Moitus, S and Kamppi, P (2020) **ENHANCEMENT-LED EVALUATION at the FINNISH EDUCATION EVALUATION CENTRE,** Helsinki: FINEEC

*Aim: “Our aim is to enable enhancement-led evaluation (E-led E) to have an impact, promote renewal and renew itself.”*

*Definition of E-led E*: It promotes participation and interaction. It’s based on trust between the evaluator and the evaluated, and on the responsibility of the latter to enhance their activities. Methods are tailored on a case-by-case basis to maximise impact and enhancement even during the evaluation. It produces an analysis of the current state and feedback on strengths, good practices and areas requiring development.

*Defining Characteristics.* Future-oriented approach, continuous improvement. Trust, participation and cooperation. Flexible, multi-method approach to achieve appropriateness. Evaluation is a learning process. Feedback leads to recommendations which are monitored to ensure change. E-led E is goal oriented to identify factors that promote, and those that prevent, development. The PDCA ( Plan-Do- Check-Act) cycle must be completed.

Trust means that “*participants can talk openly about successes, development needs and shortcomings without having to fear sanctions.”* Data is collected for the benefit of the evaluated. No ranking lists are published. “*We publish the criteria for the evaluation in advance and base our conclusions only on the material gathered.”* It’s an evidence-based approach.

The evaluated contribute to the content and methods of the evaluation. This strengthens ownership and commitment to outcomes and use of the report. All partners are consulted via hearings, workshops, and seminars for both analysing the data and for development.

We monitor the use made of our recommendations and their impact by carrying out feedback surveys and follow-up evaluations.

*Four Values* underpinning E-led Es.

*Reliability* = strong expertise + systematically collected info.

*Independence* from government and all external bodies

*Openness* = our principles, criteria and practices are made public.

*Boldness* = *“We take up difficult topics, take a stand and participate in the societal debate.”*

*Three main tasks of FINEEC*: accountability, provision of knowledge, and enhancement to achieve change.

*Results and Actions*. *“For the evaluations to be effective, those who benefit from them … need to discuss the reports, prioritise the recommendations, allocate the responsibilities and schedule the enhancement measures.”*

Short-term impact: “*reliable data improves the knowledge base of decision-making*”.

Long-term impact : continuous improvement of the education system.

The impact of our evaluation activities is a “ *result of interaction and cooperation.”*

*Budget:* in 2023-24 the centre received 5 million euros from the state but it is entirely independent from it. In that year the respective populations of Finland and England were 5,584 million and 57,690 million. So if Ofsted were to have received the same backing as Fineec, its budget would have been 51,665 million euros which converted into pounds is £44,948 million. Ofsted’s budget in that year was £151 million. So Fineec, in our opinion, achieved significant improvements to its educational system at less than a third of the cost of Ofsted.

I didn’t know about this organisation until this week and I’m impressed by the brochure summarised above. How should we use it? Let me suggest the following:

“If we are going to learn from other jurisdictions, why not choose the country that has been spectacularly and consistently successful in international comparisons like PISA over recent decades, namely, Finland. Interestingly, it does not have a school inspection system. Perhaps part of its success is due to the absence of such a system, but a more important and positive influence is likely to be Finland’s Enhancement-led Evaluation Centre which has been in operation for over 25 years at less than a third of the cost of Ofsted. We summarise the key characteristics of the Centre’s work in the accompanying Box and we incorporate some of its practices and values in our suggested pilot.”