

# PERFORMANCE REPORTING & PROGRAM EVALUATION



# WHAT DOES A PROGRAM REPORTING TOOL DO?

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- The **performance reporting tool** is an instrument used to track activities in relation to achieving deliverables (such as those outlined in a grant application/contract).
- A performance reporting tool can be used to:
  - Focus on goals that are high priority;
  - Define the benchmarks that will be used to measure success;
  - Monitor development toward target outcomes;
  - Identify opportunities for making improvements; and
  - Report to community and funders on the realized outcomes
- A performance reporting tool serves two purposes:
  1. To advance intentional management of community programs; and
  2. To encourage accountability to the community

# QUESTIONS FOR OUTCOME MEASURES (INDICATORS)

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- Outcomes measures or **indicators** are the data collected throughout the program (ex. the number of hours that clients participated in a training, demographic information, satisfaction with services, etc).
- Questions for outcome measures:
  - Is the outcome measure linked to the agency's deliverables in the contract?
  - Is the outcome measureable? Will it be constant over time? Will the data be available?
  - What information should be solicited as indicators to meet the outcomes?
  - Can the agency collect data without acquiring excessive expenses? Could sampling methods or other cost-effective alternatives be used to obtain the data?
  - Is the outcome measure coherent? Are the terms recognized & defined?

# OUTCOME MEASUREMENT DESIGN

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For each outcome, the measurement should include:

- Specific and measurable *indicators*
- Definition of *relevant clients* (which clients will be measured on each indicator)
- *Performance target* for each indicator
- A *data source*
- A *methods* plan for data collection

# PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT: HOW DO WE DETERMINE GOOD INDICATORS?

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Measurement is vital to determining cost-effective interventions.

- Three questions to ask when designing reporting tool:
  1. Is it meaningful?
    - Measurement should be logical & corresponding to help maintain learning.
  2. Is it credible?
    - Intentional measurement should endure reasonable skepticism.
  3. Is it practical?
    - Measurement should be designed to an agency's needs & budgetary constraints.

# COMPETENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

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| <b>Characteristics</b>  | <b>Description</b>   |
|-------------------------|--|
| ✓ Credible              | Individuals believe in the results                                 |
| ✓ Useful                | Timely, relevant information that can be used to make decisions    |
| ✓ Easily Understandable | Clear and consistently defined information which is put in context |
| ✓ Attributable          | Information which reliably links causes to effects                 |
| ✓ Accurate              | Verifiable information   |
| ✓ Balanced              | Objective information that reports both strengths and weaknesses   |

# Outcomes Framework

Need: (this is a good place to briefly describe the community need being addressed by your program)

Target Population:

| <u>Outcome</u> | <u>Indicators</u> | <u>Relevant Clients for the Indicator</u> | <u>Benchmark</u> | <u>Metric</u> | <u>Program Reporting</u> |
|----------------|-------------------|---|------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
|                |                   |   |                  |               |                          |
|                |                   |   |                  |               |                          |
|                |                   |   |                  |               |                          |

# RELEVANT CLIENTS FOR THE INDICATOR

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- Identify the group of clients that will be measured on each indicator.
- You may want all clients to be measured on an indicator, but may have a subgroup included.
- Examples of how you may define relevant clients:
  - Clients who have been receiving home-delivered meals for 90 days.
  - Students who have completed the second quarter of classes.
  - Participants who attend three group counseling sessions.

# BENCHMARKS

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- **Benchmarks** are performance data used for comparative purposes (ex. meeting performance target halfway through the program year).
- Uses numeric objectives/indicators to measure if your program is on track to achieving its outcomes.
- Targets could be a percent of participants achieving desired outcomes for the next quarterly report.
- Another example of a target can be the amount of change expected among participants within a designated amount of time.

# METRIC

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- **Metrics** are the tools used to evaluate if the program's expected performance is being achieved.
- Identify where your data will come from for each indicator.
- Example of data sources:
  - Client files (intake and exit records, case notes, follow-up calls and notes)
  - Surveys (participants, staff, family members, teachers, volunteers, etc.)
  - Tests or measurement instruments (evidence-based if possible)

# PROGRAM REPORTING

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Plan for collecting the data:

- When will data be collected?
- Who will collect the data?
- Who will analyze the data?
- Where will the data be stored?
- How will data quality be assured?

# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS)

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- An **outcome or deliverable** is the benefit for clients during or after their involvement with a program.
- An **activity** is an output or intervention used in facilitating the program.
- Coherent targets should be defined for each activity.
- Deliverables are attainable and measurable, with a set direction for the plan of intervention.
- Should answer questions:
  - Does the deliverable describe an outcome as particular target and time frame?
  - Are the activities precisely relative to results or outcomes rather than internal processes?
  - Are the benchmark performance targets reasonably associated to outcomes?

