
So now you have got the data, what's next?

Collaborative sensemaking to navigate diversity

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Questions we care about

01

What is 'collective sensemaking' in M&E?
What forms can it take?

02

What role can it play to navigate the values, needs and understandings 'responsibly'?

03

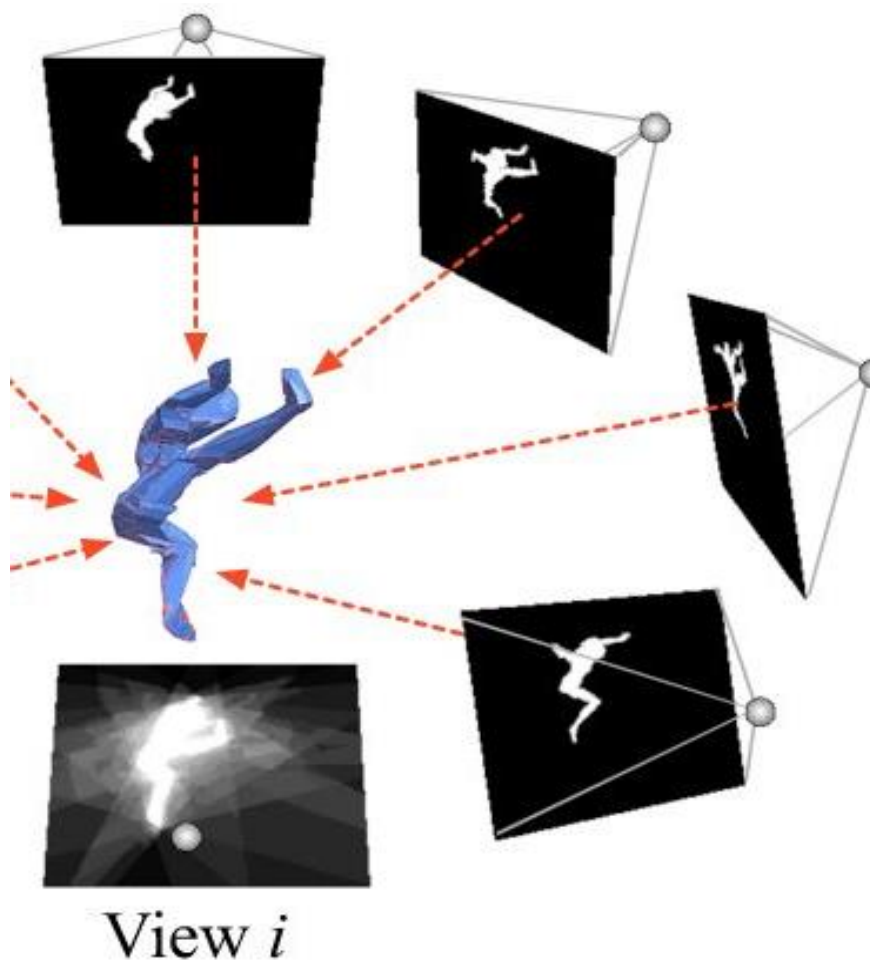
When can we consider collective sensemaking 'successful' and what conditions are necessary to achieve this?

04

Why is collective sensemaking often not (yet) part of evaluative processes? How can we strengthen this part of M&E practice?

What is collective sensemaking?

A definition



Giving meaning to data
& emerging knowledge

together

in order to be able to
act on it

Route 1. Embedded in organisational learning

Building individual and organisational culture and capability to do evaluative thinking

Regular reviews

“We need to get people to engage with data. Every time data is collected and passed on, we need to encourage sensemaking, for example by each person a set of simple prompt questions to ask themselves.”

Guy Sharrock, CRS



Route 2. Multiple perspectives on evaluation



Collectively discuss & decide on:

- Values (rubrics), which questions matters
- Revise/develop a Theory of Change
- Design choices - what processes would be optimal
- *Synthesis - what the data means and translate into implications for action*

Our focus is on synthesis and use

*Giving meaning **together** to data and emerging knowledge in order to be able to act on it*



- Making sense of evaluation findings with multiple perspectives
- More systematic critical thinking together - different levels and types of thinking

Is any of this familiar?

- Conclusions were challenged?
- Findings not used?
- Findings were not nuanced or contextualized enough?
- Findings were... err, umm... a bit wrong?



Image credit: <http://glory-company.com/2011/08/>

Fit for purpose options



From

- *Small and focused*
- 3 hour validation of unclear areas with key anticipated users

To

- *Extensive and inclusive*
- Full/multi-day to validate all findings and generate conclusions and recommendations

An example

Evaluating a party venue

Different parties – similar criteria overall



21st birthday party



40th birthday party
(brunch/lunch)



Wedding party

Source: 21st birthday <http://giftyourkid.com/21st-birthday-party-ideas-and-preparation/>
40th birthday: <http://www.party-ideas-by-a-pro.com/40th-birthday-party-ideas.html>
Wedding: <http://prosonlydj.com/weddings/wedding-reception/>

High level criteria - not too detailed

Intended guests invited and attend

Suitable venue

Meets health/safety requirements

Appropriate food and drink

People socialise

Guest of honour feels special



Generic rubric – along with evaluative criteria

Level of performance	Description
Excellent (Always)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear example of exemplary performance or best practice in this domain: no weaknesses.
Very good (Almost always)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very good to excellent performance on virtually all aspects; strong overall but not exemplary; no weaknesses of any real consequence.
Good (Mostly, with some exceptions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reasonably good performance overall; might have a few slight weaknesses, but nothing serious.
Adequate: (Sometimes, with quite a few exceptions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fair performance, some serious, but non-fatal weaknesses on a few aspects.
Poor: Never (Or occasionally with clear weakness evident)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear evidence of unsatisfactory functioning; serious weaknesses across the board on crucial aspects.
Insufficient evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence unavailable or of insufficient quality to determine performance.

Assessing recent events held at Humming Country Club



Eight 21st birthdays held on Friday or Saturday nights

For two parties police were called but the other six went well

Less profitable than other events but Mega Room popular venue



Seven 40th birthday lunches held – generally husbands organise for wives

Went well

Were profitable – good use of venue on Sundays



Five weddings held – which generally went well

Were profitable, with satisfied couples

Some flexibility around venues and spread from Thursdays to Saturdays

Sensemaking exercise



Part One: Orientation

- Instructions: Split the handouts between your group and read a page each
- Decide what is the key information on your page
- Discuss findings - using the questions on the bottom of the handout
- Write key points on paper provided under the headings

Sensemaking exercise

Part Two: The exercise



Source of photo <https://amyfortier.files.wordpress.com/2011/04/puzzle-pieces.jpg>

- In general what can we see?And what are the exceptions to these generalisations?
- What are the contradictions? On the one hand and on the other hand....
- What are you surprised to see...or surprised is missing?
- How might we explain these findings (rather than explain them away?)
- What still puzzles you?

Sensemaking exercise



Part Three: Reflection

- Can you imagine this working in your context and why?
- What could go wrong?
- What would make you hesitate?
- What else might you need to know before you tried this?

To summarise

Key points



Key take away messages

- Sensemaking a vital part of the evaluation process
- Not actually that hard to do but relies on having the right people in the room
- A really useful way to transfer ownership of the data to evaluation users – important to have a range of stakeholders present
- Helps ensure the resulting reporting is really on target and useful – allows for changes in focus since the start of the evaluation.

Thank you



To contact



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References

Some suggested reading material

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