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MONITORING AND EVALUATING DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMMES

PROCER



Framework for a Minimum Quality Standards Prevention Program

- Core principles: ethics and a scientific approach
- An overall process of continuous quality improvement
- Sequential steps of gathering data,
- Planning and delivery
- Process and outcome evaluation
- Publication of results.





What is Program Evaluation?

Program evaluation is defined as “the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future program development.



What is Evaluation? - Other Perspectives

It is a process by which we determine whether a project is meeting its goals through the activities taking place and in the manner expected.



It summarizes:

- Why we developed the project (goals)
- What it involves (project activities)
- What we expect will happen as a result of these activities (anticipated results or outcomes)
- What in fact did happen (actual results or outcomes)
- What this information tells us about the project (conclusions)



The Uses of An Evaluation

- To collect evidence on the effectiveness/impact of a programme.
- To be accountable to stakeholders: funders, clients, volunteers, staff and community.
- To identify ways to improve a programme:
 - determining what works,
 - what doesn't work and why
 - improving the usefulness of programme materials
- To compare a programme with other programmes.
- Identifying side-effects (unanticipated outcomes)
- To assess the efficiency of a programme (cost-benefit analysis).



Why Don't We Evaluate?

- Time
- Money
- Expertise
- Intrusiveness
- Fear
- We already know the program/project is effective
- Long-term change versus short-term funds



Types of Evaluation

- ✓ Needs assessment
- ✓ Resource assessment
- ✓ Evaluability assessment
- ✓ Project monitoring
- ✓ Formative
- ✓ Outcome
- ✓ Summative
- ✓ Cost-benefit
- ✓ Cost-effectiveness



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Types of Evaluation

Needs Assessment

Used to learn what the people or communities that you hope to reach may need in general or in relation to a specific issue

Evaluability Assessment

Done to determine whether a project is ready for a formal evaluation



Types of Evaluation

Formative

Also known as process evaluation, a formative evaluation tells how the project is operating, whether it is being implemented the way it was planned, and whether problems in implementation have emerged (for example, it might identify that a project is reaching a less at-risk group than it intended, that staff do not have the necessary training, that project locations are not accessible, or that project hours do not meet participant needs.).



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Types of Evaluation

Project Monitoring

Counts specific project activities and operations. This is a very limited kind of evaluation that helps to monitor, but not assess the project

Outcome Evaluations

Examines the extent to which a project or program has achieved the outcomes it set at the outset



Types of Evaluation

Summative Evaluation

Examines the overall effectiveness and impact of the project or program, its quality, and whether its ongoing cost can be sustained



Types of Evaluation

Cost-effectiveness

Examines the relationship between project costs and project outcomes. It assesses the cost associated with each level of improvement in outcome.



Types of Evaluation

Cost-Benefit Analysis

Looks at the relationship between project costs and outcomes (or benefits). But a cost-benefit study assigns a dollar value to the outcome or benefit so that a ratio can be obtained to show the number of dollars spent and the number of dollars saved.



Levels of Evaluation



Project Monitoring



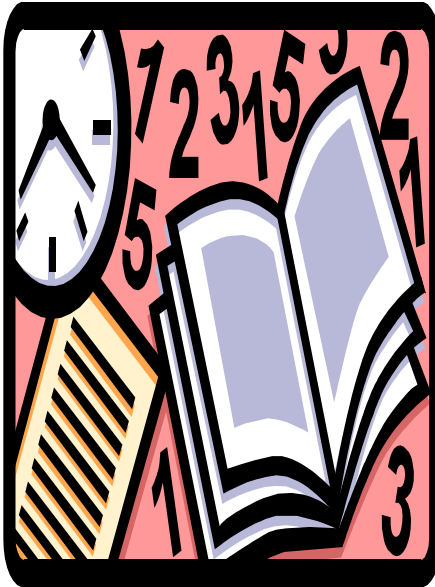
Process Evaluation



Outcome Evaluation



Project Monitoring



Tracks how or what the project is doing

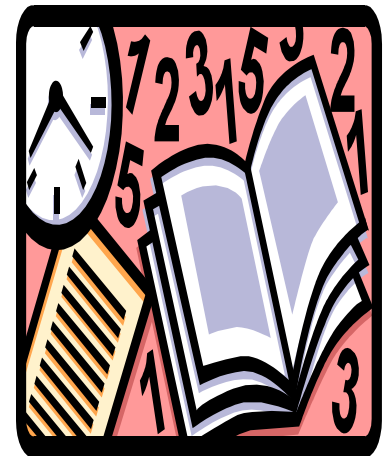


For Example . . . Monitoring

How many:

- ✓ activities you offer
- ✓ staff are involved
- ✓ hours the staff work
- ✓ participants attend activities
- ✓ partners are involved

... and whether these things change over time.





