



Programmatic/Partnership Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

CCPH Service Learning Institute

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July 2009



Objectives

- ◆ Examine the purpose of programmatic and partnership evaluation
- ◆ Identify key stakeholders for service-learning programs and what each group of stakeholders needs to know about program process and impact
- ◆ Identify methods for measuring outcomes relevant to these stakeholders
- ◆ Determine realistic strategies for collecting evaluation data and ensuring these data get used



“Good evaluation” is nothing more than “good thinking”



It is the systematic collection of information about activities, characteristics and outcomes of programs, personnel, and products to use to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness and make decisions.

Patton, 1997



Why Evaluate?

- Reduce uncertainties
- Measure program achievement
- Improve effectiveness
- Demonstrate accountability
- Make programmatic decisions
- Build constituency; be responsive to stakeholders



Why Evaluate? (cont'd)

- Hold everyone accountable
- Use scarce resources effectively and efficiently
- Build capacity
- Influence policy
- It can be fun...and interesting



Why Do **You** Evaluate?

Stakeholders

- ◆ People who have a “stake” in what will be learned from an evaluation and what will be done with the knowledge
- ◆ They include:
 - People who manage or work in the program/organization
 - People who are served or affected by the program, or who work in partnership with the program
 - People who are in a position to do or to decide something about the program

CDC, 1998



Stakeholders

- ◆ Stakeholders' information needs and intended uses serve to focus the evaluation
- ◆ Variety of stakeholders may mean:
 - more than one focus (policy implications vs documentation of local activities)
 - varied levels of involvement



Stakeholders

- ◆ Who are your stakeholders?
- ◆ What do they want and need to know?
- ◆ How will you make sure that happens?

Comparison of Academic Research and Practical Evaluation

	Academic Research	Practical Evaluation
Purpose	Test hypotheses	Improve program/ practice
Method	Controlled environment	Context sensitive
Data	Sophisticated	Simpler



Evaluation should:

- ◆ Strengthen partnerships & projects
- ◆ Use multiple approaches
- ◆ Address real issues
- ◆ Create a participatory process
- ◆ Allow for flexibility
- ◆ Build capacity

Adapted from WK Kellogg Foundation, 1998



Guiding Principles

- ✓ Ongoing process
- ✓ Means, not an end
- ✓ Collaboration based on trust and respect
- ✓ Sensitive to cultural, socioeconomic, ethnic, lifestyle, life-span pluralisms
- ✓ Allow for combination of methodologies
- ✓ Remain flexible
- ✓ Build capacity



Methods, Strategies: Thinking About Data

- ◆ Match the data to the questions – what kinds of information would be worthwhile?
- ◆ As much as possible, use existing data and data collection methods
- ◆ Collect and analyze data from multiple perspectives
- ◆ Keep available resources in mind

Creating an Evaluation Plan

What do we want to know?	What will we measure?	How will we measure?	Who will be responsible? When?	How will we use results?

Creating an Evaluation Plan

What do we want to know?	What will we measure?	How will we measure?	Who will be responsible? When?	How will we use results?
Impact on community members (clients)	Member attitudes towards advocacy; advocacy knowledge	Pre and post survey	Evaluator Beginning of course and at the end	Demonstrate power and influence of program on clients; advocacy



Thinking About Data

(continued)

- ◆ Where might we find them?
- ◆ How might we obtain them?
 - Roles for students?
- ◆ What types should we consider?
 - Quantitative and qualitative
 - Participatory approaches
- ◆ What do we do now that we have them?



Who can help us collect and make sense of data?

- ✓ Community partners
- ✓ Student participants
- ✓ College administrative offices
- ✓ Faculty colleagues (and their students)
- ✓ Students who participated in previous programs
- ✓ Campus service-learning centers



Closing the Loop

Collaborate with stakeholders for
meaningful:

- ✓ Communication of results (process and outcome)
- ✓ Decisions based on results
- ✓ New assessment plans emerging from results
- ✓ Reflection on the assessment process

Evaluation References

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