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Translating Project Achievements into Strategic Plans: A Case Study in Utilization-Focused Evaluation

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Background: Utilization-focused evaluation (UFE) is a decision-making framework intended to design and implement evaluations that get utilized. In this case study, the authors applied the UFE approach to the evaluation of a youth training and employment program in Kenya.

Purpose: Analyze a case study based on empirical experience with the lens of evaluation use and influence.

Setting: Nairobi and other urban and peri-urban settings, Kenya.

Intervention: The evaluation of a youth training and employment program that provided direct training for marginalized youth as well as capacity building for employment and adapted a *Basic Employability Skills Training* (BEST) model from India.

Research Design: Analysis of a case study to describe: how the evaluation approach provided enabling factors for funders and grantees to turn evaluation into a learning intervention; the benefit of clarifying a project's theory of change; and learning how to combine summative and developmental evaluation.

Data Collection and Analysis: A case study based on an evaluation consultancy. The evaluation included site visits, extensive documentation review, qualitative and quantitative data collection.

Findings: The 'facilitation of use' (a step in UFE) provided a bridge between a summative and a developmental evaluation. The evaluators and program partners developed a learning relationship wherein the evidence influenced the subsequent project design and strategy.

Keywords: *evaluation as learning; utilization-focused evaluation; theory of change; summative and developmental evaluation; technical vocational education and training (TVET); Kenya; youth livelihoods*

Introduction

Purpose of this paper

Utilization-focused evaluation (UFE) is a decision-making framework intended to design and implement evaluations which stakeholders will use. In its original form, the approach consisted of twelve steps that enabled the evaluation team and organizational and project stakeholders to take ownership of the evaluation design (Patton, 2008). UFE is methodologically neutral in that data collection methods are selected on the basis of the evaluation questions that are posed, and the nature of the data or evidence that is needed to respond to them.

In this case study, the UFE approach was applied to a youth training and employment program in Kenya. The original request for proposals called for a final evaluation to take place near the end of a five-year project. The evaluation was meant to inform the last year of the project implementation, as well as the design of a subsequent project. This paper summarizes the evaluation process, the findings and their utilization, and it documents the merits of the process as perceived by the primary evaluation users.

This paper addresses the following research questions:

1. To what extent does UFE provide enabling factors for funders and grantees to turn evaluation into a learning intervention?
2. What are the features in UFE that help clarify a project's theory of change?
3. How can UFE provide a bridge between a summative review of achievements and a developmental contribution to future work?

The practical dimensions of the first two questions will interest both commissioners and practitioners of evaluation. The first and third questions are meant to expand both practical and conceptual dimensions of evaluation use that may appeal to evaluation scholars.

Organization of this paper

The first section situates the reader by providing a background on the organizations involved and the project. It includes an overview of the technical vocational education and training (TVET) sector in Kenya, a summary of the project objectives, and of UFE.. **The second section** summarizes relevant evaluation literature to situate UFE as an approach, to position the notion of theories of change in evaluation, and to expand on conceptualizations of evaluation use. **The third section** presents the evaluation as a case study that encapsulates the implementation of the evaluation and the evidence of utilization. **In the final section,** the case study is analyzed using three key research questions and some conclusions are provided.

Project & Sectoral Content

Organizational & project background

The MasterCard Foundation is a private foundation based in Toronto, Canada. The Foundation works with visionary organizations to provide greater access to education, skills training and financial services for people living in poverty, primarily in Africa. Its mission is to advance learning and promote financial inclusion in order to alleviate poverty. This article reports on the evaluation of a project supported by the foundation's Youth Livelihoods Program. The Youth Livelihoods Program provides skills training for economically disadvantaged young people so they can find employment. This skills training focuses on developing foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy and technical skills, as well as soft skills such as critical thinking, communication and teamwork. The Program also provides financial services, such as savings and financial literacy education, to build young people's financial capability (MasterCard Foundation, n.d.).

Among the Youth Livelihoods Program strategies, there is emphasis on conducting market assessments to identify employment or self-employment opportunities. The intent is to "Provide young people with a holistic package of relevant technical and transferable skills, opportunities for apprenticeships, mentoring and connections to employers, as well as access to financial services"(MasterCard Foundation, n.d.).

In 2011, The MasterCard Foundation partnered with the CAP Youth Empowerment Institute (CAP YEI) - a non-profit organization based in Nairobi, Kenya that focuses on the provision of employability skills and support to marginalized young people. In Kenya, CAP YEI introduced the Basic Employability Skills Training (BEST) model in 2011 as part of a 5-year project implemented in partnership with The MasterCard Foundation. The BEST model has its roots in

Figure 1. the BEST model

another continent: the original CAP Foundation was formed in 2003 and started off as a child protection organization in India. It evolved to focus on community-based workforce development for disadvantaged and at-risk youth and women. It emphasized the transition pathways from capacity building to employment and developed a Basic Employability Skills Training (BEST) model as its hallmark curriculum (Figure 1). This model was subsequently introduced into Africa in 2008 and was implemented successfully in Egypt, Sudan, South Sudan and Tanzania before it was taken to Kenya.

In Kenya, the project targeted rural, urban and peri-urban youth and provided short-term employability skills training courses that were labor market-oriented and demand-driven. The model emphasizes a life skills component for building self confidence, also work readiness and a desire for life achievement. The program integrated financial literacy into skills training and connected youth to institutional service providers for savings and finance. The CAP YEI trainers

"Youth (15 – 34 year olds), who form 35% of the Kenyan population, have the highest unemployment rate of 67%. Over one million young people enter into the labour market annually without any skills, some having either dropped out of school or completed school and not enrolled in any college. A further 155,000 join the labour market annually after completing training in TVET or at the university. A total of over 1.3 million new employment places have to be created annually to meet this demand. It is also noted that, the skills acquired by the college and university graduates often do not meet the expectation of employers. There is therefore an urgent need for the Government to strengthen and scale up successful measures targeting quality skill development and employment creation for the youth. Youth face few available employment opportunities against a fast growing pool of employment seekers; lack of requisite skills sought by industry due to mismatch of TVET acquired skills and industry expectation; and poor access to information on available opportunities" (Kaane, 2014, p. 3).

Text Box 1. Kenyan TVET Context

are also involved in connecting youth to local placement opportunities. The program builds direct linkages between supply (employers and the market) and demand (the youth) in order to equip the youth with the skills that are most needed in the labor market in each setting where the program operates.

In Kenya, the BEST model has been implemented through three streams: at 'demonstration centres' that are run and operated by CAP YEI, at 'replication centers' where the program is delivered by CAP YEI staff inside public TVET institutions, and through 'capacity building' where public TVET staff are trained in the model for delivery inside their institutions without CAP YEI staff participation. Figure 1 summarizes the main steps on which the BEST model is based. The expected short-term outcomes included: increased self confidence, access to market-demanded skills and job placements. The expected longer-term outcomes included: rising aspirations for continued education by youth, the ability and willingness to earn and save, contributing to family livelihoods and becoming champions in their community.

The goals of the project were the following:

1. Give disadvantaged youth in Kenya the opportunity to successfully transition to market-oriented work, and earn and build assets for their futures by employing the BEST methodology to teach life skills, job market-relevant skills, savings education & small business development training to 10,000 youth from 17-to-25-year-old urban/ suburban youth.
2. Provide youth with vital pre- and post-job-placement counseling, support and services (including financial) as they transition to work.
3. Transform outdated technical and vocational training systems (TVETs) in Kenya through capacity building of the trainers in some of the best elements of the BEST model.