# COMMUNITY BENEFIT BY DELIVERABLES FOR OA

DELIVERABLES: UI = Unduplicated Individuals UH = Unduplicated Households UHU = Unduplicated Housing Units

| OUTPUTS<br>COMMUNITY IMPACT   | OUTCOMES                           |                       |                               |                       |                                       |  |  |                            |                                    |                       |                                      |                          |  |                                  |  |                                       |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
|   | Case Management<br>Client Hours UI | Childcare<br>Hours UI | Counseling Client<br>Hours UI | Education<br>Hours UI | Financial Assistance<br>Dollars UI UH | Food Assistance<br>Meals Provided, Meals<br>Congregate, Boxes, Pounds<br>UI UH | Home Modification<br>Modifications UHU | Home Repair<br>Repairs UHU | Material Assistance<br>Items UI UH | Mentoring<br>Hours UI | Professional Services<br>Hours UI UH | Respite Care<br>Hours UI | Screenings/Assessment<br>Screenings Completed UI | Shelter<br>Bed Utilization UI UH | Training - Skill Development<br>Hours UI | Transportation Assistance<br>Trips UI |
| Acquired New Knowledge or Skill   | X                                  |                       | X                             | X                     | X                                     |  |  |                            |                                    | X                     | X                                    |                          |  |                                  | X  |                                       |
| Demonstrate Academic Achievement  |                                    | X                     |                               | X                     |                                       |  |  | X                          | X                                  | X                     |                                      |                          |  |                                  |  |                                       |
| Improved Health: Increased Family Functioning                                     | X                                  |                       | X                             |                       |                                       |  |  |                            | X                                  | X                     | X                                    | X                        |  |                                  |  |                                       |
| Improved Health: Better Nutrition   |                                    |                       |                               | X                     |                                       | X  |  |                            |                                    |                       |                                      | X                        |  |                                  |  |                                       |
| Improved Health: Better Physical Condition  |                                    |                       |                               | X                     |                                       |  |  |                            |                                    | X                     |                                      | X                        |  | X                                |  |                                       |
| Improved Health and Safety: Access to Essential Services                          | X                                  |                       | X                             | X                     | X                                     |  |  |                            |                                    | X                     |                                      |                          |  |                                  |  | X                                     |
| Improved Wellbeing: increased Social Competence                                   | X                                  |                       | X                             | X                     | X                                     |  |  | X                          | X                                  | X                     |                                      |                          |  |                                  | X  |                                       |
| Improved Safety and Wellbeing   | X                                  |                       | X                             | X                     | X                                     |  |  | X                          |                                    | X                     | X                                    | X                        |  |                                  |  | X                                     |
| Increased Individual Stability: Individuals or Families                           | X                                  | X                     | X                             | X                     | X                                     | X  |  | X                          |                                    | X                     | X                                    | X                        |  |                                  |  | X                                     |
| Promote Health and Well-Being: Obtained/Retained Safe, Affordable, Decent Housing |                                    |                       |                               |                       | X                                     |  | X                                      | X                          | X                                  |                       |                                      |                          | X  |                                  |  |                                       |
| Promote Health and Wellbeing: Independent Living                                  | X                                  |                       |                               | X                     |                                       |  | X                                      | X                          | X                                  |                       | X                                    | X                        |  |                                  |  | X                                     |
| Promote Health and Wellbeing: Improved Housing Conditions                         |                                    |                       |                               |                       |                                       |  | X                                      | X                          | X                                  |                       |                                      |                          | X  |                                  |  |                                       |
| Promote Health and Wellbeing: Reduction in High Risk Behaviors                    | X                                  |                       | X                             | X                     |                                       |  |  | X                          | X                                  | X                     |                                      | X                        |  | X                                |  |                                       |

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# PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

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- Performance measures (or **benchmarks**) are set as a series of outcomes to meet over a defined period of time.
- An **efficacy assessment** utilizes the reporting tool to determine if the program is meeting its expected outcomes.
- Data from the performance measurement is used to identify areas of exceeding target results or underperformance that may call for an evaluation.
- **Program evaluation** provides insight into how to improve services based on client goal achievement and feedback, facilitator/teacher/volunteer feedback, or identify how to adjust services to meet deliverables.
- Program evaluations assess whether the program is meeting those performance measures but also look at “why” a program is performing at, above or below expectations.

# PROGRAM EVALUATION

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- What factors, internally and/or externally influence our program's performance?  
(Retrospective)
- What effect will this level of performance have on our future outcomes if changes aren't made? (Prospective)
- What role did context play in the program's overall performance?

# WHAT CAN AN EVALUATION DO FOR OUR PROGRAM?

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# HOW CAN WE EXECUTE A MEANINGFUL EVALUATION?

