EVALUATION APPROACHES

Realist Evaluation	
Workshop title	Realist evaluation: reporting and quality standards
Trainers	Gill Westhorp
Affiliation	University of Leeds (UK), Charles Darwin University (Australia)
Target level	Intermediate
Workshop content	Realist evaluation (RE) is a distinctive approach to the appraisal of social programs, which are becoming widely applied in recent years. The course will introduce students to the main empirical application of the realist approach. It will explain how these approaches fit within the overall repertoire of policy evaluation, enabling students to choose the most appropriate methods for appraising programmes and interventions. It focuses on the logic for analysis and key processes of RE, with examples of how it has been applied internationally in complex policy interventions. Students will also explore specific issues relating to past or future application of RE in their own research and share insights from their own experience.
Learning outcomes	Upon successfully completing this course, participants will be able to: • Explain the development of realist methods as an approach to understanding complex social interventions. • Understand what realist evaluation is, including its strengths and weaknesses. • Outline the relationship between program theory and study design. • List the core steps needed to conduct a realist evaluation following the RAMESES II quality and reporting standards (http://ramesesproject.org/). • Practice the application of a realist logic of analysis and methods within worked examples. • Produce an outline research design for a realist evaluation of an intervention within their own topic of interest.