The objectives of the project included:

a. Establishing and managing four model demonstration hub centres and ten replication centres to be run by other Youth Polytechnics and Youth Organizations.
b. Including 50 trainers from 25 TVETs to receive intensive training and demonstrate the value of integrating the model into the existing TVET system.
c. Having at least 50% of all those engaged with the project (representatives of businesses, business associations, employers, mentors, government agencies, vocational training institutions, youth organizations and financial service providers) champion the model and its expansion to a wider circle of potential stakeholders.

The Kenyan youth education context

The challenges faced by technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programs in Sub-Saharan Africa include: a failure to link skills provision with market realities; a negative social perception of vocational and technical skills where parents and youth view it as inferior education; failure to address the specific challenges that marginalized vulnerable youth, especially girls, face in accessing such skills; and, retention of blueprint models and approaches that remain unchanged even after their value has been discounted. Text box 1 provides a summary of the challenges faced by this sector, a context that is typical across much of Sub-Saharan Africa.

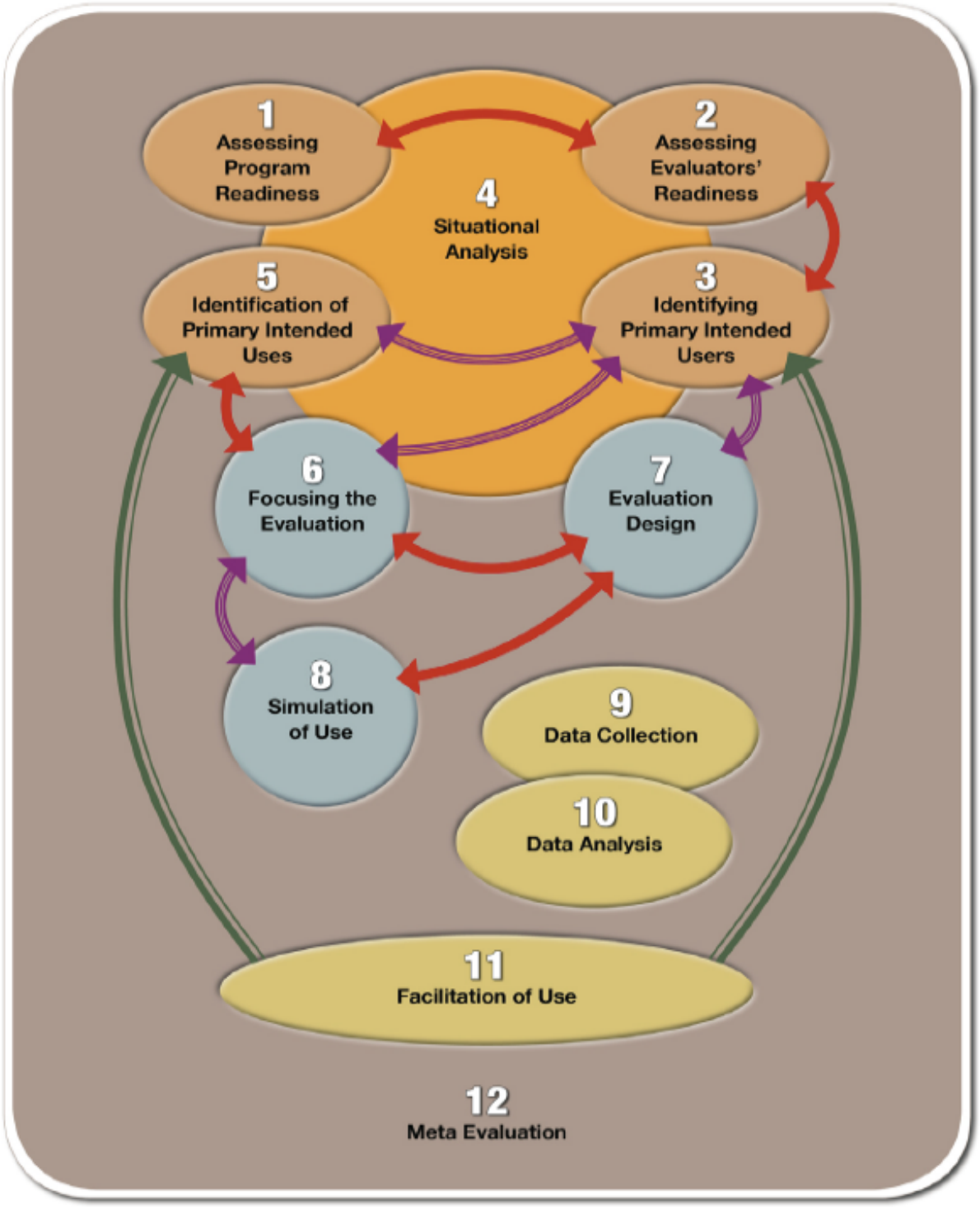

Figure 2. Steps in UFE (Ramírez & Brodhead, 2013)

In terms of the context within which the project functions, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNSB) reported that the informal sector contributed 82.7% of total employment in 2014. According to KNBS data, a total of 799.700 new jobs were created in 2014, out of which 693,400 were in the informal sector (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2015, p. 16). According to the above data, the 799,700 new jobs would fall short of the 1.3 million jobs target by half a million jobs.

The timing of the CAP YEI pilot coincided with a government commitment to transforming TVET

as a critical strategy to realize Vision 2030 (Republic of Kenya, 2007). This introduction of the policy coincided with significant changes in the economy, where after the 'lost decade' of the 1990s, economic growth has been well over 5% which has led to increased labour demand and entrepreneurial opportunities. This new demand is coupled with the fact that 60% of the population is comprised of youth. The emphasis on competencies and quality standards responded to the TVET Act of 2013 (Republic of Kenya, 2013) which also created the Technical Education and Training Authority (TVETA) as the body responsible for regulation, standards and reform of the TVET system. Transforming vocational education thus became a Government of Kenya priority. Some of the flagship projects created to meet this goal included the establishment of technical institutes and colleges, vocational training centers and partnerships like the Kenya Youth Empowerment Project of the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA). Other initiatives included re-branding and awareness-raising programs to ensure increased enrollment and address the negative public perception of TVET. The CAP YEI program and model fits squarely within this initiative with its emphasis on a competency-based education and training approach (CBET) to skills provision. During the conduct of its evaluation, the CAP YEI program was submitted for accreditation which will mean the official recognition of its certificates and the integration of its courses into the national TVET structure. This certification is a two-step process that involves curriculum review and approval by the Curriculum Development Assessment and Certificate Council (CDACC) of TVETA. This is followed by an audit of training delivery capacity by the TVET Authority (TVETA) before final certification. The organization has completed both of these processes, receiving conditional approval to operate.

The evaluation approach - UFE

The overall evaluation approach rested on a utilization-focused framework. UFE begins with the premise "…that evaluations should be judged by their utility and actual use" (Patton, 2008, p. 37). In UFE, evaluators facilitate a learning process with attention to how people might apply/use evaluation findings and experiences. In designing a utilization-focused evaluation, attention is constantly placed on the intended use by intended users. UFE can include a wide variety of evaluation methods within an overall participatory paradigm. Decision-making on the evaluation design and methodology, in consultation with those who can benefit from the evaluation, is an important part of the process. As crucial, is the fact that intended users will be more likely to utilize an evaluation in which they have ownership. UFE stems from a push in the evaluation field for producing evaluations that people actually use. As simple as this notion may sound, its application is mired in organizational and management challenges. While UFE is summarized into a series of steps, the process itself is not linear – as illustrated in Figure 2.