Process Evaluation



Asks how the project is operating
and how to make it better



For Example. . . Process

- ✓ Is the project reaching who it intended?
- ✓ Are activities occurring in the way they were planned?
- ✓ Is the number of participants affecting staff workloads or the amount of services participants receive?

Standards







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Outcome Evaluation



Asks how effective the project is



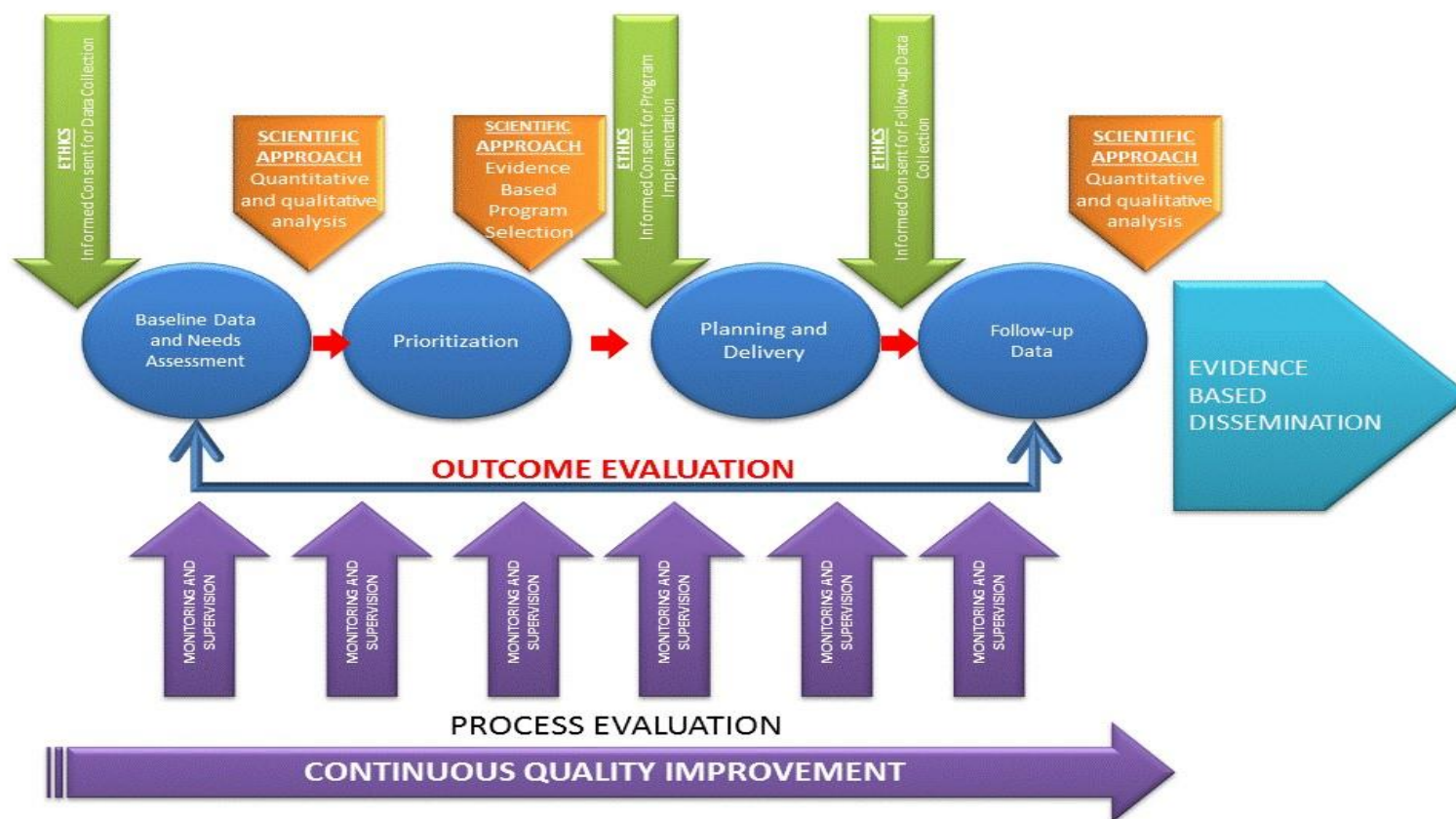
For Example . . . Outcome

- ✓ Did participants stay in school longer?
- ✓ Did they have less contact with police or become victims less often?
- ✓ How can the program be improved to better meet its objectives?



