Strengths and Limitations of Evaluation Approaches

	Strengths	Limitations
Quantitative Only	– Can incorporate large sample sizes – Data can be trended across multiple years	– May be difficult to understand context of findings – May lack specificity for the needs of the evaluation – Data obtained from large datasets may not be up to date (data may be lagged by one or more years) – Lacks the richness and detail of descriptive information based on human experience
Qualitative Only	– Allows for the examination of phenomena in rich detail – Provides insights based on human experience – Data can uncover subtleties not addressed by quantitative data sources	– Often utilizes a relatively small sample size – Findings are only generalizable to the study population – Lacks the validation of statistical analysis
Mixed Methods	– Combines inductive and deductive reasoning and thinking through the triangulation of evaluation findings – Strengthen the reliability of data – Can help ensure evaluation findings are robust, valid, and credible – Reduces evaluator bias when interpreting results	– May require more resources to conduct both evaluation methods – Training is necessary for evaluators to cross over and collect/analyze both data types