In UFE, the definition of primary users is open to different stakeholders: they may be the funders of a project, or its implementers or even its beneficiaries or a mix of these groups. The decision as to who will be involved as a user may be difficult. Organizational power differentials may come into play with regards to who decides on the on the **evaluation purposes** and **users**. Another important early step is a review of **readiness** that addresses both the project and organizational openness to try out a learning focus to evaluation, as well as to engage evaluators willing to facilitate this exploration. Although Patton (2011) recently increased the number of UFE steps to 17, for the sake of simplicity the evaluation team followed the original 12-steps process (from the 2008 book, 4th edition).

The first five UFE steps are interrelated: assessing program readiness; assessing evaluators' readiness; identifying primary intended users, identifying primary intended uses; and situational analysis. This process may require several iterations of one or more of the steps. It needs to be anticipated and planned for, given that changes taking place in one step will impact others.

Focusing the evaluation takes place through the definition of **key evaluation questions by the intended users**; who in turn guide the design of the evaluation. 'Simulation' is about test-driving plausible data sets to double check that they respond to the key questions. This step ensures that 'evaluation course correction' is possible during the process, especially when it appears that some questions may not still be as strategic as they first appeared.

A unique aspect of UFE is Step 11: facilitation of use, which ensures the findings and evaluation processes are fed back to the users. The closing step 12 captures the experience through a meta-evaluation/reflection and this article is an attempt to do just that. The account of how these steps unfolded is detailed in the implementation section of this paper.

As it turned out, some of the 'uses' or 'purposes' proposed, constituted forward-looking questions that an evaluation cannot address. They referred to the evolution of subsequent work, that would need to be adapted and refined through implementation. 'Developmental evaluation' is an approach that responds to this challenge. UFE is a decision-making framework within which developmental evaluation can fit, depending on the uses and key evaluation questions. The emphasis in developmental evaluation is on adaptive learning, real-time feedback, flexibility and capturing system dynamics (Gamble, 2008; Patton, 2011). The notion of utilization-focused developmental evaluation (UFDE) was advanced by Patton (2008) and has been reported in empirical examples (Patton *et al.,* 2016; Ramírez, Kora & Shephard, 2015). In this instance, the initial focus was on UFE; and the development dimension emerged from the users' interest in shaping a subsequent project.

Context of the evaluation

The evaluation reported in this paper coincided with the start of the fifth year of the project and was intended to document accomplishments, analyze why and how it worked, appreciate its integration into the context, and extract lessons to contribute to the design of a subsequent expansion phase.

The purpose of the evaluation was twofold from the start: a) to ascertain the achievement of outcomes relative to the program goals and objectives, and to pressure test the design (theory of change) in order to enable the users to course-correct and improve the delivery during 2016; and, b) to gather evidence for replication or expansion, as well as to support applications for continued funding from other sources.

The Terms of Reference (MasterCard Foundation, 2015) placed emphasis on the OECD's Development Assistance Committee's principles of evaluating the program's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, outcomes (anticipated and emergent) and sustainability. For each of the criteria, the request for proposals listed key learning questions and possible sub-questions. The evaluation team proposed to sharpen the focus by also considering some decisions that The MasterCard Foundation and CAP YEI intended to make in the future (such as course correction in early 2016, advocating for further support in late 2016). Annex 1 shows the alignment between the original purposes in the RFP[1] and the subsequent evaluation uses as identified by the evaluation users.

The evaluators had previous experience in facilitating this refinement with evaluation users, and proposed this step as a pivotal part of the evaluation process. The team also proposed a field visit as a precursor to the preparation of an inception report. Given that the evaluation team included an experienced Nairobi-based member, it was possible for two of the Canadian-based members to undertake the inception mission early on to build on the field reality, to propose and shape the evaluation, its key questions, and assess the comprehensiveness of the existing data, and identify gaps. The team proposed to visit several sample sites for orientation and introduction purposes, and as a reference to develop a detailed work plan in consultation with stakeholders. The Kenyan evaluation team member was directly involved in that stage and led much of the data gathering process and further field visits, as well as in report writing and editing.

Literature Review

Conceptualizations of evaluation use and influence

In the evaluation literature, UFE has been a guiding approach that addresses use from the design stage, as opposed to when a report is completed. As indicated in the preceding section, the success of UFE hinges on whether the stakeholders actually use the findings and processes of the evaluation (Patton, 2008). As simple as this idea sounds, it calls for a commitment by 'primary intended users' to drive the process from beginning to end on the basis of concrete identified 'uses'. The more the users are involved, the likelier they are to take ownership of the process, have an understanding of the relevance of the findings, and have a stake in implementing its recommendations (Liket *et al.*, 2014).

"Best practice examples demonstrate that a central factor facilitating uptake of impact evaluations (IEs) is stakeholder involvement. This involvement must be brought in at the early stages of the IE process, include the support of high-profile champions and attract political agents interested in learning or using instruments to

[1] Based on the DAC criteria.

Table 1
Influences/consequences of (monitoring and) evaluation use (Visser et al., 2014, p. 16)

Type of Use	Consequence/Effect	Consequences at individual/personal level	Consequences at interpersonal level	Consequences at collective or organizational level
Direct (immediate) or instrumental use	Behaviour and action	What individuals will do (taking up extra tasks)	What individuals will do together (e.g. sharing tasks to achieve a common goal)	What an institution does (e.g. strategic decisions about a program, or policy)
Conceptual use	'Thinking', such as knowledge and attitude	The way an individual thinks about certain issues (e.g., realization of the importance of contextualisation of the development initiative)	Attitudes towards working with each other, or towards what people do (e.g. more willing to interact with other stakeholders)	How the institution values certain kinds of thinking; change in values and aspirations (e.g. valuing both dialogue and dialectic; empowerment)
Symbolic use	Behaviour and actions	A person's justification for acknowledgement of (monitoring and) evaluation	How people influence each other in terms of justification. or acknowledgement of (monitoring and) evaluation	An organisation's justification for acknowledgement of (monitoring and) evaluation
Process use	Behaviour, actions, thinking, broader aspirations (as a result of being engaged in the evaluation process)	What individuals will do, think, believe	People's actions, attitudes, understanding in relation to collaboration with others	An organisation's actions, values, role
Relational use	Ongoing relationships, (organisational) structures and processes	Role and functioning of an individual in relation to others (e.g. more empowered to fulfill their tasks)	Role and functioning of groups, networks (e.g. more shared learning)	Role and functioning of the institution in society (e.g. learning organisation)
Value use	Broader goals, aspirations, motivations - what we believe in	Personal goals, aspirations and motivations (e.g. in relation to the work they do)	How people understand and value each other's perspectives	Formal goals, values and aspirations
External use	Changes beyond the immediate interests of a development initiative	However, individuals, except, conduct work against the (monitoring and) evaluation processes and findings	Collaboration with other groups (previously not actively involved)	And organisations to take similar ideas or work against them (as they negatively affect their own interests)

demonstrate effectiveness" (Jones et al., 2009, p. vii).

UFE has two key advantages: there is continuous attention placed on utilization, hence it is practical. Second, primary 'users' take ownership of the design and implementation of the evaluation; in doing this, the process is as important as the findings in shaping future learning mechanisms and creating momentum for implementing the findings. The underlying assumption is that by 'owning' the evaluation process, the primary evaluation users will be especially committed to utilizing the findings and adopting the process.

