98%
Opportunities to continue learning new information about evaluation	24%	76%	100%
Opportunities to continue guided evaluation projects through alumni study	28%	68%	96%



# FORMER PARTICIPANT STUDY 2013-14

## Key Questions

1. How and to what extent have former participants put their evaluation capacity building (ECB) training to use?
2. What evaluation capacities have been sustained and how and to what extent do these capacities benefit organizations?



# Who Participated? Former Trainees

Rochester Effectiveness Partnership (REP) - 20  
Rochester, New York 1997 - 2003

Building Evaluation Capacity (BEC) - Hartford,  
Connecticut, 2006 - 2013 60

MetroWest Evaluation Institute (MWEI) - MetroWest  
region, Massachusetts, 2011 7

Outcomes-Based Planning Institute (OBPI) - New York,  
New York, Winter 2011, Spring 2012 10

# Key Findings: Results Very Clear, Uniformly Positive

All former ECB trainees reported:

- The comprehensive training they received was worthwhile for them individually.
- They continued to use what they learned.
- They valued evaluative capacity and its importance in their organizations.
- They avidly use evaluation capacities and evaluative thinking for key organizational benefits.
- They extended the training to others.





# Continued Evaluation Use: **Challenges** and Benefits

- Time to work on evaluation projects,
- Turnover of trained staff
- Unmet technology needs
  
- ECB training helped their organizations:
  - do better evaluation
  - use evaluative thinking
  - commission evaluation



# Unmet Needs

*When asked specifically if there were evaluation activities organizations have not conducted since their training, despite need and interest, about half said yes.*

Most frequently cited unmet needs:

- Time
- Money



# Current Status of ECB Retrospective Study Respondents

**TOTAL  
N=97**

## **Percent of respondents who: . . .**

Have participated in other evaluation training since ECB 28%

Are involved in evaluation now 95%

Have more responsibility for evaluation since ECB 51%



# Quality of Training Experiences in Retrospect

**TOTAL  
N=97**

## **Value of Initial Training to Individual**

Very Worthwhile 83%

Somewhat Worthwhile 17%

## **Value of Initial Training\* to the Organization**

Very Worthwhile 84%

Somewhat Worthwhile 16%



# Quality of Training Experiences in Retrospect

**TOTAL  
N=97**

## **Value of Alumni Group to the Individual**

Very Worthwhile	84%
Somewhat Worthwhile	16%

## **Value of Alumni Group to the Organization**

Very Worthwhile	87%
Somewhat Worthwhile	13%



# Evaluation Planning Skills Former Trainees Continue to Use

	Did this Before	Still do this Sometimes	Still do this A Lot	TOTAL N=97
Incorporating Evaluative Thinking into regular work	10%	34%	56%	<b>100%</b>
Selecting data collection strategies to use for evaluation	8%	57%	32%	<b>97%</b>
Specifying evaluation questions	7%	43%	45%	<b>95%</b>
Developing evaluation designs	8%	55%	27%	<b>90%</b>
Presenting findings from evaluation	12%	45%	33%	<b>90%</b>
Writing an evaluation findings section in program reports	8%	47%	27%	<b>81%</b>
Writing evaluation reports	11%	43%	22%	<b>76%</b>
Writing an evaluation plan section in program proposals	10%	39%	23%	<b>72%</b>



# Data Collection and Analysis Skills Former Trainees Continue to Use

	Did this Before	Still do this Sometimes	Still do this A Lot	TOTAL N=97
Developing surveys	12%	48%	35%	<b>94%</b>
Planning for survey administration	11%	48%	30%	<b>89%</b>
Analyzing survey data	11%	41%	41%	<b>93%</b>
Developing interview guides/protocols	12%	54%	20%	<b>86%</b>
Conducting evaluation interviews	11%	40%	23%	<b>73%</b>
Analyzing interview data	10%	45%	27%	<b>72%</b>





