Different Organisational Models for Structuring Evaluation (Part I)

Outsourcing Model

Description

The outsourcing model involves organisations contracting external agencies to conduct Social Impact Assessments (SIAs) on their behalf. This approach is often adopted due to a lack of internal expertise, financial resources, or human capacity to undertake SIA.

Advantages

The outsourcing model offers several advantages, including:

- **Access to expert knowledge and methodologies**: External agencies possess specialized knowledge and expertise in SIA, ensuring that the assessment is conducted using best practices and methodologies.
- **Unbiased and effective reports**: Outsourcing SIA helps avoid conflicts of interest and ensures that the assessment is conducted objectively, resulting in unbiased and effective reports.

Disadvantages

However, the outsourcing model also has some disadvantages, including:

- **Smaller organisations may lack resources to hire external agencies**: Smaller organisations, particularly those reliant on donations and grants, may not have the financial resources to hire external agencies to conduct SIA.
- **External agencies may miss some qualitative impact indicators**: External agencies may not have the same level of community connection and understanding as the organisation itself, which can lead to missing some qualitative impact indicators.

Example

The Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), NITI Aayog, is an example of an organisation that outsources impact evaluations to expert agencies selected through competitive bidding.

Partnership Model

Description

The partnership model involves research and policy teams forming mutually beneficial partnerships to combine their interests. This approach brings together researchers interested in conducting studies and policymakers seeking to implement programs.

Advantages

The partnership model offers several advantages, including:

- **Combines scientific rigor with policy relevance**: Partnerships between researchers and policymakers ensure that SIA is conducted using scientific rigor while also addressing policy-relevant questions.
- **Potential for co-financing and broader visibility**: Partnerships can attract co-financing and provide broader visibility for the SIA, increasing its impact and reach.

Disadvantages

However, the partnership model also has some disadvantages, including:

- **Risk of misalignment between research innovation and local policy needs**: Research innovations may not always align with local policy needs, which can create challenges for the partnership.
- **Requires close alignment of objectives and clear roles**: Partnerships require close alignment of objectives and clear roles and responsibilities to ensure success.

Example

The World Bank's partnerships with groups like DIME, SIEF, and GIL are examples of the partnership model in action. A joint evaluation of the Youth Employment and Skills Development Project in Côte d'Ivoire is another example of a successful partnership.

Source: NISM Series XXIII: Social Impact Assessors Certification Examination workbook