Beyond Patton's focus on utilization of the findings and the evaluation process, there are additional types of evaluation uses and 'consequences'. The consequences may be evident at different levels: personal, inter-personal, and organizational. Karen Kirkhart prefers the term evaluation influence. She defines influence as, "the capacity or power of persons or things to produce effects on others by intangible or indirect means.... Influence is broader than use, creating a framework with which to examine effects that are multidirectional, incremental, unintentional, and instrumental" (Kirkhart, 2000, p. 7). Henry and Mark (2003) assert that the theory of evaluation influence should focus on "*the subset of evaluation consequences that could plausibly lead towards or away from social betterment*... Evaluation represents a change or contribution to ongoing processes that produce consequences, good, bad, neutral, mixed or intermediate" (Henry & Mark, 2003, pp. 295-296, their emphasis).

Table 1 provides an extensive review of evaluation uses and influences (Visser *et al.*, 2014). Jones *et al.*, 2009 provide a summary of different conceptualizations of use, which they in turn summarize into three major categories: 1. Direct, instrumental use; 2. Legitimation; and 3. Indirect use. In this paper, we focus on the first two categories in that the findings of the evaluation report were used as inputs in the preparation of a subsequent project proposal, and also resulted in the emergence of clarity about how the project worked (theory of change) as a legitimation process of the BEST model. This experience is very much in line with the evaluation scholars who emphasize the importance of the timing of an evaluation to inform program improvement (Hall *et al.*, 2014), especially when the interventions are complex and emergent (Ling, 2012).

As Table 1 illustrates, the literature refers to a wider set of categories. However, we found fewer sources that expand on the mechanism or practices to facilitate use. In UFE, Step 11 is dedicated to facilitating use, yet even Patton's checklist on how to cover this step remains rather general. For instance, engaging the users in data analysis is useful in that they begin a process of immersion in the findings. This activity has been reported in utilization-focused developmental evaluation (UFDE), with an example in which the process was extended to involve the primary evaluation users in drafting recommendations (Ramírez *et al.*, 2015).

Theory of change in evaluation

A theory of change describes how a project is intended to work, by outlining a sequence of activities and outcomes along with the underlying causal assumptions (Mayne, 2015). They are often designed at the planning stage, and used for monitoring and evaluation.

In other cases, the notion of what changes are expected can remain un-expressed for some time. "Evaluation often serves as the process through which different definitions of impact surface, and sometimes very late in the programme lifecycle. However, questions of who is defining impact and how development is being judged are more fundamental matters that relate to, but are larger than, a single programme evaluation" (Hearn & Buffardi, 2016, p. 5).

With complex or evolving projects, theories of change often need updating because there is uncertainty and emergent dimensions. Mayne (2015) sees the value of having several versions for different purposes. First, managers or policy makers can receive a storyline or narrative version (this is for public dissemination); second, an overview diagram that shows it is useful as an overall map; third, a detailed version may address the causal assumptions and include nested theories of change that detail certain components. The notion of different theories of change for different purposes and audiences has important utilization implications in that each stakeholder group will expect their perspective on the project and its change trajectory be explicit.

The following are ten different purposes for theories of change:

Designing/planning interventions

1. Designing interventions.
2. Understanding and agreeing on interventions with stakeholders.
3. Identifying and addressing equity, gender, and empowerment issues.

4.Ex ante evaluation of proposed interventions.

Managing interventions

5. Designing monitoring systems.
6.Understanding implementation, managing adaptively, and learning.

Assessing interventions

7.Designing evaluation questions, methods, and tools.
8. Making causal claims about impact.
9. Reporting performance.

Scaling

10. Generalizing to the theory, to other locations and for scaling up and out. (Maine, *2015, p.* 120)

Several of the uses list above align well with UFE, in particular the notion of users taking control over the determination of evaluation *uses* related to managing, assessing and scaling interventions.

Both Mayne (2015) and Vogel (2012) emphasize context as a dimension that needs to be addressed; and this aspect is an important part of UFE (Step 4). Isabel Vogel's work focuses on theories of change for research projects. She includes an analysis of actors, stakeholders, networks and power relations; she also adds attention to analyzing how responsive the context is to new evidence. In the theory of change design process, questions about specific, expected changes in awareness, knowledge, skills and attitude by stakeholders need to be specified. However, this analysis needs to be done while acknowledging the limited control a project has over such outcomes. Because of the high level of uncertainty, Vogel provides a structured set of questions to guide this analysis process. (For examples, refer to the question guide in section B3 in Vogel, 2012b).

Vogel summarizes four elements needed to assemble a theory of change:

Stage 1: Context for the initiative: analysis of the current state of the problem the project is seeking to influence, the social, political and environmental conditions, and other actors able to influence change.

Stage 2: Long-term change: a statement expressing the long-term change that the initiative seeks to support, from whose perspective it is significant and for whose ultimate benefit.

Stage 3: Sequence of events: mapping the sequence of changes that lead to the desired long-term outcome.

Stage 4: Assumptions: critical reflection on the change process, making explicit the analytical perspectives on change, the drivers of change and expressing the underlying hypotheses about how these changes could come about. The purpose of making these assumptions explicit is as a check on whether the activities and outputs are appropriate for influencing change in the desired direction in this context. (Vogel, 2012a, pp. 8-9)

We have already indicated how UFE addresses context directly. In addition, the formulation of key evaluation questions in UFE opens the door to the direct expression of the expected long-term changes and sequence of events. The primary evaluation users are faced with the challenge of making these explicit (or choosing to focus on the most critical ones), and this in turn 'drags in' the expression of assumptions behind how change is expected to happen.

Barnett and Gregorowski (2013) write about the use of theories of change in monitoring and evaluating research uptake. They underscore how theories of change are most useful as an "'organizing framework' against which to explore and better understand complexity *during implementation*" (p. 1; their emphasis). As with Vogel, they see potential in an iterative, incremental reflection, especially as policy change processes are unpredictable, non-linear, and attribution is difficult to determine. They suggest attention be placed on theories of how policy change happens (citing Stachowiak, 2009).

Evaluation Case Study

Staff from CAP YEI in Nairobi, from the CAP Workforce Development Institute in India, and from The MasterCard Foundation in Toronto comprised the primary evaluation user team in this UFE exercise. The evaluation team mentored this group to develop the evaluation 'uses' and the key evaluation questions that drove this evaluation. They assisted in determining what data to collect, from whom, and in selecting the data collection instruments. In accordance with the UFE approach, they also participated in an early review of findings. The "users" team reviewed the evaluators' interpretation of findings, and they were able to discern how they could incorporate the findings into the design of the next project.

While the evaluation report refers to a final evaluation of the 5-year project that ends in 2016,

the findings also constituted inputs towards the definition of a subsequent project (Ramírez *et al.,* 2015). The dual focus meant that the evaluation was both *summative* in that it captured the achievements and lessons of the first project, and *developmental* in that the team intended the findings to help shape the next project. The developmental focus was meant to respond to a request from the CAP YEI 'users' that the evaluation process should help illuminate the organization's capability to expand the program in future: from a proof of concept phase to a scale-up and sustainability phase.

The evaluation focused on three broad uses: to document the program accomplishments and to understand its internal 'magic'; to describe how the model fit the context and how the 'ecosystem' accommodated it as a holistic approach; and to utilize the findings and evaluation approach to improve the future program. The first two uses were summative in that they sought to document achievements along with an elaboration of why the program worked. The third use was forward-looking; the users were interested in improving the design and implementation of a second phase. The key evaluation questions for the third set of uses became a compass to structure the developmental component of the evaluation. The summative component was of interest both to the funding partner, to inform its board, and to the Kenyan Partner, to confirm their work to local partners and government officials. While the second phase was under formulation, the summative evaluation was a necessary step to document and verify the extent to which the pilot had achieved its objectives.