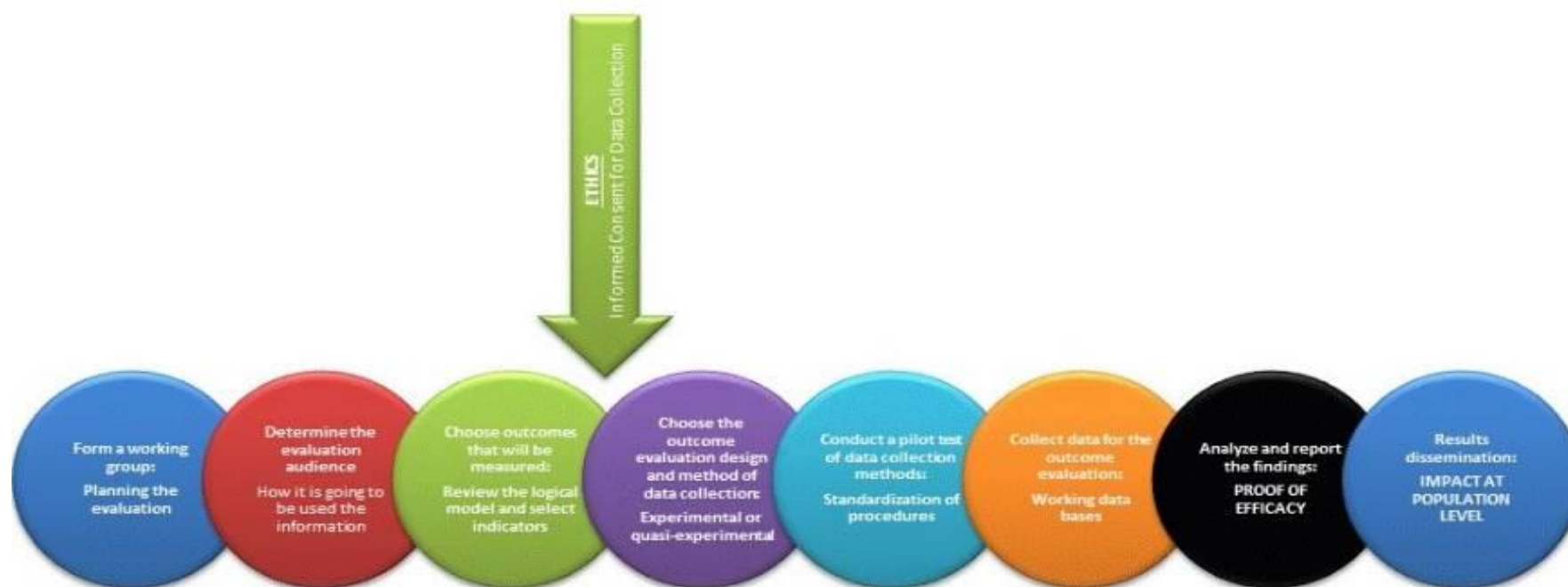


Where Does an Outcome Evaluation Fall in a Quality Prevention Programme





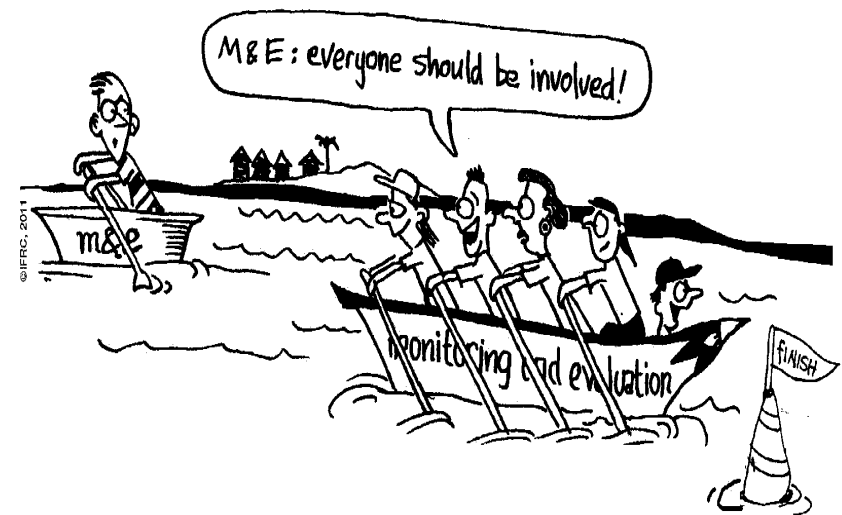
Steps in Conducting an Outcome Evaluation





Step #1- Engage Stakeholders

- Identify stakeholders
 - Persons involved in the program operations
 - Persons served or affected by the program
 - Intended users of the evaluation findings
- Gaining buy-in from stakeholders





Step #2 – Describe the Program

At a minimum, the program description should address:

- The specific **needs** for program services in the community,
- The **target audience** of program services,
- The **context** in which the program operates,
- The **objectives** of the program,
- The program's **stage of development**,
- The program's **resources/inputs**,
- All of its **activities**, and
- The intended **results (outputs and outcomes)** of the program.