# Data Collection and Analysis Skills Former Trainees Continue to Use

	Did this Before	Still do this Sometimes	Still do this A Lot	TOTAL N=97
Developing record review protocols	10%	44%	22%	<b>76%</b>
Analyzing record review data	9%	43%	29%	<b>81%</b>
Developing observation tools	9%	43%	16%	<b>68%</b>
Conducting evaluation observations	9%	45%	13%	<b>67%</b>
Analyzing observation data	7%	42%	23%	<b>72%</b>





## As Clarified by One Respondent . . .

*I would say that I used most of these skills prior to the training, but am using them at a much more enhanced level and understand it better.*



# Outcomes of ECB Projects

ECB training . . .	Somewhat True	Very True	TOTAL N=97
Taught me how to look at programs from different perspectives	28%	70%	<b>98%</b>
Improved the quality of data our agency obtained	38%	58%	<b>96%</b>
Helped my agency conduct better evaluations	30%	65%	<b>95%</b>
Helped my agency understand why evaluation is valuable	43%	52%	<b>95%</b>
Taught us the importance of involving multiple stakeholders in evaluation	45%	51%	<b>95%</b>
Made my agency more responsive to our customers	50%	44%	<b>94%</b>
Helped my agency incorporate evaluation practices into daily practice	50%	39%	<b>89%</b>



One respondent commented further . . .

*I don't think I can overemphasize the impact that BEC had on my previous employer. It completely transformed the agency's mindset and during my time there, the importance of evaluation was internalized and integrated into all of its programming.*



# RIPPLE! Participant Responses about Extending Evaluation Capacity

Percent who report they have done the following . . .	Some	A Lot	TOTAL N=97
Shared evaluation knowledge or strategies with other staff	74%	25%	99%
Presented evaluation results /findings to internal staff or board	63%	31%	94%
Presented evaluation results/findings to external audiences or stakeholders	66%	20%	86%
Initiated a new program evaluation project	43%	36%	79%
Continued or expanded upon your original evaluation project	48%	27%	75%



# Challenges to Sustaining Evaluation Capacity

	Somewhat	Very	TOTAL N=97
Lack of time to work on evaluation projects	41%	57%	98%
Maintaining staff expertise	63%	28%	91%
Turnover of trained staff	50%	28%	78%
Absence of technology for working on evaluation projects	52%	25%	77%
Insufficient funds for working on evaluation projects	31%	24%	55%
Insufficient organizational support from leaders/other staff	35%	20%	55%



# Percent Who Think Participating in ECB Helped Their Organizations . . .

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	Some	A lot	TOTAL N=97
Do better evaluations of programs	42%	57%	99%
Use evaluative thinking skills in multiple aspects of work	43%	52%	95%
Commission better evaluation	43%	49%	92%



# Recommendations to Grantmakers

1. Deem this ample, long-term evidence of key results.
2. Use the Bruner Foundation ECB Clearinghouse to compare different strategies to determine if any would be suitable for their grantees.

[www.effectivenessprojects.org/](http://www.effectivenessprojects.org/)

3. Support training and technical assistance/coaching that helps organizations build evaluation capacity.
4. Commit resources that allow staff time to work on evaluation projects, purchase technology and pay for extended participatory assistance with evaluation.





# Study Appendix: Who Participated?

	BEC	MWEI	OBPI	REP
<b>Administered</b>	89	12	57	63
<b>Answered</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Did not Answer</b>	18	4	--	9
<b>Unverified Address</b>	11	1	47	34
<b>No Address</b>	10	0	0	59

CLASS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS*
<b>Class of 2008 (9/07 – 6/08)</b>	18
<b>Class of 2010 (9/09 – 6/10)</b>	16
<b>Class of 2013 (1/12 – 6/13)</b>	26





# Feedback

We appreciate so much your dedication and the abundance of materials you sent us. They are all very useful for us and we will take time to study them and integrate them into our work.

We look forward very much to seeing you again next Fall, and as Beth and Gila are CC-d to this e-mail, we would like to thank the three of you, from the heart, for your generosity and for sharing with us so openly the vast knowledge and experience, which you have accumulated over the years.

Best  
Talía

Talia Horev  
Director of Evaluation Capacity Building,  
Matan – Investing in the Community, the Israeli affiliate of United Way Worldwide.