The program and its outcomes (Summative)

1. To document and understand the project's **accomplishments**.
2. To capture '**the magic'** that makes it work.

The program in context; the ecosystem (Summative)

3. To understand the dynamic **relationship between the CAP YEI model and the Kenyan context** to feed into improvement and development of MCF's programs, both with CAP YEI and other partners.
4. To understand what has made the **ecosystem** respond to the program.
5. To understand the added value/benefit of a **holistic programming approach,** influencing and informing MCF's broader strategies in this program area.
6. To document the **critical conditions for replication** in other areas / counties.

Once the findings and recommendations from A and B have been assembled, they will be harnessed as per the following components or themes (Developmental):

i. To improve the **program for the future.**
ii. To provide actionable learning for a potential future MCF-CAP partnership.
iii. To prepare for **future** expansion.
iv. To identify what CAP YEI needs to become **as an organization** in order to succeed in meeting increasing **future** expectations?
v. To inform **broader work** with youth.

Text box 2 . Evaluation uses or purposes

The original request for proposals (RFP) established this combination, calling for a 'final evaluation'. The RFP added the following: "The evaluation should provide both the Foundation and CAP with details and analyses that will allow for them to assess the performance of the program against its intended goals and objectives, as well as offer evidence that will shape the program moving forward." Hence the summative aspect focused on wrapping up a first phase, with an intention to inform a second phase project.

Based on the uses, the team formulated six evaluation questions to guide the data collection, along with five components or elements to guide the utilization of the process and findings (see Text Box 2).

Table 2
Sample table showing a key evaluation question, data needed, and methods

USE Group: The program and its outcomes			
A.1 To document and understand the project's accomplishments.			
Key Evaluation Question	Source of data or evidence (people, documents, etc.)	Data collection method or tool	Remarks (who collects when, how often, etc.)
What impact – positive or negative, direct or indirect, intended or unintended – has the program produced in youth, their family life, and conditions? (QA1-1)	• 'Theory of change showing the sequence of project interventions [9 steps of BEST], outputs [UMN reports] and outcomes [UMN reports; CAP presentations; our notes] • Opinions by stakeholders on what was intended and what was not at three levels: youth, family, life conditions. [Impacts of linkages to the savings of youth/List of financial inclusion partners to be contacted; MCF to complement] • Data on youth's self-esteem, skills, saving behaviors – from: i) Primary data collected by CAP; ii) UMN reports; iii) Field visits notes [Impacts of linkages to the savings of youth; Program impact assessment report; CAP YEI 2013 – 2014 Annual Report; CAP YEI annual report for 2011 – 2012; Annual report 2012 – 2013 – compressed; CAP YEI Annual Report 2014 – 2015; Program Impact Evaluation Report July 2015]; [MCF also]	• Draft a theory of change (TOC) based on 9-step model; To be revised and fine-tuned with user team • Background document review • Interviews / discussions with CAP representatives / Representatives of key stakeholder groups (using ToC as reference) • Interviews / focus groups (FGs) with representatives of partner institutions that deal with youth (such as YEF) – (using ToC as reference)	• Evaluation team to prepare draft (Aug-Sep) • CAP & MCF / key stakeholders to provide input / comments on ToC (Sep) • Evaluation team to conduct key informant interviews / FGS to complement findings from documentation review (Sep-Oct)

The data collection process combined: site visits, document review (which included findings from the first four years of a longitudinal study conducted by the University of Minnesota), focus group discussions with key stakeholders, semi-structured interviews, SWOT analysis, and theory of change diagrams. As Table 2 illustrates, the Inception Report included the definition of the data and evidence needed, and the data collection instruments. The report included each key evaluation question, and the primary evaluation users commented on the methods and suggested data sources and informants. This process ensured that the evaluation team and the primary evaluation owners agreed on the methodology early on in the process.

The implementation took place over a six-month period from July to December 2015.
A major part of the report summarized the project accomplishments, (Purpose 1) describing a gradient of outcomes, a practice borrowed from outcome mapping (Earl *et al.*, 2003):

OUTPUTS include:

- A tested BEST model that demonstrates a capabilities-based TVET curriculum
- Number of Demonstration & Replication sites that are operational
- Numbers of trainers/ staff that are operational
- Number of training batches completed
- Number of Capacity development trainings completed
- Cumulative numbers of youth who completed the training (gender, trade)
- Dropout rates, non-employed percentages

'Expect to see' OUTCOMES include:

- A TVETA/CDACC-certified curriculum
- Extent to which youth exhibit new behaviors (confidence, self-esteem, social status)
- Employment ('placement') of CAP YEI youth
- Numbers of youth in entrepreneurship
- Numbers of participants who have opened accounts, are saving, have created groups
- Increased earnings (by gender, trade)

'Like to see' OUTCOMES include:

- Continuation of employment beyond 3 months
- Combination of formal and informal employment (mixed livelihoods)
- Setting up a new business
- Savings and sharing behavior (including family and community asset building)
- Becoming a community champion or role model
- Exhibiting life-long learning abilities (taking more courses, saving for more education), dedication to the program (mentoring other batches)
- Improvement in livelihood assets (financial, social, physical, natural); improved psycho-social status; improved demonstration of resilience (Ramírez *et al.*, 2015, p. 6)

This sequence of outcomes fed into the second Purpose, which called for a summary of the 'magic' that made the BEST model work. For this element, we examined each of the nine steps in the model and listed the 'non-negotiables' considered to be the essence of the program (The term 'non-negotiables' indicates that without these elements, replication is less likely to succeed). We complemented this work with the preparation of two separate PowerPoint presentations that summarized our interpretation of the theory of change.

> The model engages stakeholders, especially employers, in a direct & purposeful manner throughout the entire process. During the Market Scan (Step 1), potential employers are asked to contribute data on employment possibilities and relevant skills sets. As the curriculum is being developed or revised (Step 2), they are consulted again. During the Road Shows (Step 3), there is engagement by local leaders, local administrators and civil society organizations (which can recommend student candidates). Some employers and local institutional representatives (e.g., from financial institutions) become mentors during the training (Step 5). The instructors keep in touch with employers with special attention paid to confirming internship opportunities (also referred to as 'attachments', lasting about a month, either paid or not) for Step 6 and placement during Step 8. This direct and purposeful engagement of stakeholders leads to building up a form of social capital for CAP YEI: by engaging with the community, by listening to their needs and responding directly, the program becomes known in each community. As such, the stakeholder interaction is part of the 'magic' and constitutes a "non-negotiable" element if the program is replicated. A 'non-negotiable' is an aspect of the model that this evaluation suggests is fundamental to its success and should not be cut when another institution implements it.
>
> Beyond stakeholder engagement, the following elements of the program are contributors to the outcomes: offering a safe place to learn, combined with providing a set of life-skills -at the start- to enhance self-esteem, confidence, and a sense of worth. Ensuring the curriculum,

