

Evaluating Early Childhood Development Programs

**A WORKBOOK FOR EVALUATION
CAPACITY-BUILDING**

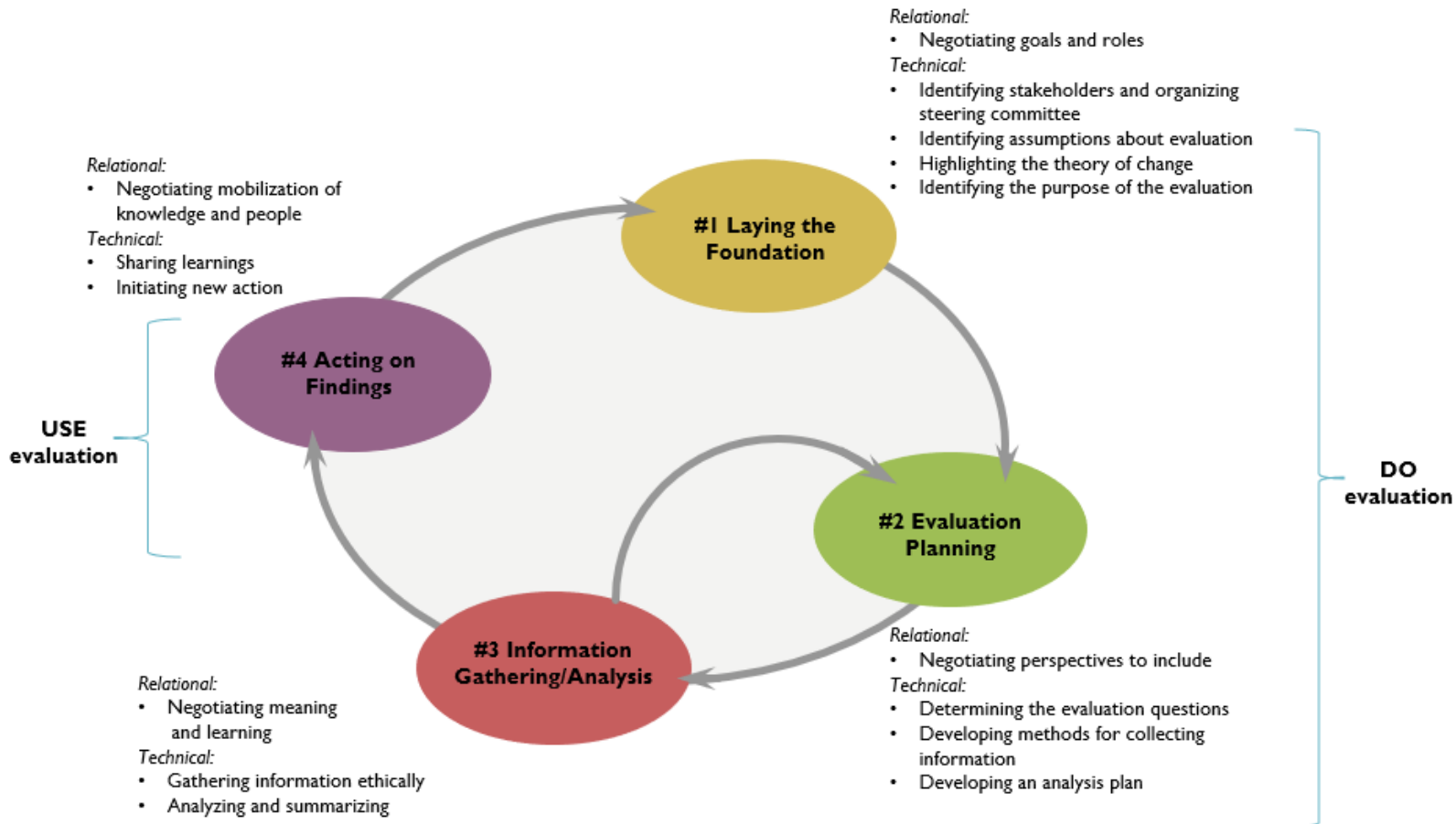


CENTRE FOR
COMMUNITY
BASED RESEARCH



EVALUATION
CAPACITY
NETWORK

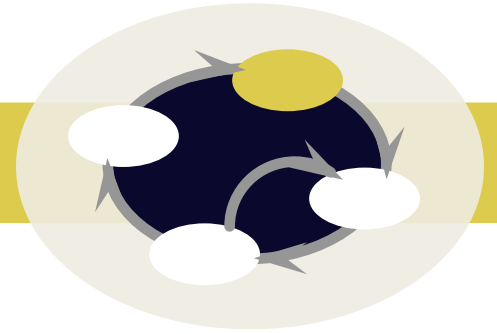
THE FOUR PHASES OF COMMUNITY-BASED EVALUATION



Did you forget what you learned in slide decks? Look for the  throughout the workbook to be redirected to the appropriate slides.

