UTILIZATION-FOCUSED EVALUATION (U-FE) CHECKLIST
This version is for process documentation

1. Program/Organizational Readiness Assessment	
Premise: Key people who want the evaluation conducted need to understand and be interested in a utilization-focused evaluation (U-FE). **Primary Tasks:**	**Premise: U-FE requires active and skilled guidance from and facilitation by an evaluation facilitator.** **Evaluation Facilitation Challenges:**
❑ 1.1. Assess primary evaluation clients' commitment to doing useful evaluation based on an explanation of U-FE.	
❑ 1.2. Assess if the program is ready to spend time and resources on evaluation.	
❑ 1.3. Determine if primary evaluation clients are ready to assess various stakeholder constituencies to select primary intended users of the evaluation.	
❑ 1.4. Assess what needs to be done and can be done to enhance readiness.	
2. Evaluator Readiness and Capability Assessment	
Premise: Facilitating and conducting a utilization-focused evaluation requires a particular philosophy and special skills. **Primary Tasks:**	**Premise: Evaluation facilitators need to know their strengths and limitations and develop the skills needed to facilitate utilization-focused evaluations.** **Evaluation Facilitation Challenges:**
❑ 2.1. Assess the match between the *evaluator's knowledge* and what will be needed in the evaluation.	
❑ 2.2. Assess the match between the *evaluator's commitment* and the likely challenges of the situation.	
❑ 2.3. Assess the match between the evaluator's skills and what will be needed in the evaluation.	
❑ 2.4. Make sure the evaluators are prepared to have their effectiveness judged by the use of the evaluation by primary intended users.	
3. Identification of Primary Intended Users	
Premise: Primary intended users are people who have a direct, identifiable stake in the evaluation and meet the criteria below to some extent. (Caveat: These judgments are necessarily subjective and negotiable.) **Primary Task:** ***Find and recruit people who are...***	**Premise: The U-FE facilitator needs to both assess the characteristics of primary intended users and reinforce characteristics that will contribute to evaluation use.** **Evaluation Facilitation Challenges:**
❑ Interested	

❑ Knowledgeable	
❑ Open	
❑ Connected to an important stakeholder constituency	
❑ Credible	
❑ Teachable	
❑ Available for interaction throughout the evaluation process	

4. Situational Analysis	
Premises: Evaluation use is people- and context-dependent. Use is likely to be enhanced when the evaluation takes into account and is adapted to crucial situational factors such as those below.	**Premise: The evaluator has responsibility to identify, assess, understand, and act on situational factors that may affect use.**
Primary Tasks:	**Evaluation Facilitation Challenges:**
❑ 4.1. Examine program's prior experiences with evaluation.	
❑ 4.2. Look for possible barriers or resistance to use.	
❑ 4.3. Identify factors that may support and facilitate use.	
❑ 4.4. Get clear about resources available for evaluation.	
❑ 4.5. Identify any upcoming decisions, deadlines, or time lines that the evaluation should meet to be useful.	
❑ 4.6. Assess the evaluation knowledge level and experiences of primary intended users.	
❑ 4.7. Understand the political context for the evaluation, and calculate how political factors may affect use.	
❑ 4.8. Make sure that important constituencies and diverse stakeholder groups for the evaluation are represented among the primary intended users and assess the consequences of any omissions for use.	
5. Identification of Primary Intended Uses	
Premise: Intended use by primary intended users is the U-FE goal of the evaluation.	**Premise: The rich menu of evaluation options are reviewed, screened, and prioritized to focus the evaluation.**
Primary Tasks:	**Evaluation Facilitation Challenges:**
❑ 5.1. Present the menu of possible evaluation	

purposes and uses to primary intended users. Explain each option (Tasks 5.2 through 5.7).*	Purpose	Primary use
	To improve an existing program.	
	To judge over the merit of an existing program.	
	To generate knowledge.	
	To develop new models.	
	Accountability.	
	Monitoring.	
❑ 5.2. Consider how evaluation could contribute to **program improvement**.	
❑ 5.3. Consider how evaluation could contribute to **making major decisions** about the program.	
❑ 5.4. Consider how evaluation could contribute by **generating knowledge**.	
❑ 5.5. Consider how evaluation could contribute to **develop a new model or program**. *	
❑ 5.6. Consider how evaluation could contribute to generate accountability within a program.*	
❑ 5.7. Consider how evaluation could contribute to **monitor a program**.*	
❑ 5.8. Consider **process uses** of evaluation.	
❑ 5.9. Define the intended purpose and uses based on the explained menu.	
❑ 5.10. Formulate the draft version of the Key Evaluation Questions according to the defined intended purpose and uses of the evaluation. *****	