> and the skills provided, are grounded in the local needs of employers is central. Offering a course duration that meets the needs of a large number of disadvantaged youth has worked, although there have been calls for longer options in some sectors. Allowing students to obtain guidance from mentors from different sectors, and thus creating linkages with employers has been beneficial. The same applies to the benefits of meeting financial organizations, and other local leaders which students would not have been able to achieve on their own.
>
> The model manages students' expectations through exposure to work sites and to the working world through internships. It also provides advice as young entrepreneurs take the leap towards starting their own businesses. It encourages peer networking and group formation during the course and subsequent to graduation, and it engages graduates in recruitment and in mentoring, to serve as role models. All of the above elements are provided in the Demonstration Centers and Replication Centers; the evaluation did not collect evidence from any Capacity Building sites to enable a comparison. However, it is safe to say that in these sites, the above list would constitute a set of 'non-negotiables', which if absent, would lead to poorer outcomes. Attached to this report is a Step-by-Step summary detailing how the BEST model is designed and delivered. (Ramírez *et al.,* 2015, pp. v-vi)

An analysis of a wide range of documents addressing evaluation purposes 3-6 (Annex 1) focused on ascertaining how the program fit the context, what the holistic features of the model were, and what challenges were expected in moving beyond the first urban and peri-urban focus towards a wider application in rural settings. The following is an excerpt:

> The step-by-step summary of the BEST model demonstrates its holistic nature. It is embedded in the local context and builds social capital through successive interactions with employers, local leadership, and community based organizations. The social capital built is reflected in how employers and financial organization representatives become mentors and contribute to in-class training and internships. The effort to provide a curriculum that responds to the local employment needs provides a service to both employers and graduates. The program has followed three streams: Demonstration Centres (operated by CAP YEI), Replication Centers (CAP YEI's model offered inside another institution) and Capacity Building (training of trainers). The commitment to recruiting from among the most marginalized youth and to offering training that they can access (by location and low cost) demonstrates its CAP YEI's integration into the local reality. The model is much more than a curriculum, it is an approach that connects, responds, and delivers. A holistic model such as BEST is nurtured by an organizational culture that learns and invites instructor commitment, and that is part and parcel of the package. (Ramírez *et al.*, 2015, p. viii)

As was indicated earlier, the team repurposed the last tranche of uses, as they were future-oriented. They became our guide towards facilitating the use of the findings. In particular, we noticed differences of opinion arising within the CAP YEI team as to what exactly the next project would be about. The meaning of 'expansion' or 'transfer' appeared to be varied. Despite these differences of interpretation, the CAP YEI staff were united in their understanding that despite the very real challenges that lay ahead, it was critical that the organization take the program to scale and that engaging with the Government TVET system was absolutely essential to achieving long term impacts in Kenya. The evaluation team focused much effort on articulating the challenges that emerged from the Theory of Change, especially the 'non-negotiables' (essentially, the key elements):

> The challenge of transferring the model from CAP YEI as an NGO, to the Government-accredited system is akin to transplanting a young tree from the nursery to a farm. Success requires that the conditions of the farm mirror some of the ones at the nursery: some soil with compost is needed to provide fertility along with regular watering. Likewise, the holistic aspect of the BEST model needs to be transferred: this means

> an organizational culture that creates the conditions for instructors to remain motivated, and for administrators to commit to engaging regularly with local stakeholders. This conclusion suggests the need to pilot a number of different transfer strategies, to track the performance of each, and to jointly (with TVETA) settle on the most promising mechanisms. It may be naïve to expect the public system to adopt the organizational culture that nourished the BEST model during the last four years under CAP YEI; however, at the same time it is unrealistic to expect the public system to adopt the model without changing the work environment in the adopting institutions…. the young tree will simply not thrive. (Ramírez *et al.,* 2015: viii-ix)

The team discussed and edited the following recommendations over several iterations. This process of exchange and adjustment took place remotely (using Skype) and constituted Step 11 in UFE: facilitation of use of both the findings and the evaluation process itself.

> "The list of 'non-negotiables' in the Step summaries points to the need to transplant the approach together with the enabling organizational culture.
>
> - **Market Scans** constitute an investment because of the social capital gains and should be presented as such.
> - With the growing importance of training for entrepreneurship, Market Scans should include looking at business opportunities.
> - To increase the social capital of the program, the **Market Scan** reports should be shared with the local government and representatives of the key stakeholders / industries.
> - There is scope to broaden the **Market Scans** to include youth's perspectives, using participatory appraisal tools.
> - There is potential to conduct **regional market scans**, (e.g. county-wide) with data and recommendations shared by a number of training institutions to design and implement focused skills programs and support.
> - Engaging employers in the **Curriculum Review** is a useful investment because of the resulting social capital gains (i.e. some participants become mentors and this added commitment to employing graduates)[2].
> - Beyond the current training (referred to as 'Level 1') there should be additional opportunities – such as 'Level 2' courses for those who want to come back. Such 'Level 2' training could be delivered by CAP YEI with some flexible training arrangements to accommodate those participants who are already working.
> - Any differentiation in **Selection Criteria** between CAP YEI's and those of other institutions must be undertaken systematically, explicitly, and purposefully, as the changes will impact on outcomes.
> - The process of **Internship** selection needs to be done systematically, explicitly, and purposefully, as changes in selection criteria will impact on outcomes (such as providing financial incentives to work places).
> - **Placement** is a key indicator for TVET, and an increase in the number of students per instructor is expected to affect the capacity of the instructor to match employment opportunities with appropriate

[2] The new Government adopted CBET framework has mandated industry involvement in curriculum design. This offers CAP YEI a relatively easy path to recommending this aspect of the BEST model to government TVET partners.

graduates, because the quality of the student-instructor relationship will likely be reduced.

- *Expanding performance indicators* – While the employment rate of participants should remain the preferred performance indicator for the BEST model, it is important to recognize that other performance indicators should be included when assessing the outcomes of the program. Potential additional performance indicators could include the following: i) Number / percentage of youth who plan to pursue further education; ii) role played by youth at the community level; iii) life skills gained by youth and their ability to empower other youth; and iv) recovery rate, for instance how quickly youth find a new job or start up from a failed business etc.

To create the foundation for a successful expansion / adaptation of the model / program, the following elements are proposed:

- *Phasing in:* Start the expansion of the BEST model by selecting a number of new locations (outside of the Demonstration and Replication centers) where the model could be fully implemented. By incrementally increasing the "catchment area" for the implementation / adaptation of the BEST model, all the parties involved will have a chance to assess what changes would be necessary for a successful expansion of the model.
- *Conduct a* ***readiness assessment*** of the new locations to provide a better chance for a successful initial expansion. This step will require the definition of desirable / necessary attributes for the successful implementation of the model / program. These attributes will need adjustment during the expansion process, as not all of them will be evident at the start.
- *Learning and adapting continuously*– Both CAP YEI and other stakeholders need to continuously monitor, evaluate, and learn from the initial expansion phases, as well as be ready to adapt accordingly, using a collaborative management approach.
- *Importance of organizational culture*– While not all the organizational attributes of CAP YEI can be "transferred" to each new BEST center, it is important that some key organizational attributes – such as the incentives that lead to a committed involvement of the facilitators and their continuous support provided to youth – be present at each new BEST center.
- *The holistic approach (complete continuum*) – The advantage / strength of the BEST model resides in its holistic approach which includes participants' involvement, provision of life skills, technical and financial skills, and continuous support from facilitators and the program. While the emphasis on these components can vary – depending on context / location / other factors, the "togetherness" and holistic development continuum of the BEST-related components should be maintained. (Ramírez *et al.,* 2015, pp. ix-x)

Evidence of Use

The evaluation provided 'external eyes for validation' for the foundation. The evaluation findings formed an important part of the information considered by The MasterCard Foundation in making its decision to renew the

partnership with CAP YEI. For The MasterCard Foundation, the process and report responded well to the principles laid out in their research and evaluation standards policies (MasterCard Foundation, 2015b). Moreover, the findings highlighted why and how the BEST model was achieving its outcomes (its internal 'magic') while also flagging challenges for scaling up. Based on the findings of the evaluation, CAP YEI conducted a risk analysis and identified three options[3] to ensure that the non-negotiable components of the BEST model would be kept throughout the expansion of the program. The findings helped explain the specific conditions needed to achieve results, which have helped in the design of the next phase (a 5-year project to start in September, 2016). Moreover, the CAP YEI Executive Director observed that the findings were coherent with the data the University of Minnesota longitudinal study obtained. This coherence is something that one of the co-authors was able to confirm when he met with the Minnesota researchers at the launch of the subsequent project in Nairobi, July 2016.

