

UA Cooperative Extension Service Evaluation Planning Quick Reference Guide

Primary Uses for Evaluation Data

- To collect results for different strategies, approaches, methods
- To identify what works and what doesn't to adapt programs locally
- To provide feedback for quality improvement
- To provide accountability for stakeholders
- To reduce the incidence of program errors and loss of credibility
- To manage more effectively
- To test assumptions
- To decide a program's future

Key Considerations

- Why use a Logic Model for program planning and evaluation?
 - 1) It is simple.
 - 2) It is proven.
 - 3) It gives us a common program planning and evaluation language.
 - 4) It can provide key evaluation information to test our assumptions, to assist us in identifying the most successful strategies within a program, and it can allow faculty to improve, modify or discontinue programs.
 - 5) It provides data for faculty to plan from an informed perspective.
- Begin program planning through a needs assessment driven by an examination of the local environment and situation, and the assumptions.
 - 1) What is the need/problem/opportunity?
 - 2) What demographic data do you have or can you find related to the state and local indicators?

3) What is your current local situation?

4) What assumptions can be made?

- Begin evaluation planning with the end in mind...what outcomes do you expect?

1) What is meaningful?

2) What is realistic?

3) Who needs to know?

- Identify what changes you want to see as a result of your program.

1) Knowledge

2) Attitudes

3) Behavior

4) Economic conditions

5) Environmental conditions

6) Policies

7) Production practices

8) Yield or Input cost changes

Selection of Evaluation Methods

- Identify what you CAN do based on what you NEED to know based on the cost involved, the time required, available resources, skills required of persons involved, potential reliability or bias of methods, confidentiality issues and ethical considerations. There are benefits and disadvantages for all methods. This quick reference guide will provide you with available methods, sources of information and tools to support your evaluation planning and management.

In building a Logic Model for program planning and evaluation you will need to concisely and simply identify the:

- **Situation**
- **Environment**
- **Assumptions**
- **Program inputs**
- **Program outputs**
- **Desired outcomes**

The Logic Model helps you answer the critical accountability question...

SO WHAT?

It provides a template to develop an evaluation that is SIMPLE, Logical and Meaningful. It helps the user stay focused on what can and should be measured.

It is usually helpful to use the one-page planning guide to construct your initial Logic Model. This allows you to see how one component of the plan is connected to the other.

The INPUTS or necessary program investments can include:

- Faculty/Staff time
- Funding for materials, travel, etc.
- Volunteer time
- Time committed from community partners
- Equipment costs
- Facility costs
- Curricula
- Evaluation resources

The OUTPUTS or program strategies, methods and target audiences can include:

- Who do you want to reach? Desired target audiences...how many?

- 1) Participants
- 2) Customers
- 3) Producers
- 4) Members
- 5) Volunteers
- 6) Agencies/Organizations
- 7) Age Groups
- 8) Ethnic Groups

- What do you want to do? How do you plan to reach your goal? What are your planned strategies and methods?

- 1) Workshops, Seminars, Classes
- 2) Research
- 3) Demonstrations
- 4) Media Efforts
- 5) Product Development
- 6) Distance Education
- 7) Counseling
- 8) Facilitation
- 9) Curriculum Development
- 10) Fund Raising/Grant Writing

The OUTCOMES or impacts of a program identify what short, medium and/or long-term results you are expecting from a program. These outcomes can include:

EXAMPLES OF OUTCOMES

CONDITIONS Longer-term	ACTION Medium	LEARNING Shorter-term
• Economic	• Behavior	• Awareness
• Environmental	• Practice	• Knowledge
• Social	• Decisions	• Attitudes
• Civic	• Skills	• Skills
• Community	• Policies	• Opinions
• Policy	• Social Action	• Intentions
• Health	• Policies	• Motivation

CHAIN OF OUTCOMES

CONDITIONS Longer-term	ACTION Medium	LEARNING Shorter-term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of area ground-water is improved as demonstrated through ADH water monitoring results at participating homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens close and seal 12 unused wells and participate in ADH water testing program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens increase knowledge of water contamination risks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants reduce debt and increase savings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants establish financial goals and use a spending plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants increase knowledge and skills in financial management.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family child care needs met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents and employers meet to discuss and identify options and implement a plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community increases awareness of child care needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents save money and enjoy a greater sense of community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents convert an empty inner-city lot to a community garden. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth and adults learn gardening skills, increase nutrition knowledge.

The Logic Model makes the complex simple if you simply invest a staff meeting or two to brainstorm and identify these key inputs, outputs and outcomes while developing a program or evaluation.

The content in this publication provides the critical "nuts and bolts" for your program planning and evaluation "tool kit."