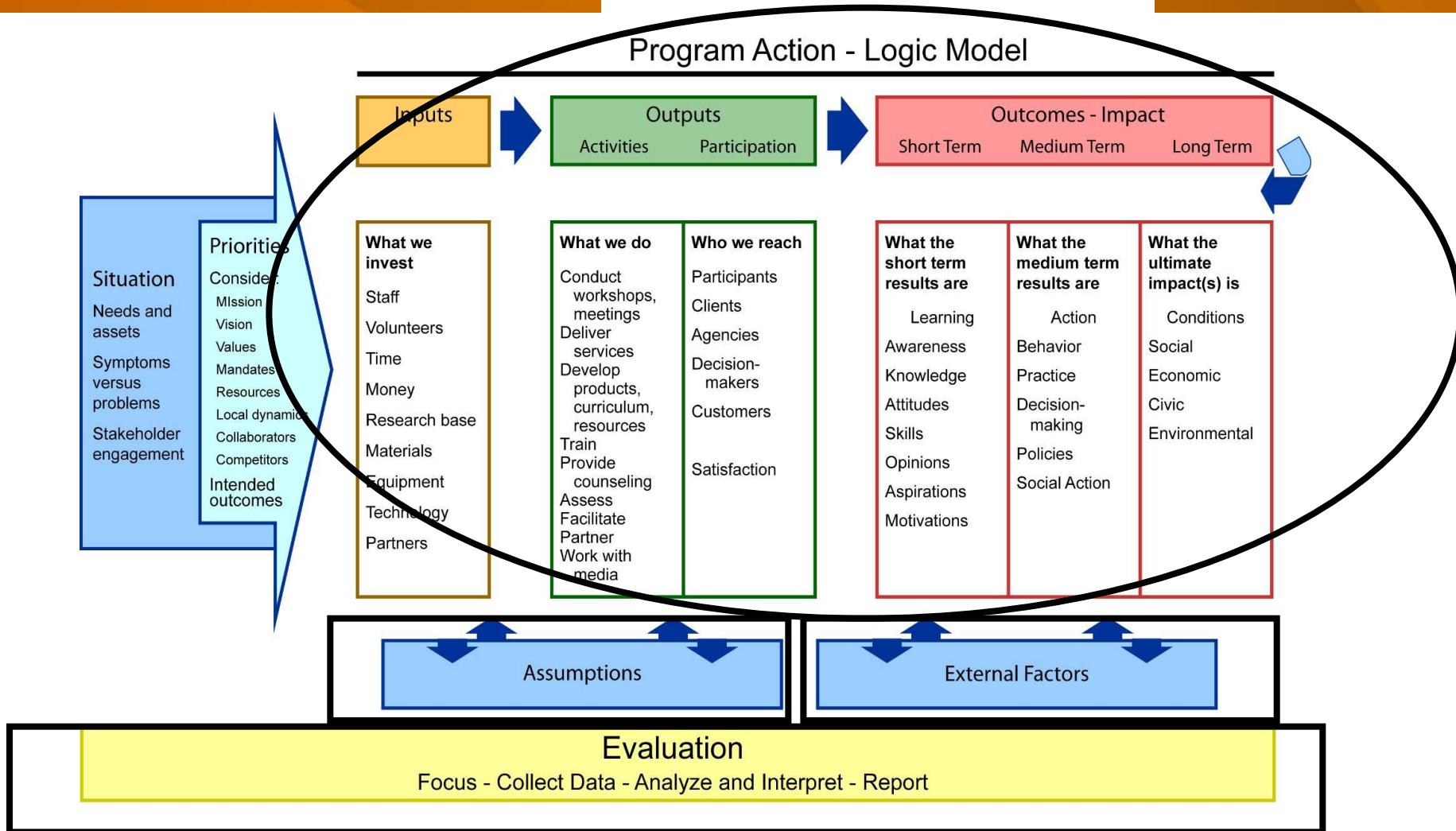


Step #2 – Graphic Description of the Program – THE LOGIC MODEL

- Provides a sense of scope – what are the program's components? How are they interconnected?
- Serves as a “map” to help ensure that systematic decisions are made about what is to be measured in the evaluation process and that gaps in information do not occur
- Organizes indicators and ensures that none are overlooked
- Visually communicates why indicators and tools matter in the overall scheme of a programs' efforts to achieve outcomes



Program Action - Logic Model





Example of Possible Changes

Conditions

Impact	Economic	Social	Cultural	Civil	Political	Environmental
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Performance

Outcome	Decision-Making	Social Action	Behaviour	Policy-Making	Viability
		Efficiency	Effectiveness	Practice	

Capacities

Outputs	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Authority
	Resources	Understanding	Risks	Motivation
	Systems	Assessments	Publications	

What we do

Activities	Networking	Counselling	Assessment	Media Work
	Training	Facilitation	Meetings	Product Development
				Recruitment

What we invest

Inputs	Money	Staff	Time	Materials	Technology	Partners
				Equipment		

Source: Adapted from St. Mary's University



Step #3 – Focusing the Evaluation Design

Process Evaluation

For established programs, process evaluations help program stakeholders understand why the programs are achieving the results they are, and serve to complement outcome evaluations

For new programs, process evaluation helps staff find and correct problems before they can affect the program.



Step #3 – Focusing the Evaluation Design (Cont'd)

Outcome Evaluation

Outcome evaluations show whether or not a program achieves the desired effects. You may ask, “Did our program activities produce the changes we wanted?”

The logic model is your best tool for “tracing back” the factors that contribute to good or poor performance on an outcome.



