Inside this workbook

Conducting an evaluation involves planning, implementing, and using the evaluation.

This resource walks you through the steps of evaluation planning with worksheets to help you gather, organize and assess information.

For more evaluation know-how, tools and support, contact healthincommon.ca.

Why evaluate?

Evaluation helps answer questions about your programs:

- Are we doing what was planned or intended? For example, do we reach the intended audience? Deliver the program as planned?
- Are we using resources well? Can we make better use of available resources?
- Are we making a difference, or having the desired impact?
Step One
Involve people in evaluation

Most evaluations have many different stakeholders. A stakeholder is any person or group that has an interest in the program or the results of the evaluation. This can include project staff, administrators, participants or clients, community residents, funders, volunteers or collaborating agencies.

Stakeholder involvement is important needs to happen from the very beginning of the process. Involving stakeholders ensures that your evaluation:

- includes multiple perspectives;
- has the needed buy-in;
- is relevant to those who will be using the information; and
- increases the likelihood that findings will be implemented.

- **Types of stakeholders** (worksheet 1a).
- **Create a plan for engaging stakeholders** (worksheet 1b).

Step Two
Describe your program

Together with the stakeholders you’ve engaged, you need to describe the program you want to evaluate.

This involves explaining the purpose of the program (the program rationale and what you hope to achieve (outcomes), the activities (outputs) and who will take part, and resources needed to implement the program.

One tool to describe your program is a logic model. Logic models show how resources (inputs) and activities can result in outputs that, in turn, lead to short, medium and long term outcomes.

In other words, the logic model visually connects the different parts of a program to show how and why the program should work.

- **Describe your program** (worksheet 2a).
- **Create a logic model** (worksheet 2b).
- **Sample logic model** (worksheet 2c).
Step Three

Agree on evaluation questions

Doing an evaluation helps to answer the question “Is the program doing what we want it to do?”. Coming up with specific evaluation questions to ask, such as “Is our community more food secure?” or “How many people benefitted from our program?”, makes it easier to find out about specific parts of the program.

These questions can then be answered and measured with indicators (the actual things we look at, describe or count to see how the program did).

For example, indicators for “How many people benefitted from our program?” could be: the number of people involved; the types of knowledge learned; the number of people served; or even the weight of food items distributed from the program.

Once you have evaluation questions and indicators you are ready to decide how and what kinds of information you will collect.

The number of questions you have will depend on the purpose of your evaluation. If you have too many questions (more than five), work with your stakeholders to prioritize a small and manageable number of questions.

Keep in mind, evaluation questions should be developed together with multiple stakeholders.

- Examples of evaluation questions (worksheet 3a).
- Prioritize evaluation questions (worksheet 3b).
- Develop an evaluation framework (worksheet 3c).

Interested to learn more about evaluation tools and resources? Visit Health in Common, healthincommon.ca
1. Those requesting the evaluation or in a position to do or decide something with the results of the evaluation:
   - Funders, funding agencies
   - Staff
   - Administrators, Board of Directors
   - Managers
   - Sponsors
   - Community members
   - Collaborators
   - Partners
   - Elected officials

2. Those who may be affected by the evaluation:
   - Clients
   - Family members
   - Neighbourhood organizations
   - Educational institutions
   - Elected officials
   - Advocacy groups
   - Community residents, community leaders
   - Professional associations
   - Skeptics
   - Opponents
   - Staff of related or partners organizations

3. Others?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individuals, Groups or Agencies</th>
<th>Reason of involvement (check any or all that apply)</th>
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<td>Others:</td>
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</table>
Describe your Program

What is the program name?

Where is it located/where does it operate?

Is it a new program? In progress? Well-established?

Situation: What is the situation being addressed? What is the need or problem that gave rise to the program?

Outcomes: What will be different as a result of the program? Who (or what) will change? In what way? What might be some unintended and/or unexpected outcomes?

Participants: Who participates in the program? Who do you want to participate? (ages, numbers, key demographic characteristics)

Activities: What are the things that happen in the program? What is the program doing? What are the activities?

Resources (inputs): What goes into the program in terms of human, material, and financial resources?
Solvent Users Recreation Program

Situation: Solvent users participated in various modules for recreation, physical activity, art and learning life skills.

