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| **The STrengthening Evaluation Practices and Strategies (STEPS) in Indigenous settings in Australia and New Zealand Project: Relevance for the evaluation of health promotion initiatives** |
| **Background**  Programme evaluation is a core health promotion practice competency and a primary concern for the discipline. The desire of a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous evaluators in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia to improve evaluation undertaken in Indigenous settings, including health promotion programme evaluation, led to the development of the STEPS project. The project has coalesced, as a discrete piece of work, over several years.  **Methods**  The STEPS project used mixed-method concept mapping methodology to brainstorm practices and strategies to support culturally safe evaluation. Participants in the brainstorming included health promoters who evaluate their health promotion initiatives as well as evaluation commissioners and educators. A total of 106 strategies were consolidated, by the research team, which were then sorted by study participants into conceptually meaningful groups; each strategy was rated on relative importance and achievability. Approximately 300 participants were involved in the sorting and rating of the 106 strategies. Separate concept maps for Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia were developed using multi-dimensional scaling and hierarchical cluster analyses.  **Results**  The 11 cluster Aotearoa New Zealand map reflects four regions: (1) Authentic Evaluation Practice; (2) Building Māori Evaluation Expertise; (3) Integrity in Māori Evaluation; (4) Putting Community First. The ratings on importance and achievability indicate that while all 11 concepts are important differences exist in perceived achievability. The 12 cluster Australia map reflects three thematic regions: (1) An Evaluation Approach that Honours Community; (2) Core Heart of the Evaluation; (3) Cultural Integrity of the Evaluation.  **Discussion**  We will present a project overview and the findings from the Aotearoa New Zealand component of the study i.e., concept map and importance and achievability ratings. Strategies rated by research participants as being both highly important and achievable have been isolated and will be the focus of future work shaping the contribution of evaluation to better outcomes for Indigenous peoples. |