Step #3 – Focusing the Evaluation Design (Cont'd)

- Choosing an evaluation focus and defining evaluation questions (what do you want to know)
- Evaluation Design



Step #4 – Gathering Credible Evidence

- Determine indicators (what will you measure? what type of data will you need to answer the evaluation question?).
- Identify data sources (where can you find these data?).
- Determine the data collection method (how will you gather the data?).
- Specify the time frame for data collection (when will you collect the data?).



Step #5 – Justifying Conclusions

Analyzing data -Analyzing the data involves looking at what the data means in addition to what they say

Justifying conclusions - In justifying the conclusions of the evaluation, you must ensure that the results are both accurate and useful for them to be of maximum value.



Step #6 – Ensuring Use of Evaluation Finding and Sharing Lessons Learned

All participants and stakeholders in the evaluation should receive information summarizing the evaluation's conclusions and recommendations. Even though you may choose to make different recommendations for different users of the evaluation, all recommendations should outline actions steps that can be taken to improve the program.



Types of Outcome Evaluations

Experimental Evaluations

Experimental evaluations are random assignment studies that assess the overall impacts of a programme or programme activities and allow for conclusions to be drawn about cause and effect. In experimental evaluations, participants are assigned at random to a *treatment group*, which receives programme services, or to a *control group*, which does not receive these services

Quasi-Experimental Evaluations

Quasi-experimental evaluations monitor outcomes over time for a single group (i.e., comparing changes in outcomes before and after receiving programme services), or compare outcomes among individuals receiving programme services to a similar population, a comparison group, or to national data.



