# STRATEGIC IMPACT EVALUATION AND SOCIAL PROGRAM OPTIMIZATION



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# Introduction

Strategic Impact Evaluation and Social Program Optimization Training Course equips professionals to measure what a social programme actually changes, and to improve it on that evidence. Participants learn to design impact evaluations, choose credible comparison groups and interpret results without overclaiming. The programme covers theory of change, impact evaluation designs, data collection, cost-effectiveness analysis and optimisation techniques. Furthermore, it addresses stakeholder reporting, ethical standards and scaling decisions. As a result, delegates can prove impact, improve programme design and direct resources to what works. Gentex Training Center delivers the programme through design workshops and applied programme case work.

# Strategic Impact Evaluation and Social Program Optimization Course Objectives

- Build a theory of change and results framework for a social programme.
- Design impact evaluations using experimental and quasi-experimental methods.
- Apply randomised controlled trials and comparison group approaches.
- Use difference-in-differences, matching and regression discontinuity.
- Design quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments.
- Measure outcomes, impact and unintended effects credibly.
- Apply cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis to programmes.
- Interpret evaluation findings and avoid common attribution errors.
- Optimise programme design using evaluation evidence.
- Report impact and recommendations to funders, boards and communities.

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## Course Methodology

The course combines technical briefings with hands-on design workshops and applied programme case studies. Participants build a theory of change, design an impact evaluation and prepare an optimisation plan. In addition, structured peer review and evaluation panel simulation sharpen judgement, and each day closes with an applied task.

## Who Should Take This Course

- Monitoring, evaluation and learning professionals.
- Programme managers in development and social sector organisations.
- Policy analysts and public sector programme officers.
- Donor, foundation and grant-making programme staff.
- Researchers, statisticians and social impact analysts.
- Consultants and advisers supporting impact measurement.

## Strategic Impact Evaluation and Social Program Optimization Course Outlines

## Day 1: Programme Logic and Impact Frameworks

- Social programme design and intervention logic.
- Theory of change and results chain construction.
- Inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact distinction.
- Assumptions, risks and external factors in programme logic.
- OECD-DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

- Aligning programme logic with funder and policy objectives.
- Workshop: building a theory of change and results framework.

## Day 2: Impact Evaluation Design

- Attribution, contribution and counterfactual thinking.
- Experimental designs and randomised controlled trials.
- Quasi-experimental designs and comparison group selection.
- Difference-in-differences and matching methods.
- Regression discontinuity and instrumental variable approaches.
- Sample size, power calculation and statistical significance.
- Workshop: designing an impact evaluation for a live programme.

## Day 3: Measurement, Data and Analysis

- Indicator design for outcomes and impact.
- Quantitative instruments: surveys, administrative data and sensors.
- Qualitative methods: interviews, focus groups and case studies.
- Sampling strategies and data quality assurance.
- Handling attrition, bias and missing data.
- Analysing and interpreting results with confidence intervals.
- Workshop: designing instruments and analysing a dataset.

## Day 4: Cost-Effectiveness and Programme Optimisation

- Costing programmes and unit cost calculation.
- Cost-effectiveness analysis and cost-benefit analysis.

- Comparing interventions on cost per outcome.
- Identifying what works, for whom and under what conditions.
- Optimisation techniques: targeting, sequencing and delivery model redesign.
- Scaling, replication and adaptation decisions.
- Workshop: running cost-effectiveness analysis and proposing optimisation.

## Day 5: Reporting, Ethics and Use of Evidence

- Evaluation ethics, consent and protection of participants.
- Managing evaluations and quality assuring reports.
- Communicating findings to funders, boards and communities.
- Management response and follow-up action tracking.
- Building an evaluation use and learning culture.
- Scaling what works and discontinuing what does not.
- Workshop: presenting an impact evaluation and optimisation plan to a panel.

## Conclusion

By successfully completing Strategic Impact Evaluation and Social Program Optimization Training Course, participants will have acquired the knowledge to measure social impact credibly and improve programmes on that evidence. They will understand theory of change, impact evaluation designs, measurement and analysis, cost-effectiveness and optimisation, and they will know how to report findings to funders and communities. As a result, delegates direct resources toward interventions that demonstrably work. Gentex Training Center builds the programme around current evaluation practice.

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# FAQs for the Strategic Impact Evaluation and Social Program Optimization course

## Q1 What is the "Strategic Impact Evaluation and Social Program Optimization" course about?

It covers how social programmes are evaluated for impact and improved accordingly. You learn theory of change and results frameworks, impact evaluation designs including randomised and quasi-experimental methods, measurement and analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis and programme optimisation.

## Q2 What are the key benefits of the "Strategic Impact Evaluation and Social Program Optimization" course?

You gain the ability to prove what a programme changes rather than describing what it did. You also improve design quality, avoid attribution errors, compare interventions on cost per outcome, target resources to what works, and report impact evidence that funders and boards trust.

## Q3 What skills will I gain from the "Strategic Impact Evaluation and Social Program Optimization" course?

You will gain social programme theory of change and results framework design, impact evaluation design including experimental and quasi-experimental methods, outcome and impact measurement with data analysis, and cost-effectiveness analysis, programme optimisation and impact reporting.

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## Q4 What tools, methods, or standards are covered in the "Strategic Impact Evaluation and Social Program Optimization" course?

The course covers theory of change and results chain models, the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, counterfactual and attribution analysis, randomised controlled trials, quasi-experimental designs, difference-in-differences, propensity score matching, regression discontinuity and instrumental variable approaches, sample size and power calculation, correlation and regression analysis, qualitative interview, focus group and case study methods, sampling strategies and data quality assurance, handling attrition and missing data, unit costing and cost-effectiveness analysis, cost-benefit analysis, cost per outcome comparison, optimisation through targeting, sequencing and delivery model redesign, and evaluation ethics, consent and safeguarding standards.

## Q5 How is the "Strategic Impact Evaluation and Social Program Optimization" course applied in real-world practice?

Graduates apply it to design results frameworks for social programmes, commission and manage impact evaluations, build data collection instruments, analyse outcome and impact data, run cost-effectiveness comparisons across interventions, recommend targeting and delivery improvements, prepare management responses to evaluation findings, and report impact and optimisation plans to funders, boards and communities.