These resources include:

- Sources of Evaluation Information
- Methods for Collecting Evaluation Information
- A Logic Model Planning Worksheet
- Evaluation Methods: Advantages/Challenges and Resources Needed
- Internet Sources of Secondary Data and Information

Sources of Evaluation Information

Existing Information

- program documents: newsletters, work plans, accomplishment reports, statistical reports, receipts, logs, minutes of meetings, enrollment records, personnel records, proposals, project and grant records
- existing data bases: census, housing, industry, school census data
- research reports, published literature
- histories: county, program, life histories
- media records
- public service and business records, for example, farm records; fertilizer sales at local dealers; employment statistics; justice, social and health agency data; DNR and SCS data; local government plans; student performance records
- other evaluations of the same or similar programs

People

- participants, beneficiaries: those people who benefit directly or indirectly from the program
- nonparticipants, proponents, critics, victims
- key informants: anyone who has particular knowledge about the program or program benefits participants, for example, teachers, parents, religious leaders, previous participants
- people with special expertise, for example, judges, faculty from a nearby college
- county residents, local leaders, influentials
- program staff, administrators, volunteers
- collaborators, competitors
- funders

- policy makers, legislators, federal or state agency staff

Pictorial Records and Observations

- before and after pictures such as photos of streets before and after a clean-up effort, photos of the garage before and after it became a youth center or the empty lot before and after the garden project
- art done by children which illustrates perceptions of or responses to their environment, for example, violence, drugs
- videotape of a group meeting which illustrates order of business, leadership and collective decision making skills
- slide series of over-time changes, for example, lakefront development, downtown restoration, grazing management systems or changes in participant skills, for example, training a pet or speaking before a public audience
- videotape excerpts which demonstrate participant reactions and learning taking place
- video or photos of program activities showing the diversity of participants
- observations of events and activities to record numbers and characteristics of participants, practices or behaviors in action, interaction patterns and skill development
- observations of practices such as manure management practices, erosion control, lawn care practices
- observations of verbal and nonverbal behavior such as people reacting to a nutrition display, working together in a team process, attending a cross-cultural experience

Methods for Collecting Evaluation Information

- **Survey:** collecting standardized information through structured questionnaires to generate quantitative data. Surveys may be mailed, sent electronically, completed on-site or through face-to-face or telephone interviews. Sample surveys use probability sampling while informal surveys do not.
- **Interviews:** information collected by talking with and listening to people, either face-to-face or over the telephone. Interviews range on a continuum from tightly structured (as in a survey) to free-flowing, conversational interviews.
- **Observation:** collecting information through “seeing” and “listening.” Observations may be structured or unstructured.
- **Document Analysis:** use of content analysis and other techniques to analyze and summarize printed material and existing information.
- **Case Study:** in-depth examination of a particular case (program, group of participants, single individual, site/location). Case studies use multiple sources of information and methods to provide as complete a picture as possible.
- **Group Assessment:** use of the group process to collect evaluation information such as nominal group technique, focus group, Delphi, brainstorming and community forums.
- **Expert or Peer Review:** examination by a review committee, panel of experts or peers.
- **Portfolio Reviews:** collection of materials, including samples of work that encompass the breadth and scope of the program/activity being evaluated.
- **Testimonials:** individual statements by people indicating personal responses and reactions.
- **Tests:** use of established standards to assess knowledge, skill or performance as in pen-and-pencil tests or skills tests.
- **Photographs, Slides or Videos:** use of photography to capture visual images.
- **Diaries or Journals:** recording of events over time revealing the personal perspective of the writer/recorder.
- **Logs:** recording of chronological entries which are usually brief and factual.
- **Other:**
 - Action Cards:** use of index cards on which participants record what they did – the “action” – and when they reach their goal, primarily used in self-assessment.
 - Simulations:** use of models or mock-ups to solicit perceptions and reactions.
 - Problem Stories:** narrative accounts of past, present or future situations as a means of identifying perceptions using fictional characters to externalize the problem situation.
 - Creative Expression:** use of art forms to represent people’s ideas and feelings through stories, drama, dance, music and art.
 - Unobtrusive Measures:** the gathering of information without the knowledge of the people in the setting such as the wear and tear on a “planted” mat in front of a display.