Outcome Evaluation Design: Single-Group Posttest-only Designs

X



What your project does.

O



When you measure the outcome.



Outcome Evaluation Design: Single-Group Pre- and Posttest Designs

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O
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Pretest assessment

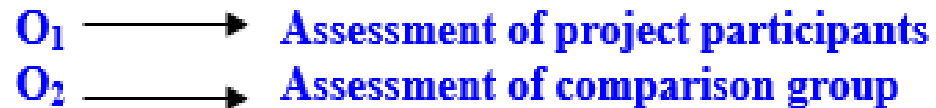
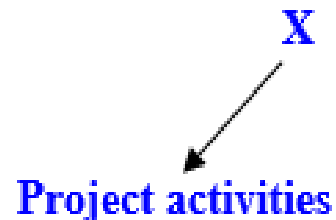
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Project activities

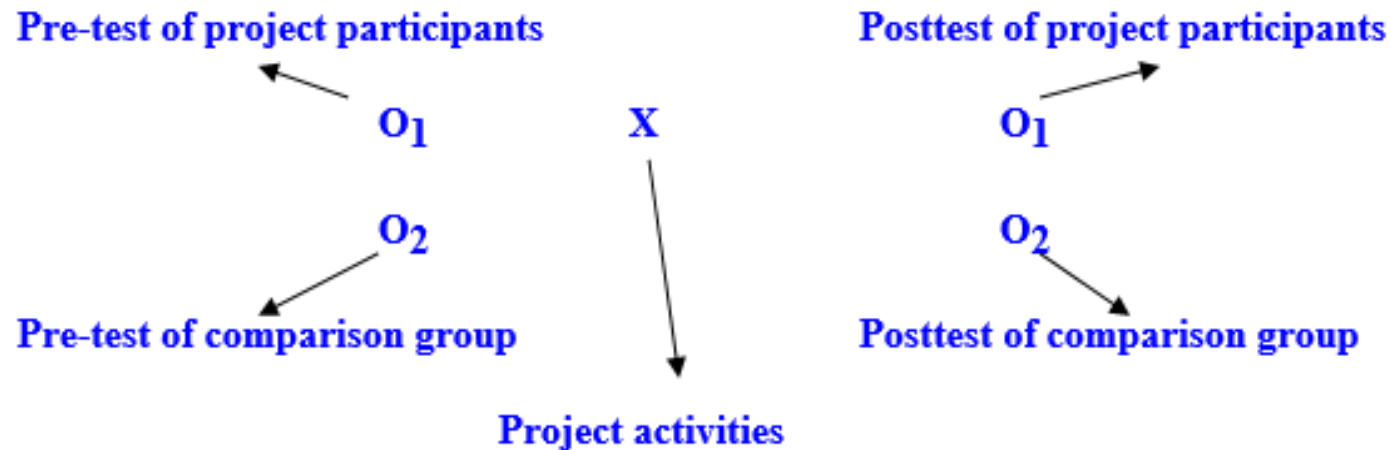
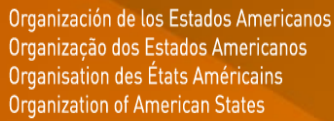
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Posttest assessment



Outcome Evaluation Design: Comparison-Group Posttest-only Designs

- Write:







Evaluation Challenges

- “Buy-in” of staff & partners
- Participant involvement
- Realistic outcomes
- Ensuring data collection takes place
- Data analysis
- Finding a good evaluator
- Ethical considerations
- Reflecting cultural & community differences



Challenge: Getting Staff and Partner Buy-In

- Anxiety/fear - For many people, evaluation is a scary word (Don't take it personal)
- Concern about the project's fate (Funding, Jobs, etc.)
- Competing workload demands
- Lack of or lack of *confidence in* evaluation skills
- Evaluation tools will not capture change
- Feeling of being over evaluated.



Solutions: Getting Staff and Partner Buy-In

- Involve staff, partners, and participants in planning the evaluation
- Develop a logic model together to create a shared vision and goals
- View evaluation as research and development
- Embed evaluation in project activities
- Use templates and tracking sheets to record evaluation information
- Provide training and support
- Consult funders where competing evaluation demands exist
- Recognize that success can be defined in more than one way



Challenge: Participants Involvement

Maintaining participant involvement can be a challenge. While it is often simple enough to obtain participant consent in the first place, as time goes on, it can be difficult to maintain participation in follow-up surveys or interviews.