**Inputs**
- Program coordinator
- Volunteer trainers and facilitators
- Advisory committee
- Evaluation committee
- Project funding
- Supplies – purchased and donated
- Food and volunteer cooks

**Activities**
- 10 week home repair module
- 8 week boxing module
- 6 week auto repair module
- 5 week photography module
- 5 week bike repair module
- 5 week music module
- Ongoing twice weekly drop-in for arts and crafts
- Celebrations held after each module and at end of program

**Outputs**
- Participation

**Activities**
- 10 week boxing module
- 8 week boxing module
- 6 week auto repair module
- 5 week photography module
- 5 week bike repair module
- 5 week music module
- Ongoing twice weekly drop-in for arts and crafts

**Participants and volunteers gain new skills**
- Increased self-confidence
- Improved physical health including fitness level and coordination
- Enhanced quality of life including improved physical and emotional wellbeing

**Participants engage in fun recreational activities**
- Participants have increased opportunity to participate in fun activities and be around others
- Participants expand their circle of formal and informal social support

**Participants have increased opportunity to participate in fun activities and be around others**
- All participants, volunteers and project partners

**Participants engage in fun recreational activities**
- 10 – 20 people per drop-in

**Participants have increased opportunity to participate in fun activities and be around others**
- 40 – 50 people

**Participants expand their circle of formal and informal social support**
- All participants, volunteers and project partners
Sample Evaluation Questions

About outcomes/impacts
- What do people do differently as a result of the program?
- Who benefits and how?
- Are participants satisfied with what they gain from the program?
- Are the program’s accomplishments worth the resources invested?
- What do people learn, gain, accomplish?
- What are the social, economic, environmental impacts (positive and negative) on people, communities, the environment?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program?
- Which activities contribute most? Least?
- What, if any, are unintended secondary or negative effects?
- How well does the program respond to the initiating need?
- How efficiently are clientele and agency resources being used?

About program implementation
- What does the program consist of – activities, events?
- What delivery methods are used?
- Who actually carries out the program and how well do they do so?
- Who participates in which activities? Does everyone have equal access?
- What resources and inputs are invested?
- How many volunteers are involved and what roles do they play?
- Are the financial and staff resources adequate?

About program context
- How well does the program fit in the local setting? With educational needs and learning styles of target audiences?
- What in the socio-economic-political environment inhibits or contributes to program success?
- What in the setting are givens and what can be changed?
- Who else works on similar concerns? Is there duplication?
- Who are cooperators and competitors?

About program need
- What needs are appropriately addressed?
- What are the characteristics of the target population?
- What assets in the local context and among target groups can be built upon?
- What are current practices?
- What changes do people see as possible or important?
- Is a pilot effort appropriate?
With your Evaluation Team, brainstorm evaluation questions and then use this table to decide which evaluation questions you want to use.

To make sure you have the time and resources to fully answer the questions, you should narrow down your evaluation to no more than five questions. It makes sense to focus your evaluation on one or two meaningful and well thought out questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Question</th>
<th>Can this be answered given the program?</th>
<th>Which people or organizations care about this?</th>
<th>How important is this?</th>
<th>Does this involve new information gathering?</th>
<th>Can it be answered given the time and resources?</th>
<th>Priority: High, Medium, Low, Eliminate</th>
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### Evaluation Framework

This is a worksheet to get you started. Worksheet 3a and b can help you to choose questions after you have looked at the framework below and have put some thought towards what to evaluate and how.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of evaluation focus</th>
<th>Indicators (what will measure or “indicate” progress?)</th>
<th>Data source (where will the information come from?)</th>
<th>Data collection method (how will the information be gathered?)</th>
<th>Timeframe (when will the information be collected?)</th>
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<td>Evaluation Question</td>
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| 1. Did the program reach the target audience? | a. Total number of participants at each session  
    b. Number of new people signing up  
    c. Number and experience of volunteers involved in the program  
    d. Number of people attending celebrations | Program activity logs | Program coordinator | Weekly and at the end of each module |
| 2. Did the participants and volunteers gain new skills? | a. Description of each module offered and type of training provided  
    b. Participants self-report on skills gained  
    c. Volunteers self-report on skills gained | Program activity logs  
    Participant survey (paper)  
    Focus groups  
    Volunteer Survey (on-line) | Program coordinator  
    Evaluator  
    Program coordinator  
    Evaluator | Weekly and at the end of each module  
    At the end of each module  
    At the end of each module  
    At the end of each module |
| 3. Did the participants have fun? | a. Participants self-report  
    b. Program coordinator and volunteers observe participants engaging and enjoying the program | Program activity logs  
    Participant survey (paper)  
    Focus groups  
    Volunteer Survey (on-line) | Program coordinator  
    Evaluator  
    Program coordinator  
    Evaluator | Weekly and at the end of each module  
    At the end of each module  
    At the end of each module  
    At the end of each module |
| 4. Did participants’ support networks expand? (advocacy, support, e.g. peer support, housing) and resources | a. Participants share stories about the experience  
    b. Participants document their experience through photographs  
    c. Increased scores on PDSQ questionnaire re: wellbeing, social supports and health | Focus groups  
    PDSQ Instrument (short form) | Program coordinator  
    Evaluator | At the end of each module  
    At the end of each module |