This workbook accompanies the Evaluating Early Childhood Development Programs slide decks, which is part of a larger nation-wide initiative to build the evaluation capacity of the early childhood development sector across Canada. To learn more please visit: www.evaluationcapacitynetwork.com

To evaluate your organization or group's readiness for community-based evaluation, see Appendix F: Evaluation Capacity Readiness Tool.



Stakeholder Mapping

Identify those who have a stake in the project and determine steering committee members.

What groups of people have a stake in the issue that you wish to evaluate?

Who could you invite to join a guiding steering committee that would bring these different stakeholder perspectives?



SUSTAINERS
INFLUENCERS
PEOPLE WITH
LIVED EXPERIENCE

Create a Logic Model

Visualize your theory of change.

Inputs

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Activities

--	--	--

Outputs

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**Immediate
Outcomes**

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**Intermediate
Outcomes**

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**Ultimate
Outcomes**

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➡ Flow of people

Components of the Logic Model

A logic model is an overview of the flow of materials and processes to produce the results desired by the organization or program.

Inputs

Resources such as staff, volunteers, resources, and funding

Activities

Program events or strategies (at the individual or community level) designed to achieve the outcomes

Outputs

Tangible results of the major activities (# of people trained, resources produced, etc.)

Outcomes are the impacts on those people whom the organization wanted to benefit:

- a) changes in knowledge, understanding/perceptions, and actions
- b) enhancements in skills (needed to accomplish particular results)
- c) changes in conditions (increased financial security, confidence, etc.)

Immediate Outcomes

Immediate changes as a result of activities

Intermediate Outcomes

Changes in the mid-term (months/years)

Ultimate Outcomes

Long-term intended impact (years/decades)

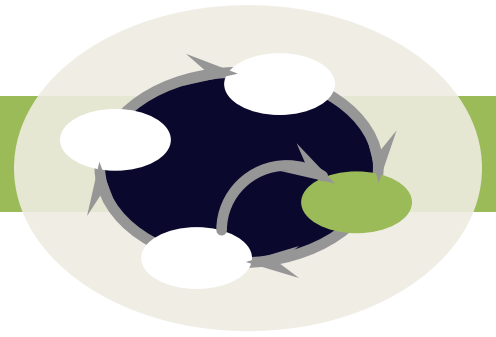
Create a Purpose Statement

What is the purpose of your evaluation?



Write your purpose statement below:

For further details, see Appendix A: What Is Your Purpose for Evaluating?



Develop Your Main Questions

What do you intend to understand with this evaluation?

What are the 3-4 main questions that you want the evaluation to answer? How would answering these questions fulfill your evaluation's purpose?

Decide On Your Methods

What methods will you use to answer your main evaluation questions?

What are the most effective and efficient ways to answer your evaluation questions (consider a mix of methods that provide: quantitative and qualitative data; primary and secondary data; data from different stakeholder perspectives)?

How do your methods complement each other? How do they together better answer the main evaluation questions than if they were conducted alone?

In what order (or stages) should the methods be carried out?

For those methods requiring you to recruit participants, how will you select people to be involved (i.e., sampling) and how will you go about recruiting people (i.e., recruitment strategy)?

For further details, see:

- ✓ Appendix B: Methods for Collecting Information
- ✓ Appendix C: Advantages and Challenges of Data Collection Methods
- ✓ Appendix D: Data Collection Plan Worksheet

Develop Your Analysis Plan

How would you go about analyzing your data? What strategies would you use for qualitative data? For quantitative data? How would you summarize across methods?