Solution: Participants Involvement

- Involve participants in evaluation plans
- Use plain-language consent forms
- Give staff scripts to help explain the evaluation
- Use incentives or rewards
- Make participation convenient, go to participants or fit survey completion into program times; keep surveys short
- Select a big enough sample to allow for drop-out
- Provide feedback on evaluation results



Challenge: Data Collection

An evaluation's success rests on getting accurate and complete information. It is often too late to go back for information if you later realize it is missing. Yet despite the crucial role of good data in evaluations, there are often many players involved in data collection, resulting in less control over this aspect of the evaluation than you might like.



Solution: Data Collection

- Ensure partners, staff, and participants are aware of the information needed to evaluate the project
- Start the project with systems in place to collect appropriate data on a timely basis
- Review the data for accuracy and completeness on a regular basis



Challenge: Realistic Outcomes

Success = prevention of or reduction in substance use and abuse

But linking prevented or reduced substance use or abuse to a particular project can be difficult. Rates of substance use and abuse are affected by many factors outside of the control of a community project

Versus

Success = prevented or reduced substance use or abuse by project participants.



Solution: Realistic Outcomes

- Are there alternatives to using reduced substance use or abuse as a measure of success?
- Use more than one measure of substance use or abuse to control for problems with any one measure
- Report change in nature and frequency of substance use/abuse to avoid a simple success/failure outcome



Challenge: Finding an Evaluator

You may not have the financial resources within your budget to pay for an outside evaluator. But even if you are lucky enough to have money to hire an evaluator, you might find it's a challenge to find someone who is suited to your evaluation project and who will provide quality work.



Solution: Finding an Evaluator

Seek referrals from groups with which you've worked.

Look for someone with:

- Competence in research design, data collection, database design, and statistical analysis
- Knowledge of legal and professional standards for research
- Familiarity with the literature relevant to your project work
- Good management, public relations, writing, and interpersonal skills
- An action orientation

Evaluators with an action-research orientation will be more likely to suggest practical solutions to any problems identified in your evaluation



Challenge: Ethical Considerations

- Limits to confidentiality
- Privacy
- Participants observations
- Random assignments
- Language used in reports
- Working with youth and marginalized groups



Solution: Ethical Considerations

- Ensure participation in the evaluation is voluntary
- Obtain signed consent forms indicating participants have given their informed consent
- Guarantee confidentiality to the extent possible
- Respect and inform yourself about cultural differences
- Write reports with project participants in mind



Challenge: Reflecting Cultural and Community Differences

- Distrust of record keeping
- Oral traditions
- Cultural differences
- Small participation numbers
- Experience with project management
- Confidentiality
- Language



Solution: Reflecting Cultural and Community Differences

- Use participatory methods of evaluation
- Include qualitative measures
- Use culturally appropriate measures
- Employ multiple measures
- Offer staff training in project management and evaluation, if needed
- Translate evaluation measures into the language of participants or hire interpreters to provide oral translations



- Dessimination of outcomes and reports.

[..\Reference Materials\Communications Strategy Template.doc](#)



Key Factors in the Transmission of Information

- **Know your Audience** - identify the key individuals to whom we wish to send messages about the drug use prevention project.
- **Clarity** — Ensure that the information is clear and precise and contains as few technical, scientific or bureaucratic terms as possible and eliminate information that the audience does not need.
- **Consistency** — All messages on a particular topic should be consistent.
- **Main Points** — The main points should be stressed, repeated, and never hidden within less strategically important information.
- **Credibility** — The spokesperson and source of the information should be believable and trustworthy. Ensure that the information comes from reliable sources, that is, that it has been obtained from clearly identified primary and secondary sources.
 - guarantees that *decisions taken are based on evidence*.
- **Public Need** — Messages should be based on what the target audience perceives as most important to them and not what is most important or most interesting to the originating agency.