At the policy level in Kenya, the evaluation findings impressed the TVETA partners, who have proposed a number of presentations to influence policy and to profile the work of CAP YEI. In addition, a TVETA senior officer suggested the publication of the evaluation report. One joint paper by the CAP YEI Director and a TVETA official will be presented at the Education Innovation Africa conference in June – 5th Rift Valley Vocational and Technical Institute (RVVTI) International TVET and Interdisciplinary Conference. The data was also used to buttress the case for partnership between CAP YEI and TVETA/CDACC (Curriculum Development Assessment and Certification Council) in supporting the implementation of the national Competency Based Education and Training (CBET) framework through a joint paper presented at the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) conference in Vancouver, Canada (June 2016). At the time of writing, the CDACC had accredited eight of CAP YEI curriculum units and the CBET training offered included skills on how to bring the others up to CBET standard. CAP YEI received a conditional report of assessment in July 2016 with a list of compliance requirements for an audit which will take place soon after.

Through widely sharing its evaluation experience, CAP YEI has been able to use the findings and its association with the New Economy Development Group (the evaluation consultant) and The MasterCard Foundation, to increase brand recognition and credibility among peers, government partners and other funding agencies. The funding partner and CAP YEI recently uploaded a blog summarizing the project approach[4]. One of the co-authors participated in the launch of Phase 2 in Nairobi, in July of 2016, and witnessed the flagging of the evaluation findings in a public seminar, especially in reference to the non-negotiables.

In addition, the CAP YEI executive director shared the following examples of use: The introduction of UFE to CAP YEI was an important learning opportunity which has continued to have impact in different ways. For instance, the presence of enthusiastic supporters of UFE within CAP made the decision to use the same approach during the case study evaluation of the partnership with SamaSchool (recently completed) was made much easier. There are some informal suggestions about one day training some of CAP YEI's partners in UFE, as those who have read the findings were quite impressed by the process. The adoption of UFE for a subsequent evaluation is evidence of process use (as per Table 1).

The evaluation report provided inputs into the recent case studies work examining the role of transferable skills in youth livelihood initiatives, which the African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP) and The Master Card Foundation commissioned. In addition, the partnership with TVET/CDACC has proceeded with CDACC providing training-of-trainers training to 30 CAP YEI staff in CBET. Another 30 received training in November 2016. This capacity will allow field staff to respond to CBET issues raised by Vocational Training Centre partners and other stakeholders. There is also a plan to create a team of 10-15 Master trainers who will be responsible

[3] The identified options include: i) Support for the roll out of the Competency Based Education and Training (CBET) framework, in which BEST fits as a component at the basic level; ii) The accreditation of BEST as a TVET skill provider will include certain conditions regarding the "non-negotiables"; and iii) Community engagement – as one of the "non-negotiables" will be included in the Capacity building option.

[4] http://www.mastercardfdn.org/holistic-collaborative-programming-a-success-in-kenya/

Table 3
Types of uses experienced in this evaluation

No.	Type of use	User	Use
1	Direct (immediate) or instrumental use	MCF	MasterCard Foundation used the finding of the evaluation in making the decision to renew the partnership with CAP YEI for another 5 years
		CAP YEI	The evaluation findings were shared with Kenyan authorities and were included in the preparation of the second phase project proposal (bridge between summative and developmental)
2	Conceptual use	MCF	The findings helped explain the specific conditions needed to achieve results The findings highlighted why the BEST model was achieving its outcomes while also flagging challenges for scaling-up The evaluation provided 'external eyes for validation'
		CAP YEI	The findings helped explain the specific conditions needed to achieve results The findings highlighted why the BEST model was achieving its outcomes while also flagging challenges for scaling-up
3	Symbolic use	MCF	The behaviour and actions of the primary evaluation users, during the process, was one of cordial exploration and learning
		CAP YEI	The behaviour and actions of the primary evaluation users, during the process, was one of cordial exploration and learning
4	Process use	MCF	
		CAP YEI	The CAP YEI staff involved in the process 'learned its way' into UFE, which was new to them
5	Relational use	MCF	
		CAP YEI	The evidence constituted a foundation for a stronger partnership with TVETA leaders, especially the findings clarified the differences in approach between CAP YEI and government-run institutions that would need attention
6	Value use	MCF	The process used and the report responded to their research and evaluation policy standards
		CAP YEI	
7	External use	MCF	

CAP YEI	CAP YEI made use of the findings in its presentations to other partners and to education conferences

for imparting the enhanced capacity building skills programs (N. Kahihu, e-mail. 22 Sep. 2016). Last, but not least, three people have approached CAP YEI with a request to be permitted to carry out their graduate research on the CAP model based on the findings of the four years of program implementation as captured in the evaluation report.

In Table 2, the types of use are summarized based on the table by Visser *et al.* (2014).

Discussion

The discussion follows the original research questions:

1. To what extent does UFE provide enabling factors for funders and grantees to turn evaluation into a learning intervention?

The MasterCard Foundation, CAP YEI, both the CAP Foundation and the associated CAP-Workforce Development Institute (India) were engaged from the start in the evaluation process. From previous work with the funding partner, it was clear that the Foundation was open to giving the grantee an important role in evaluation design. This delegation is something that is not to be taken for granted in an age of donors' preference for control, as others have amply described (Eyben, 2013). By engaging primary evaluation users from the funding partner, the grantee partner, and the Indian organization wherefrom the approach emerged, the evaluators gathered a mixed team of evaluation owners. The evaluators were able to build on an existing sense of trust amongst the key stakeholders which the findings of the longitudinal data produced by the University of Minnesota research augmented. The findings from the last round of data collection had already pointed at important achievements; something that gave all parties a sense that a proof of concept was already at hand. This combination of factors became a foundation for a learning-oriented evaluation: all parties were thirsty to verify achievement and understand what was working and why.

The strategic importance of early attention in UFE towards uses or purposes clearly important for focusing the evaluation. It allowed the group of users to align the evaluation and connect it directly to the original intent in the Request for Proposals. The sequence of planning from uses or purposes, to key evaluation questions, and onto the methodology selection that was done *with* the primary intended users, ensured that the evaluation covered a relevant set of uses: measuring outcomes, understanding process and integration of the model into the Kenyan context, and definition of what was working in the project and how it worked.

The enabling factors appear to include: an explicit review of partner roles during the readiness review that allowed for a shared ownership over the evaluation; an openness to introduce evaluation purposes that covered a range of topics, not just accountability; early exposure of the evaluation owners to the emergent findings; the option for the evaluation owners to comment and shape emergent conclusions (including the theory of change); openness to having the evaluation owners comment, revise and shape the final report. We also learned that the UFE approach excited the CAP YEI users, especially in regards to the extent of shared ownership, the level of engagement, and the potential to influence the process and final product, even as they admitted that the model was new to them and would require new learning.

