FIRST NATIONS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE – Native American Food Sovereignty Initiative

Program Evaluation Webinar
August 22, 2013
Program/Project Evaluation for Nonprofit Organizations

- Techniques & Tools:
- Overview
  - The When, What, Why, and How of Program/Project Evaluation and some simple management tools to build organizational capacity in evaluation techniques
So what exactly is program/project evaluation?

- Program or project evaluation is a systematic investigation and analysis of the value and effectiveness of concepts, characteristics, activities, or outputs of a program, project, or an initiative.
- It is the “evidence” upon which we can increase our effectiveness, build our organizational capacity, and better inform future decision making.
Why do we need to evaluate our programs/projects?

- To continuously improve our program/project operations and delivery to the benefit of our stakeholders
- To demonstrate our stewardship and accountability to funders and stakeholders
- To enhance our organizational effectiveness in the design and delivery of future initiatives
- To contribute to our collective body of knowledge and policy for community well-being
Okay, I’ll try it. When, where, and how do I begin?

- When: The earlier the better!
- Best when the desired outcomes of a project are determined and you’re designing a program or project, and considering submitting a proposal or request for support or administrative approval
- When you can answer the question: What will be different if this project is implemented?
Your “theory of change”

- If implemented, this program/project will: [Fill in the blank]...these will be the IMPACTS of your program/project
- Impacts are broad and may be positive or negative: Examples of positive impacts may be: adding to community’s knowledge base; recovering traditional skills; changes in community perceptions; more informed decision making by community members. Examples of negative impacts may be reducing obesity levels, reducing at-risk behaviors, reducing the flow of capital, talent, or other resources out of the community.
Plan to evaluate it by determining what the best evidence of the program/projects impacts are and systematically collecting, measuring, and analyzing that evidence.

Will you use qualitative evidence, such as surveys, pre–and post tests of participant knowledge, or other hard data?

Will you use qualitative data like interviews, observations, and focus groups?

Will you use both types of evidence [Mixed methods]
Oh, no! Not getting the outcomes expected!

- Think through the critical intervals of project activity to identify when to conduct an interim evaluation.
- These interim evaluations may be formative evaluations; from which you may need to refine your theory of change, or
- They may be process evaluations, which suggest a different or refined delivery or approach in your activities.
- Frequently, an interim evaluation will be both formative and process evaluations.
Evaluation is a process, not a product

7 “serious questions: you will need to consider:

- What do we want to evaluate?
- What is the purpose of the evaluation?
- What type of evaluation do we want to use?
- What information do we need?
- How will we get that information?
- How will we analyze/interpret that information?
- How will we use and share that information?
Developing your evaluation design

A step by step approach:

- State your project goal [BIG picture, transformative statement based on the projected impact of the project]
- State each project objective. Remember objectives must be SMART: Specific; Measurable; Actionable/Achievable; Realistic; and Timely
Stakeholders

- Primary Stakeholders
- Secondary Stakeholders
- Which stakeholders should participate in this evaluation?
- Which Stakeholders will need information from this evaluation?
SMART Objective(s)  What evaluation measures or indicators will we use as evidence?

What quantitative measures will we use?

What qualitative measures will we use?

How will we compile that data or information?

How often or at what interval will we collect that data or information?
Anticipated Outcomes of Each Objective – 2

- What are the outputs, deliverables, or products of each SMART objective?
- How will we evaluate each of those activities, products, or other outputs of each objective?
Best Evidence by SMART Objective

- What evaluation questions will we use?
- What evaluation instruments or protocols will we use for each?
- Are there prior approvals required for us to undertake collection of this evidence?
- How extensive does our data collection need to be to assure its validity?
## Presenting your plan through a logic model

LOGIC MODEL FOR PROGRAM DESIGN AND DEVELOPING AN EVALUATION PLAN

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Impacts</th>
<th>Evaluation Tool</th>
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Evaluation Plan

- Narrative description of the responses you’ve identified in the prior steps or displayed on a logic model
- Identification of the key personnel who will be responsible for the collection, compilation, and analysis of the data
- Identification of stakeholders or participants who will have access to the evaluation, and the format(s) in which you will present your findings
Communicating your Findings

- Reporting Considerations: to whom, in what format, and how disseminated
- Interpreting your findings – What did you learn from this project or program?
- Did it meet your expectations or were there modifications that you’d make?
- Were there unanticipated outcomes?
- Tell your audience WHY this information is important
Using Evaluation Results for Future Projects

- What did your project team learn from this program/project?
- How can that knowledge inform the organization for future efforts?
- Did this project suggest new or previously uninvolved constituencies or stakeholders?
- How can your organization best embed rigorous evaluation techniques/skills for all of its future efforts?
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