

Micro-Credential Study Plan

1. Title: Theory-based approaches to evaluation

2. Audience: Evaluation Managers

3. Level Intermediate level (M&E Officers P2/NOB/P3/P4; Evaluation Officers P3/P4)

4. Prior knowledge and or/skills that a learner needs to have including pre-requisite micro-credentials

This micro-credential assumes that participants have basic knowledge about theories of change, including:

- Defining what a theory of change is, its key elements and how they fit together
- Why and when to use a TOC for different evaluation purposes, including testing underlying assumptions and causal chain between outputs and outcomes
- What is a nested TOC and when it is useful to have one

This micro-credential assumes that learners are able to construct and revise a theory of change for evaluation purposes as pre-requisite prior knowledge for taking this course. It also assumes that learners possess the following knowledge as a pre-requisite for this micro-credential:

KNOWLEDGE	SKILLS
Basic knowledge on the key components of evaluation design, particularly in the WFP context. This course is designed to help participants infuse theory-based approaches to evaluation into an evaluation design process, but assumes a basic knowledge of the relationships between evaluation questions, evaluation matrices, indicators/measures, data sources, and data collection tools.	This course assumes that participants have basic skills in evaluation design, including developing an evaluation matrix based on evaluation questions, identifying lines of enquiry based on evaluation questions, selecting the most appropriate key measures or data sources to inform lines of enquiry based on possible sources, and developing data collection tools. This course will focus on adding skills around how to integrate theory-based approaches to evaluation within these core evaluation design skills.

5. Learning Outcomes

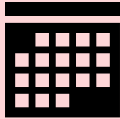
Overall Learning Objective: Determine where using a theory-based approach (TBA) to evaluation is most useful and relevant to answer key evaluation questions (based on context).

LO	Description	Competencies	UNEG Competencies	Module
1	Define a theory-based approach (TBA) in evaluation	Knowledge: What is a TBA to evaluation Knowledge: Understand difference between TBA and other evaluation approaches Knowledge: What are different methods used within theory-based approaches to evaluation and when is it appropriate to use and combine methods?	Knowledge base of evaluation [professional foundations]: Understands current issues in evaluation practice and theory Understands and applies the parameters of social science research in moderately complex evaluations Evaluation approaches and methods and analysing the data [technical evaluation skills]: Has solid knowledge and the ability to apply a range of evaluation data collection and analysis methods, and is able to use methods appropriate for the given context Recognizes the importance of multiple and mixed methods	MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION TO THEORY-BASED APPROACHES (TBA) TO EVALUATION
2	Develop evaluation questions (or sub-questions in case of CSPEs) and testable hypotheses which are specific to the context and the intervention	Knowledge: Characteristics of a theory of change suitable for theory-based approaches to evaluation?	Identifying evaluation needs [technical evaluation skills]: Has solid knowledge of various types of theories of change and logic models and is able to apply an understanding of systems thinking in order to identify and facilitate the development of theories of change and logic models for moderately complex programmes and policies and in order to facilitate evaluative thinking among stakeholders	MODULE 2: KEY FEATURES OF THEORY-BASED APPROACHES TO EVALUATION

