

Rapid Economic Evaluation to Maximise Program Reach and Impact per Unit Spending

Rationale

Funding for humanitarian and development needs are extremely limited, so program implementers and practitioners need to prioritise which interventions can bring the most impact to the most people in need within the reality of scarce resources. While some interventions and approaches have been evaluated to be effective, which ones can provide the most impact and reach per unit of spending? **Economic evaluation can help implementers better understand the cost per result of interventions and approaches, so that limited funds can be allocated for the most benefit to the most people in need.**

For example, [IRC found that for every dollar of cash or non-food items distributed, it can cost 50% less to distribute cash than non-food items.](#) In other words, cash distribution can benefit more people with more value within a finite budget, if appropriate for the context.

Workshop Purpose

This workshop is for implementers and practitioners of humanitarian and development programs to learn how to conduct rapid economic evaluation of an intervention using existing financial expenditure data and routine M&E data. In a resource-constrained world where critical program decisions need to be made now, implementers can use rapid economic evaluation to quickly analyse the cost per result of their interventions, compare with potential alternatives, and inform near-term implementation decisions.

The rapid economic evaluation methodology is applicable to any sector and uses the “ingredients-based costing” approach by [Levin and McEwan](#), [the Grand Bargain cost-efficiency analysis guidance](#), and [the USAID Education Cost Analysis Guidance](#).

Learning Objectives

1. Interpret economic evaluation results for program learning, improvement, and decision-making.
2. Learn the step-by-step process of conducting a rapid economic evaluation.
3. Prepare and anticipate the conditions required for a successful economic evaluation.

Workshop Delivery and Schedule

The workshop will flip the traditional chronology of methodology training, by first starting with interpreting the economic evaluation results of a real-world case example so that participants can immediately understand how to use economic evaluation for program learning and improvement.

Participants will then learn the step-by-step process of rapid economic evaluation using a hands-on exercise with sample data to calculate those results. The evaluation process can be tool-agnostic, however the workshop will expose participants to the [Dioptra cost analysis tool](#).

The workshop will conclude by summarising the data and preparations required to enable a successful economic evaluation.

- **0900-1100** Real-world case example on how to interpret economic evaluation results for program learning and improvement
- **1100-1130** Coffee break
- **1130-1230** Hands-on exercise on how to conduct a rapid economic evaluation
- **1230-1330** Lunch
- **1330-1500** Hands-on exercise on how to conduct a rapid economic evaluation, with an example of using the Dioptra tool (continued)
- **1500-1530** Coffee break
- **1530-1630** Group discussion on the data and preparations required to enable a successful economic evaluation; close of workshop

- **1630-1730** Participants can feel free to stay for an optional consultation clinic to ask any specific project-level questions

Handout Materials

Before the workshop, participants will receive sample financial data and a limited-time online access to the Dioptra cost analysis tool.

During the workshop, participants will receive printed handouts of the course content.

Facilitators

Lucian Lee (Senior Advisor, Cost Analysis at International Rescue Committee): Lucian supports IRC country teams and partner organisations on conducting cost analysis and assessing value for money of humanitarian and development programs. He has over 10 years of experience in the non-profit and private sectors.

Federico Ercolano (Senior Advisor, Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning at Mercy Corps): Federico provides technical MEL support to country teams and leads the work around Value for Money and cost analysis at Mercy Corps. He has over 10 years of experience in working with humanitarian and development actors.

Target Level: Intermediate

Prerequisites for participants: Basic experience in program implementation, project budgeting, and Microsoft Excel required. Please bring a laptop that has email and Microsoft Excel capabilities.

Minimum number of participants: 5

Maximum number of participants: 20