What should be Communicated in a Drug Abuse Prevention Intervention

- Baseline
- Objectives
- Activities
- Outcomes
- Goal
- Lessons Learned



Communicating Stakeholder-Specific Messages

The messages and the style of communication are determined on the basis of the public or key person to whom certain messages are directed... It is important to identify the interest that each stakeholder may have in the project, and, on that basis, to prepare the message in the confidence that the stakeholders will find it interesting, that they will understand it and become involved in it.

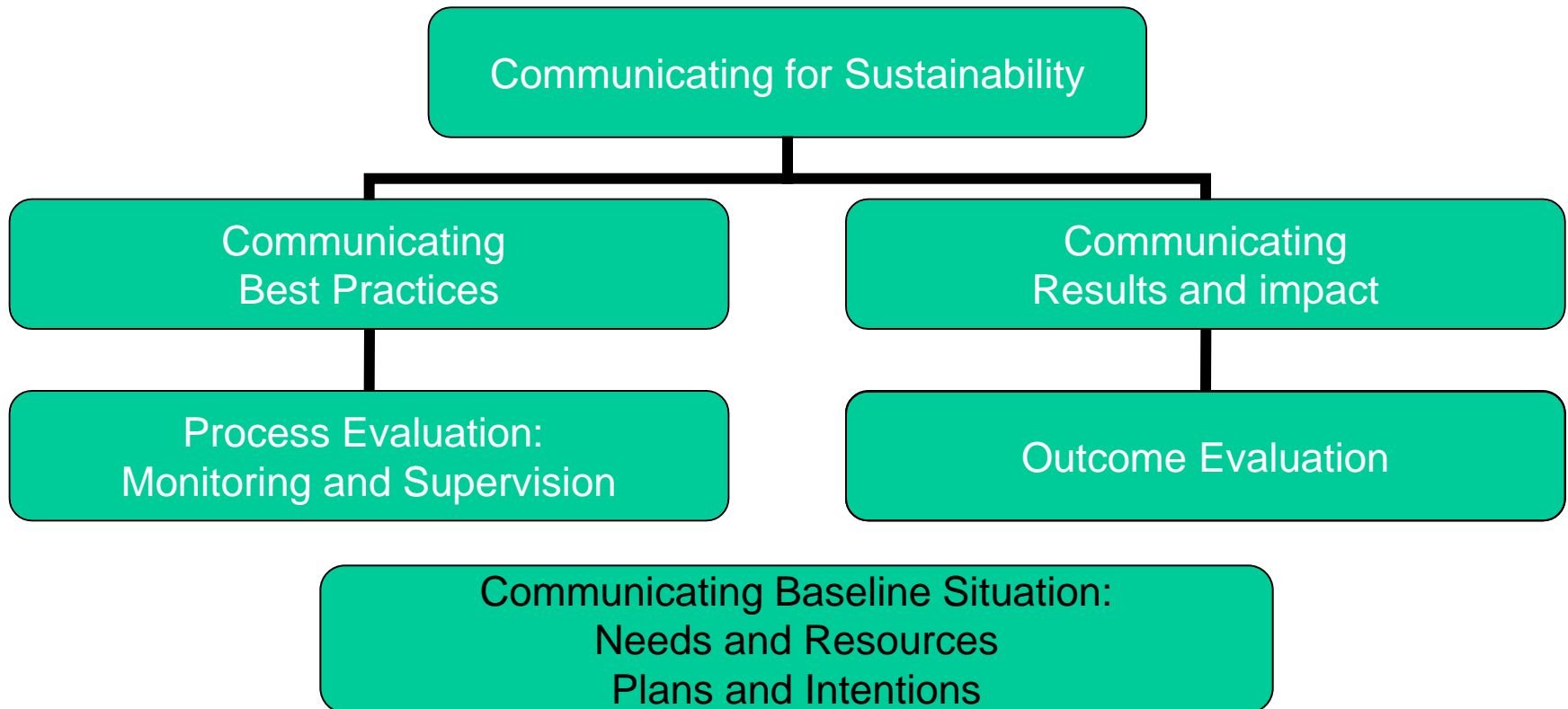


Communicating for Project Sustainability

- **ECONOMIC SUPPORT** - means providing financing, a budget, for project execution
- **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SUPPORT** - is the support that professionals and/or individuals with experience in drug use prevention projects can provide to the various project activities.
- **POLITICAL SUPPORT** - Or backing from the authorities is always important.



Concept Map





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Example: Communications Plan Template



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Any comments, questions?