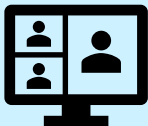
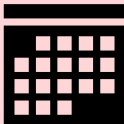
3	Develop evaluation questions (or sub-questions in case of CSPEs) and testable hypotheses which are specific to the context and the intervention	Knowledge: What types of questions can be answered / are most suited to TBA Skill: Ability to develop questions (or sub-questions in the case of CSPEs) using TOC	Defining evaluation purposes and design [technical evaluation skills]: Has solid understanding of and is able to establish the relevant evaluation quality assurance mechanisms for upholding high-quality standards	MODULE 3: QUALITY ASSURING A THEORY-BASED EVALUATION DESIGN
4	Verify that the evaluation design will allow the testing of hypotheses to assess whether and how an intervention	Skill: Ability to review evaluation design (during inception), including the evaluation matrix and the data collection tools to ensure that the design (and use of TOC) responds to evaluation questions (extent to which it is used to follow the lines of enquiry related to causal linkages and assumptions suggested by TOC)	Upholding quality standards [technical evaluation skills]: Has solid experience in developing high-quality terms of references for moderately complex evaluations, including clear and focused evaluation questions Upholding quality standards [technical evaluation skills]: Has solid knowledge of elaborating evaluation designs for moderately complex evaluations, modifying existing designs to fit the context	MODULE 3: QUALITY ASSURING A THEORY-BASED EVALUATION DESIGN
5	Review a draft evaluation report to determine if the theory-based evaluation design was used consistently and appropriately	Skill: Ability to review evaluation report to ensure that TOC has been used in analysis to respond to evaluation questions (ensuring that where and when it is used in analysis is transparently presented)	Upholding quality standards [technical evaluation skills]: Has solid understanding of and is able to establish the relevant evaluation quality assurance mechanisms for upholding high-quality standards	MODULE 4: QUALITY ASSURING A THEORY-BASED EVALUATION FINAL REPORT

6. Curricula

MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION TO THEORY-BASED APPROACHES (TBA) TO EVALUATION

ORIENTATION SESSION	READ AND DISCUSS	VIDEO LESSONS	QUIZ
 All participants will be invited to a 30-minute orientation session. The session will take place during the week of 10 November.	 Participants will read selected assigned excerpts on theory-based approaches to evaluation and answer questions in the forums.	 Participants will watch pre-recorded video lessons covering interlinked topics around theory-based approaches to evaluation, situating these approaches within the broader range of designs and methods for evaluations.	 Participants will test their knowledge through multiple-choice quizzes.

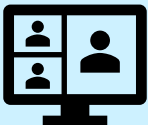
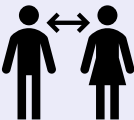
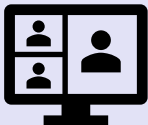
MODULE 2: KEY FEATURES OF THEORY-BASED APPROACHES TO EVALUATION

READ AND DISCUSS	VIDEO LESSONS	QUIZ	THEMATIC LIVE SESSION
 Participants will read selected assigned excerpts and answer the questions in the forums.	 Participants will watch pre-recorded video lessons.	 Participants will test their knowledge through a multiple-choice quiz.	 All participants will attend a synchronous session with dynamic group exercises. The live session will take place during the week of 1 December.

MODULE 3: QUALITY ASSURING A THEORY-BASED EVALUATION DESIGN

READ AND DISCUSS	VIDEO LESSONS	THEMATIC LIVE SESSION	ASSIGNMENT	MENTORING SESSION
 Participants will read selected assigned excerpts and answer the questions in the forums.	 Participants will watch pre-recorded video lessons covering quality assuring theory-based components of an evaluation design.	 All participants will attend a synchronous session with dynamic group exercises. The live session will take place during the week of 19 January.	 Participants will practice key module concepts through an assignment.	 Participants will have the opportunity join a mentoring session to talk through their reflections on the exercises and discuss how it can be further integrated in their day-to-day work.

MODULE 4: QUALITY ASSURING A THEORY-BASED EVALUATION FINAL REPORT

READ AND DISCUSS	VIDEO LESSONS	ASSIGNMENT	MENTORING SESSIONS	COURSE CLOSE-OUT AND CRITICAL REFLECTIONS
 Participants will read selected assigned excerpts and answer the questions in the forums.	 Participants will watch pre-recorded video lessons covering quality assuring theory-based components of an evaluation final report.	 Participants will practice key module concepts through an assignment.	 Participants will have the opportunity to join mentoring sessions to talk through their reflections on the exercises and discuss how it can be further integrated in their day-to-day work.	 All learners will participate in a close out session where they will be guided through structured reflections to think about what they've learned over the course and how they can integrate these learnings into their current and future work. The session will take place during the week of 9 March.