6. Focusing the Evaluation	
<u>Premise:</u> **The focus derives from primary intended uses of the evaluation by primary intended users.**	<u>Premise:</u> **Primary intended users will often need considerable assistance identifying and agreeing on priority evaluation uses and the major focus for the evaluation.**
Primary Tasks:	**Evaluation Facilitation Challenges:**
❑ 6.1. Define one or two expected outcomes for each specific objective of the program. If already defined, revisit them.*	
❑ 6.2. Define who the direct beneficiaries of the	

program are.*	
❑ 6.3. Make sure that all <u>high priority</u> questions are addressed in the evaluation design—or be clear about why they aren't included.	
❑ 6.4. <u>Review the Key Evaluation Questions:</u> Revisit them and modify them if necessary to ensure their relevance and alignment with the program's objectives, outcomes, beneficiaries and intended uses of the evaluation.*	
❑ 6.5. Make sure that the intended uses of answers to the specific evaluation questions are reasonably clear.	
7. Evaluation Design	
<u>Premises</u>: **The evaluation should be designed to lead to useful findings. Methods should be selected and the evaluation designed to support and achieve intended use by primary intended users.** **Primary Tasks:**	<u>Premise</u>: **Evaluators and users have varying responsibilities in the design decision-making process.** **Evaluation Facilitation Challenges:**
❑ 7.1. Define the data that would be required to answer the KEQ, as well as their respective colletion methods.*	
❑ 7.2. Select methods appropriate to the questions being asked.	
❑ 7.3. Assure that results obtained by the methods selected will be believable, credible, and valid to primary intended users.	

❑ 7.4. Assure that the proposed methods and measurements are
  ▪ Practical
  ▪ Cost-effective
  ▪ Ethical	

❑ 7.5. Assure that the results obtained from these methods will be able to be used as intended.	
❑ 7.6. Review the evaluation as designed in relation to professional standards and principles.	
❑ 7.7. Consider seriously whether involving primary intended users or other stakeholders in actual data collection enhance *process use.*	
❑ 7.8. Define and assign data collection and analysis responsibilities *	
8. Simulation of Use	

Premise: **Before data are collected, a simulation of potential use can be done with fabricated findings in a real-enough way to provide a meaningful learning experience for primary intended users.**	Premise: **It's important to move discussions of use from the abstract to the concrete, and a simulation of use based on fabricated data helps do that.**
Primary Tasks:	**Evaluation Facilitation Challenges:**
❑ 8.1. Fabricate findings based on the proposed design and measures.	
❑ 8.2. Guide primary intended users in interpreting the potential (fabricated) findings?	
❑ 8.3. Interpret the simulation experience to determine if any design changes or additions to the data collection would likely increase utility.	
❑ 8.4. As a final step before data collection, have primary intended users make an explicit decision to proceed with the evaluation given likely costs and expected uses.	

9. Data Collection

Premise: **Data collected should be managed with use in mind.**	Premise: **It's important to keep primary intended users informed and involved throughout all stages of the process.**
Primary Tasks:	**Evaluator Facilitation Challenges:**
❑ 9.1. Keep primary intended users informed of progress.	
❑ 9.2. Inform primary intended users of important interim findings to maintain interest in the evaluation.	
❑ 9.3. If involving primary intended users or other stakeholders in actual data collection, manage this process carefully.	

10. Data Analysis

Premise: **Analysis should be organized to facilitate use by primary intended users.**	Premise: **Facilitating data interpretation among primary intended users increases their understanding of the findings, their sense of ownership of the evaluation, and their commitment to use the results**
Primary Tasks:	**Evaluation Facilitation Challenges:**
❑ 10.1.Organize data to be understandable and relevant to primary intended users.	
❑ 10.2. Actively involve users in interpreting findings and generating recommendations.	
❑ 10.3. Examine the findings and their implications from various perspectives with focus on primary intended uses by primary intended users.	

11. Facilitation of Use	
Premise: Use doesn't just happen naturally; it needs to be facilitated.	**Premise:** Facilitating use is a central part of the evaluator's job.
Primary Tasks:	**Evaluation Facilitation Challenges:**
❑ 11.1. Work with primary intended users to use the findings and *learnings from the process* in intended ways.	
❑ 11.2. Examine potential uses and users beyond those intended and originally targeted (dissemination).	
❑ 11.3. Decide on dissemination mechanisms and avenues consistent with intended uses and additional desired uses.	
❑ 11.4. Identify possible misuses, and plan action to assure appropriate uses.	
❑ 11.5. Stay involved beyond formal reporting, and engage in follow-up facilitation as needed to enhance use.	
12. Metaevaluation	
Premise: Utilization-focused evaluations should be evaluated by whether primary intended users used the evaluation in intended ways.	**Premise:** A U-FE facilitator can learn something from each evaluation.
Primary Tasks:	**Evaluation Facilitation Challenges:**
❑ 12.1. After the evaluation is completed, followup to determine the extent to which intended use by intended users was achieved.	
❑ 12.2. Follow-up to determine the extent to which additional uses or users were served beyond those initially targeted.	
❑ 12.3. Follow-up to determine and learn from any misuses or unintended consequences of the evaluation.	

* ***Note:*** *These steps are NOT part of the Patton's original U-FE checklist. They have been added in order to make them more explicit throughout the process.*