Program Evaluation Plan Worksheet

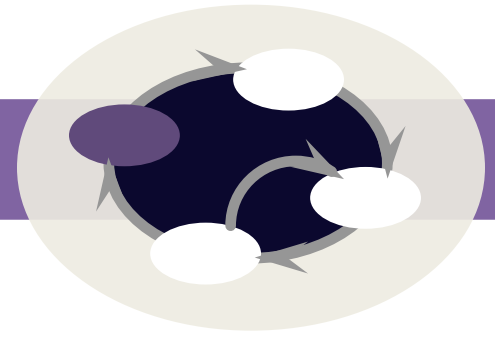
Evaluation Component	Key Plan Information	Actions	Considerations	Who Is Responsible?	Timeline
Phase 1: Laying the Foundation					
Stakeholder Mapping (see p. 3)	1. List of key stakeholder groups 2. List of Steering Committee Members (and the groups they are representative of) 3. Date/time of Orientation session 4. List of evaluation expectations (based on consensus) 5. Regular Steering Committee meeting dates/times				
Create a Logic Model (see pp. 4-5)	1. Logic Model				
Create a Purpose Statement (see page 6, Appendix A)	1. Purpose Statement				

Evaluation Component	Key Plan Information	Actions	Considerations	Who Is Responsible?	Timeline
Phase 2: Evaluation Planning					
Develop Your Main Evaluation Questions (see p. 7)	3-4 Main Evaluation Questions - Sub-questions, as appropriate				
Decide on Your Methods (see p. 8, Appendix B, C, D)	- Data collection method(s) for each of the main evaluation questions - Sampling and recruitment strategies for each method	Evaluation Method a. Sampling Strategies b. Recruitment Strategies c.			
Phase 3: Information Gathering and Analysis					
Develop Your Data Analysis Plan (see p. 9, Qualitative Data Analysis ppt)	Data Analysis Plan				

Evaluation Component	Key Plan Information	Actions	Considerations	Who Is Responsible?	Timeline
Phase 4: Acting on Findings					
Create a Sharing Plan (see pp. 13-14)	1. Sharing / Knowledge Mobilization Plan				
Create an Action Plan (see p. 15)	1. Action Plan				

For further details, see:

- ✓ Appendix E: Program Evaluation Plan Worksheet with Questions and Prompts



Create a Sharing Plan

How will your group share learnings?

What types of formats would best communicate your evaluation findings (e.g., reports, presentations, video, theatre, etc.)? Who is the intended audience(s) for each product?

Target Audience	Communication Format

What are your dissemination strategies? What specific activities will help you share findings so that key people are moved into action? Are there any natural decision-making events that you can utilize?

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Sharing What We Have Learned

Your audience: _____

1. Messages	2. Goals	3. Strategies	4. Impact
What are the key messages you want to share with your audience? <i>What is the most important message your audience needs to know about how children are developing in your community? (Note: Create 3 key messages. Refer to the tree for ideas).</i> 1. 2. 3.	What are the goals for each message? <i>What goal(s) are you hoping to achieve by sharing the key message? What are your expectations?</i> Messages 1 2 3 ↓ ↓ ↓ ☐ ☐ ☐ Generate... ☐ ☐ ☐ awareness ☐ ☐ ☐ interest ☐ ☐ ☐ practice change ☐ ☐ ☐ behaviour change ☐ ☐ ☐ policy action ☐ ☐ ☐ Impart... ☐ ☐ ☐ knowledge ☐ ☐ ☐ tools ☐ ☐ ☐ other ►. ☐ ☐ ☐ other ►. ☐ ☐ ☐ other ►.	What will be the most effective way to share this information with your audience? <i>Consider the best way to communicate each of your key messages in order to reach your goals. There may be more than one idea per message.</i> (Note: Go to the resource table for different ideas of how you could share this information with your audience). 1. 2. 3.	How will you know if you have achieved your goals? I will see indicators of..... ☐ Partnership/Collaboration (i.e. more collaboration between depts., sharing of info across the community,) ☐ Program or Service change (i.e. new or adapted programming, documented change in program outcomes) ☐ Policy development or change ☐ Knowledge Change (i.e. documented increase in awareness) ☐ Attitude Change (i.e. documented increase in awareness) ☐ Other:

Adapted from: Barwick, M. (2008, 2013). Knowledge Translation Planning Template. Ontario: The Hospital for Sick Children.