2. What are the features in UFE that help clarify a project's theory of change?

Patton (2008) emphasizes that in UFE the evaluators can become facilitators of a learning process. We advised our colleagues in Kenya that we saw our role, not as policemen or judges (as some fear in conventional evaluations), but as storytellers and researchers/learners. Our job was to dig for data, discover evidence and ensure we fully captured as many voices and perspectives as possible. We went beyond being neutral facilitators and asked tough questions to uncover implicit assumptions that the implementing team may have taken for granted.

For instance, to understand the 'magic' behind the approach (evaluation purpose # 2), we needed to fully grasp each step of the BEST model, including the conditions that enabled its delivery. During our visit to Kenya, we started with CAP YEI's summary of the BEST model (Figure 1) and inquired into the details as we visited training

sites; as we interviewed students, trainers, employers, and parents; as we visited youth at work sites and in their enterprises. This exercise was a brief immersion (Chambers, 2007) that was guided by a thorough review of the activities that took place at each step of the BEST model.

We went about discovering the achievements by contrasting the model with 'best practices' in mainstream TVET documentation (Marope *et al.*, 2015). We were able to notice enablers or contributing elements; such as the ratio of trainers to students (~28:1) that allowed instructors to become very familiar with each student and assist in matching their profile with employment opportunities. We began to flag possible limitations as the model was expected to move from peri-urban to rural settings. Some enablers would not be present in an agricultural economy, especially local employers in the service industry.

Through this process of inquiry, we began eliciting a more detailed description of the project's theory of change. We differentiated outcomes; added details to the step-by-step summaries; proposed the notion of non-negotiables; and opened the discussion on what expansion or scale-up might mean. As we shared our findings with the primary evaluation users, we heard that our perspectives on the project added value to their own.

When we reflect on the different purposes that Mayne (2015) listed for preparing theories of change, we feel we contributed to the following ones: managing an intervention, assessing it, and generalizing it as a theory to help explore what scaling or replication in other locations might look like. Most important perhaps, assumptions were uncovered behind the BEST model that may have not been expressed, let alone shared previously (Vogel, 2012a).

3. How can UFE provide a bridge between a summative review of achievements and a developmental contribution to future work?

As mentioned earlier, Step 11 of UFE focuses on the facilitation of use of the findings and the process. In the process we followed, the last tranche of evaluation uses or purposes was forward-looking and became our guide for articulating recommendations.

In terms of the summary of conceptualization of use (by Jones *et al.,* 2009), we gathered evidence of direct, instrumental use in the integration of recommendations into the subsequent project proposal. We also realized from our exchange with the evaluation users as we finalized the report that the process had led to a form of legitimation: their achievements were confirmed and triangulated, and the raison d'être for the BEST approach received validation.

Since we worked closely with the primary evaluation users throughout the process, we discussed emerging findings a few times, especially during review of the draft final report. This process led to a partnership between evaluators and project managers (clients) which other sources have reported as being central to formative evaluation in the education sector (Hall *et al.*, 2014). As we drafted the conclusions and recommendations, as we developed the list of non-negotiables, and as we drafted the theory of change diagrams, we became participants in sketching out the design of the subsequent program. The facilitation of use shifted into co-shaping directions for the next project phase. The subsequently formalized Phase 2 started in September of 2016. The fact that by then the evaluators had a contextual understanding of the first project and its connection to the ongoing TVET transformation in Kenya aided in this joint effort. Our experience was consistent with Hall *et al.* (2014) who emphasize the relationship value of the process [though in their case the authors refer to a formative evaluation]:

> From our perspective, evaluation is not simply a method to determine the merit or worth of a program, but it is also a way of intelligently and actively intervening for the purpose of effective educational program development and implementation. Thus, we do not think of the approaches and how they are operationalized in a formative evaluation as discrete elements. Rather, we consider these approaches as a way of being-in- relation. When thinking of formative evaluation as an embodied relation, these qualities assist evaluators in becoming keenly attuned to identifying precise moments in which decisions about actions must be taken to promote successful program outcomes. (Hall *et al.*, 2014, p. 153)

What had started as a final or summative evaluation also included a developmental evaluation dimension. Since the decision-making framework followed the UFE sequence, a motivation toward learning fueled the commitment of the primary evaluation users to the recommendations. In addition, the facilitation of use of the process translated into a possible future

refinement of the internal management information system. There was awareness that data to be collected should respond to clearly articulated needs. In other words: focus first on practical decisions, formulate questions, define the evidence needed and then determined which data to collect.

Both The MasterCard Foundation and CAP YEI have confirmed that the evaluation was a significant learning process. A major benefit was that at the start of the evaluation, there was evidence at hand that the program was meeting many of its targets (number of youth that had completed the program and secured employment), which allowed for a focus on the conditions or factors that were enabling these achievements. The evaluators were able to allocate time and resources to an in-depth understanding of the BEST model and its implementation with different partners. This perspective speaks to the notion that the evaluation provided external eyes for validation.

Specifically, this focus on process pushed the evaluators and key stakeholders to document and express the theory of change that underlies the BEST model. Our work confirmed Vogel's (2012a) summary of the four elements needed to assemble a theory of change: appreciating the context for the initiative, clarifying the long-term changes that are sough, mapping the sequence of events or steps; and making assumptions explicit.
The bridging between a summative (final) evaluation, and a developmental contribution to a subsequent project was confirmed. This exercise was a variation of utilization-focused evaluation that emerged as a result of the review of the primary intended users' stated purposes and key evaluation questions. It was an approach where evaluators and program partners developed a mutual learning relationship in which they harnessed the evidence to influence the subsequent project design and strategy.

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Annex 1

Alignment between RFP purpose and evaluation uses as defined by evaluation users

Original purposes in RFP	Evaluation uses or purposes
• Anticipated/early indications of impact (intended, un-intended, life conditions) • Efficiency (cost effectiveness; output/outcome ratio) • Effectiveness (of model in terms of employment outcomes)	1. To document and understand the project's accomplishments. 2. To capture 'the magic' that makes it work
Comment: *USES 1-2 will capture impact, while USE 3 will elicit the principles that make the model effective. Efficiency will be partially covered by USE 2 and USE 6.*	
• Relevance & responsiveness to the context • Effectiveness (in context)	3. To understand the dynamic relationship between the CAP YEI model and Kenyan context, feeding into improvement and development of MCF's programs, both with CAP YEI and other partners. 4. To understand what has made the ecosystem in Kenya respond to the program 5. To understand the added value/benefit of a holistic programming approach, influencing and informing MCF's broader strategies in this program area. 6. To document the critical conditions for replication in other areas / counties
Comment: *USES 4-6 will capture how the BEST model responds to the Kenyan context.*	
• *Sustainability (requirements for continuity)* • *Continuation & replication*	i. To improve the program for the future ii. To provide actionable learning for potential future MCF-CAP partnership. iii. Prepare for future expansion iv. To identify what CAP YEI needs to become as an organization in order to succeed in meeting increasing future expectations? v. To inform its broader work with youth
Comment: *Component or themes i-v will enable a discussion on the rationale for the CAP expansion, and continuation & replication through different partnerships. The question of sustainability will be contextualized within the 3-pronged strategy (Demonstration Centres, Replication & Capacity Development)." (Inception Report, 2015, pp. 3-4).*	