PERFORMANCE REPORTING & PROGRAM EVALUATION
WHAT DOES A PROGRAM REPORTING TOOL DO?

- 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)

• 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

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?

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

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

Source: First Nation Self-Evaluation of Community Programs
Outcomes Framework

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

**Target Population:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Relevant Clients for the Indicator</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Program Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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RELEVANT CLIENTS FOR THE INDICATOR

• 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.

Adapted From: United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg
BENCHMARKS

• **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.

Adapted From: United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg
METRIC

- **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)
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)

• 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 measureable, 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?

Adapted From: United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg
## Community Benefit by Deliverables for OA

### Outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Impact</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Deliverables:</th>
<th>UO = Unduplicated Individuals</th>
<th>UH = Unduplicated Households</th>
<th>UHU = Unduplicated Housing Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquired New Knowledge or Skill</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrated Academic Achievement</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved Health: Increased Family Functioning</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved Health: Better Nutrition</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved Health: Better Physical Condition</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved Health and Safety: Access to Essential Services</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved Wellbeing: Increased Social Competence</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved Safety and Wellbeing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Individual Stability: Individuals or Families</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote Health and Wellbeing: Obtained/Retained Safe, Affordable, Decent Housing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote Health and Wellbeing: Independent Living</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote Health and Wellness: Improved Housing Conditions</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote Health and Wellness: Reduction in High-Risk Behaviors</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

Revised: 01/2015
PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

• 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

• 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?

Evaluation, and evaluative thinking, can be used to...

Inform decision making
- Set goals and priorities
- Plan allocation of resources
- Improve program design & implementation

Develop knowledge and skills
- Increase understanding of client needs
- Increase knowledge of effective practices
- Build organizational capacity

Support accountability
- Increase confidence that funds are being well spent
- Inform funders and other stakeholders of program progress

Increase collaboration
- Improve communication
- Build pride & confidence
- Develop a common understanding across departments or partners

Influence social change
- Explore diverse perspectives
- Shape public opinion
- Develop and share an evidence base

Source: United Way Toronto & York Region
HOW CAN WE EXECUTE A MEANINGFUL EVALUATION?

- 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?

1. Describe the program
2. Focus the evaluation & prioritize questions
3. Choose a design & methods
4. Collect information
5. Analyze & interpret findings
6. Develop recommendations & action plan
7. Share learnings and act
8. Identify stakeholders

Source: United Way Toronto & York Region
WHAT TYPE OF EVALUATION IS BEST FOR OUR PROGRAM?

• 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

• 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

• 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

• 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

• 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

• Better Evaluation  www.betterevaluation.org

• Centre for Development Innovation:

• Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child & Youth Mental Health:
  www.excellenceforchildandyouth.ca/sites/default/files/docs/program-evaluation-toolkit.pdf

• Imagine Canada:  sectorsource.ca/sites/default/files/resources/files/projectguide_final.pdf


• Western Michigan University:  www.wmich.edu/evaluation/checklists