



EVALSDGs INSIGHT 4: THE SDGs AND EVALUATION OF TRAINING EVENTS: ADAPTATION OF THE KIRKPATRICK MODEL

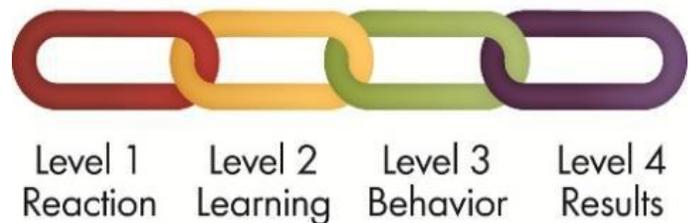
PURPOSE: Organizations worldwide continue to provide courses, workshops, webinars and learning experiences aimed at contributing to the implementation of the global 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is of utmost importance to develop tools and methodologies to evaluate the extent to which these training events are effective and achieve sustainable results. This INSIGHT discusses how the Kirkpatrick model might be adapted to the training for SDGs implementation and evaluation.

The Kirkpatrick Model¹

During the 1950s, Dr Donald Kirkpatrick wondered if the training programs he conducted were making any difference for participants. In general, he aimed to understand four points: 1) the degree to which participants find the training favorable and relevant to their jobs (Reaction); 2) the degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation during the training (Learning); 3) the degree to which participants apply what they learned during training when they are back on the job (behavior); and 4) the degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the training and the support and accountability package (Results). Over the years, these concepts coalesced into The Four Levels of the Kirkpatrick Model. Though not perfect, the Kirkpatrick Model enables evaluators to identify which aspects of training events, workshops, courses and/or other learning-related events have been effective, in terms of usefulness, learning, change of behavior and results.

Kirkpatrick Model adapted to the SDG context

Two points emerge from the evaluation of training events in the context of Agenda 2030. Firstly, the Agenda emphasizes the importance of evidence-based decision making to guide policies, programmes and projects related to the achievement of the SDGs. Secondly, considering the number of organizations involved in SDG training-related events, evaluations can improve their quality, maximize the transfer of learning by participants and demonstrate the value of training for organizations and other stakeholders such as donors, sponsors, and governments, amongst others.



Success at Level 3 (Behavior) is a critical link between Level 2 (Learning) and Level 4 (Results). Special attention must therefore be given to it by reinforcing, encouraging and rewarding performance on the job as well as by focusing on monitoring and supporting implementation of learning from training events inside the organization of participants who attend training courses. Considering that results (Level 4) are generally demonstrated by participants in workplaces, supervisors in organizations and their human resources sections can influence the likelihood of results by pursuing how participants can or will apply and transfer the skills and knowledge acquired during training. It is important to go beyond the Level 2 (learning) even though teaching professionals have historically spent a big part of their time and effort on the two first levels (Reaction & Learning). Evaluators should verify the extent to which training events are linked to the Agenda 2030 principle of “No one left behind”, and if the principle is incorporated into the training design and evaluation. To ensure that no one is left behind,

evaluators are encouraged to use more sex, age, social status etc. disaggregated data to better comprehend the effects of the training on participants who might include vulnerable or marginalized groups (for example, rural populations, migrants, women and children, people with disabilities, linguistic and cultural minorities, indigenous people). Evaluators might be able to find and present valuable results on those factors which enable or deter training participants from applying or transferring skills and knowledge acquired during training activities to the real as well as SDG implementation context. A combination of surveys (quantitative analysis) and interviews (qualitative analysis) of training participants (as training feedback) is highly recommended at this stage, as part of the evaluation to contribute to deeper understanding of the effects of demographics to results.

Guideline for evaluation of training events in the context of the SDGs

Steps	Actions to be undertaken by evaluators and/or learning managers
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to go beyond the Learning evaluation (Level 2). • Assess to what extent training programmes are aligned to one or some SDGs. • Customize templates and evaluation questionnaires in accordance to project, data availability, level of knowledge of participants and temporality. • Arrange to collect data related to gender and countries in special situations if on the global level.
Administration / Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop evaluation questions on the main objectives of the training and include considerations related to countries in special situations, gender, disabilities, youth, indigenous people, etc. • Clear communication to participants on the evaluation. • Adapt questionnaires and interviews to the context.
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include survey questions to collect disaggregated data related to gender and countries in special situations, if on the global level. • Contextualize application of skills/knowledge. • Understand enablers and preventing factors of the application of skills/knowledge. • Observe the different results according to disaggregated data. • Analyze trends.
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define actions after the training events and follow-up procedures. • Elaborate recommendations. • Develop lessons learned. • Share results with the international community (e.g. High-Level Political Forum on the SDGs and other relevant fora) through SDGs Learning, Training and Practice sessions and the EvalSDGs platform.

KEY LESSONS:

- The Kirkpatrick Model consider four key levels: Reaction; Learning; Behaviour: Results.
- Evaluators should verify to what extent the training-related events are linked to the 2030 Agenda’s principles and use more disaggregated data to assess the impact of training on vulnerable or marginalized participants.

About EVALSDGs INSIGHTS

EVALSDGs is a global network formed to add value and learning to the SDGs, as well as support processes to integrate evaluation into global and national SDGs review systems. EVALSDGs Guidance Group is a sub-group of EVALSDGs made up of evaluators ready to walk with you to support the evaluation of the 17 SDGs which is complex and requires strong collaborations and partnerships. It provides INSIGHT publications, trainings materials, and information on opportunities to strengthen the global and national evaluation capacity. It shares good cookies around the impact and sustainability of the SDGs and tells you which competencies you need. EVALSDGs INSIGHTS are short, light and easy to digest notes on topics related to evaluation and the SDGs. They present ideas and new information, and stimulate thinking to strengthen evaluation capacity.

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ⁱ For more information on the Kirkpatrick Model visit <https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/Our-Philosophy/The-Kirkpatrick-Model>