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- Conducting a meaningful evaluation is part of a program or initiative cycle. Your team may use different types of evaluation or tools throughout the stages of the program.
  - *During planning* a needs assessment will help in setting program goals and plan how to reach them,
  - *Ongoing monitoring* keeps track of successes and challenges so that activities can be adjusted while the program is being carried out,
  - *Periodic evaluation* assesses a program's outcomes as well as how the outcomes were obtained and any implications.

# WHAT DOES AN EVALUATION ENTAIL?

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# WHAT TYPE OF EVALUATION IS BEST FOR OUR PROGRAM?

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- As the program evolves, you will utilize different types of evaluation to establish that the program's services are the most effective way to assist participants.
  - Needs Assessment – conducted before a program begins and is used so that the organization can learn about the community context and needs.
  - Developmental Evaluation – implemented after a new program begins and sets a feedback cycle to learn about changes occurring within a program's services; demonstrating room for growth.
  - Formative Evaluation – a “check-in” to ensure that the program is going according to its planned intent.
  - Summative Evaluation – utilized when measuring an ongoing program to verify that its meeting its desired outcomes.

# NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION

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- A needs assessment answers questions such as:
  - Who needs services and what kind?
  - What services are already available?
  - What services have been proven effective?
  - Are there enough resources to address the need?
- A developmental evaluation:
  - Highlights needed adjustments to the program,
  - Is built into the program and is carried out over a long period of time,
  - Changes the evaluation questions as more information is needed, and
  - Adapts the method of collecting data as the evaluation questions change.

# FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE EVALUATIONS

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- A formative evaluation asks questions such as:
  - Is the program being implemented as planned? If not, why?
  - What components of the program work well, for whom, and why?
  - What are the parts that aren't working well, for whom, and why?
- Questions addressed in a summative evaluation are:
  - Does the program improve the lives of clients?
  - Are there any unanticipated outcomes, negative or positive?
  - Is the program the most efficient way to meet these outcomes?
- A summative evaluation is used to support decisions about whether a program should be expanded, revised, copied, scaled back or cut.
- It may be beneficial to incorporate several evaluations types. For example, if the agency wants to know if a program is achieving its goals (summative) and which elements are most helpful (formative).

# POTENTIAL EVALUATION CHALLENGES

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- Generating buy-in
  - State the evaluation's goals clearly, emphasizing how it will better serve clients.
  - Engage stakeholders during the planning stage so that they can see their priorities reflected in the work plan.
  - Keep surveys and interviews short so that the timing doesn't conflict with other events or schedules.
  - Communicate in a format that is appealing to your audience (ie. paper survey versus an online one).
- Managing resources
  - Prioritize your goals and evaluation questions. It's more efficient to do a smaller scaled evaluation that meets a need than attempting to conduct a large-scale one.
  - Assign the appropriate people to conduct the evaluation. Build on your team's strengths, assigning tasks to people who excel at them (and can probably do them more quickly).

# ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES

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- Demonstrate cause and effect
  - Recognize that perfect certainty is rarely possible. Focus on constructing an understanding of what contributed to outcomes.
  - Gather baseline information about clients prior to their commencing the program so that you can compare it with their circumstances afterwards.
  - Gather information from various people in different ways such as utilizing various feedback mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of the program.
- Collect consistent information
  - Create a data collection guide (ie. interview or survey guide) and protocols for how they should be distributed.
  - Test the evaluation to guarantee that the questions solicit the information sought.
  - Train the team on how the tools should be distributed and collected.
  - Establish the terminology so that everyone is utilizing the same key concepts in their diction.

# EVALUATION RESOURCES

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- Better Evaluation [www.betterevaluation.org](http://www.betterevaluation.org)
- Centre for Development Innovation:  
[www.wageningenportals.nl/sites/default/files/resource/2011\\_guide\\_memguide.pdf](http://www.wageningenportals.nl/sites/default/files/resource/2011_guide_memguide.pdf)
- Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child & Youth Mental Health:  
[www.excellenceforchildandyouth.ca/sites/default/files/docs/program-evaluation-toolkit.pdf](http://www.excellenceforchildandyouth.ca/sites/default/files/docs/program-evaluation-toolkit.pdf)
- Imagine Canada: [sectorsource.ca/sites/default/files/resources/files/projectguide\\_final.pdf](http://sectorsource.ca/sites/default/files/resources/files/projectguide_final.pdf)
- Kellogg Foundation: [www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2010/w-k-kellogg-foundation-evaluation-handbook](http://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2010/w-k-kellogg-foundation-evaluation-handbook)
- Western Michigan University: [www.wmich.edu/evaluation/checklists](http://www.wmich.edu/evaluation/checklists)