Logic Model Program Planning WORKSHEET

Program Name: _____ Goal: _____



OUTCOMES – IMPACT			OUTPUTS		INPUTS
Longer-term	Medium	Shorter-term	Audiences	Strategies/Dates	Program Investments



Assumptions

-
-
-

Environment:

Evaluation Methods, Advantages/Challenges and Resources Needed

Method	Purpose	Advantages and Challenges	Resources Needed
Document Review	To gather information from preexisting written materials, such as meeting minutes, reports, budgets, newspaper articles, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Most common method for evaluation + Good method for reviewing materials on how a program was implemented + Uses information that is already available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Can be done by program staff themselves - Takes a lot of time to review existing files, especially if program is complex and of long duration
Observation	To gather information on how the program operates, or on visual changes that have resulted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for process evaluation, because you can get an immediate impression about how the program is progressing - Information can be difficult to interpret - May be biased by how staff interpret the information - Events that are seen can be time dependent, and not representative of what is really going on - If people know they are being observed, they may act differently than usual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Can be done by program staff themselves - Takes a lot of time to review existing files, especially if program is complex and of long duration
Interviews	To obtain information from individuals about their experiences, or to learn more about their answers to surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Excellent for both process and outcome evaluation, because you can get in-depth information from participants + Can ask sensitive questions that require confidentiality - Data can be difficult and complex to analyze - Interviewer can bias the responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can take a lot of time to conduct - May require data inputting and analysis programs - May require assistance from a consultant to design the interview protocol and develop the database program

KEY: + advantages
- disadvantages

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Evaluation Methods, Advantages/Challenges and Resources Needed *continued*

Method	Purpose	Advantages and Challenges	Resources Needed
Focus Groups	To hold discussions with groups of people (10-12) to understand in-depth what they believe were the effects of the program, or how they saw the program implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for outcome evaluation, because you can ask people to explain how the program affected them + Can identify a lot of issues and effects + Can give staff better understanding of the program from participants' own words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Can be done relatively quickly (1-2 hours per focus group) - Requires a good facilitator - Takes time to analyze and interpret the discussion - May require extra resources for facilitator's time and participant incentives
Case Studies	To describe a program or experience in depth, often using some or all of the other evaluation methods to construct a case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for combining process and outcome evaluation + Can be a powerful way to describe the program + Can depict personal experiences, quotes, and unique program processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can take a lot of time to collect information, organize and describe the program
Surveys and Questionnaires	To get information from individual people about their changes in tobacco use knowledge, attitudes, and behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Excellent for outcome evaluation + Can get information from a lot of people + Can be done confidentially or anonymously, so may be more valid + Can be used as pre/post tests to measure changes from program educational sessions + Can use questions from existing surveys - More effective when using yes/no or true/false type questions - Are more impersonal for participants, and usually not good for getting quotes in participants' own words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Takes time to develop questionnaire - May require database program to manage and analyze a lot of data - May require extra resources for participant incentives and data analysis

Source: Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment and Leadership (APPEAL), *Integrating Evaluation into Tobacco Programs for Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities*, 2001.
www.appealforcommunities.org

Internet Sources of Secondary Data and Information

Agriculture

National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS) www.nass.usda.gov

NASS - County Data www.nass.usda.gov/indexcounty.htm

Education

Arkansas Department of Education www.as-is.org/

U.S. Department of Education www.ed.gov/stats.html

National Center for Education Statistics <http://nces.ed.gov>

Employment

Arkansas Employment Security
Department www.accessarkansas.org/esd/labormarketinformation.htm

Bureau of Economic Analysis www.bea.doc.gov/bea/regional/data.htm

Bureau of Census - 1997 Economic Census www.census.gov/epcd/www/econ97.html

Family

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Youth www.aradvocates.org

Government (local)

Bureau of Economic Analysis www.bea.doc.gov

Health

Arkansas Department of Health www.healthyarkansas.com/data/data/html

National Health Information Center www.health.gov/nhic

Households

Bureau of Census - 2000 Census www.census.gov/dmd/www/databank.html

Housing

Bureau of Census - 2000 Census www.census.gov/dmd/www/databank.html

Bureau of Census www.census.gov/hes/www/housing.html

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Internet Sources of Secondary Data and Information *continued***Income**

Bureau of Economic Analysis www.bea.doc.gov/bea/regional/data.html

Bureau of Census www.census.gov/hhes/www/income.html

Bureau of Census - 1997 Economic Census www.census.gov/epcd/www/econ97.html

Population

Arkansas State Data Center - 2000 Census www.ualr.edu/

Bureau of Census - 2000 Census www.census.gov/dmd/www/databank.html

Bureau of Census www.census.gov

Poverty

Bureau of Census www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html

Retail Sales

Bureau of Census - 1997 Economic Census www.census.gov/epcd/www/econ97.html

Transportation

Bureau of Economic Analysis www.bts.gov

Arkansas Highway & Transportation Dept www.bts.gov

Youth Risk Factors

UALR Census Data Center,
Children's Data Center Project www.aiea.ualr/csdc/csdcinfor/child.html

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