Create an Action Plan

What are the potential steps that would be needed to start implementing the evaluation recommendations? How well are your steering committee and original partners positioned to do this? What new partners might you need to engage through your evaluation?

What further information might be needed to provide more detailed implementation steps?

Appendix A: What Is Your Purpose for Evaluating?

Purposes	
1. Judgement oriented	Aimed at determining the overall merit, worth, significance or value (e.g., summative evaluation aimed at deciding if a program is sufficiently effective to be continued or replicated).
2. Accountability	Aimed at rendering account. Includes oversight and compliance, the assessment to the extent to which a program follows the directives, regulations, mandated standards, or other formal expectations (e.g., audits; accreditation). Driven by attention to external stakeholders.
3. Improvement oriented	Improve programs (e.g., formative evaluation; continuous improvement; quality enhancement; manage more effectively).
4. Knowledge-generating	Generate knowledge (e.g., generalizations about effectiveness; theory building; scholarly publishing; policy making; extrapolate principles about what works).
5. Monitoring	Manage the program, routine reporting, early identification of problems. Provided information to those internal to the program (e.g., quality control, management information systems; routine reporting).
6. Development	Involves changing the intervention, adapting it to changed circumstances, and altering tactics based on complex, emergent and dynamic conditions (e.g., developmental evaluation; rapid assessment; rapid feedback; environmental scanning).

Source: Patton, M.Q. (2012). *Essentials of utilization-focused evaluation*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications

Our purposes often are more specific. Think about the program you are evaluating. Are you conducting evaluation in order to...

- ✓ See if goals and objectives were met?
- ✓ Determine outcomes for participants? Families? Groups/organizations? For the community?
- ✓ Assess ultimate impact on the community in terms of changes in human, economic, civic, and/or environmental conditions?
- ✓ Assess whether the program is worth the resources invested? To demonstrate accountability for resources invested? To determine resource allocations? To justify need for funding? To make sure resources aren't wasted on ineffective programs?
- ✓ Learn about what works/doesn't work and for whom? Which activities lead to which outcomes?
- ✓ Assess access and/or disparities in reach, participation, and outcomes?
- ✓ Improve your service delivery or teaching? To help inform what you will do the next time?
- ✓ Promote the program?
- ✓ Meet the funder's requirement?
- ✓ Other?

A special acknowledgement to: Javier Mignone, Summer Institute in Program Evaluation, The University of Manitoba

Appendix B: Methods for Collecting Information

Survey: Collecting standardized information through structured questionnaires to generate quantitative data. Surveys may be mailed (surface and electronic), completed on site through interviews, either face-to-face or telephone.

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.

Interviews: Information collected by talking with and listening to people, either face-to-face or over the telephone. Interviews range on a continuum for those which are tightly structures (as in a survey) to free flowing, conversational interviews.

Observation: Collecting information through “seeing” and “listening.” Observations may be structured or unstructured.

Group assessment: Use of group processes 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, performance such as in pen-and-pencil tests or skills tests.

Photographs, slides, videos: Use of photography to capture visual images

Diaries, 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.

Document analysis: Use of content analysis and other techniques to analyze and summarize printed material and existing information.

Other:

Action cards: use of index cards on which participants record what they did – the “action” – and when they reached 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 feeling as through stories, drama, dance, music, 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.

Source: Program Development and Evaluation, *Methods for Collecting Information, Quick Tips #8*, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Madison, WI. 2002

A special acknowledgement to: *Javier Mignone, Summer Institute in Program Evaluation, The University of Manitoba*

Appendix C: Advantages and Challenges of Data Collection Methods

Method	Overall Purpose	Advantages	Challenges
Questionnaires, surveys, checklists	when need to quickly and/or easily get lots of information from people in a non-threatening way	-can complete anonymously -inexpensive to administer -easy to compare and analyze -administer to many people -can get lots of data -many sample questionnaires already exist	-might not get careful feedback -wording can bias client's responses -are impersonal -in surveys, may need sampling expert - doesn't get full story
Interviews	when want to fully understand someone's impressions or experiences, or learn more about their answers to questionnaires	-get full range and depth of information -develops relationship with client -can be flexible with client	-can be hard to analyze and compare -can be costly -interviewer can bias client's responses
Documentation review	when want impression of how program operates without interrupting the program; is from review of applications, finances, memos, minutes, etc.	-get comprehensive and historical information -doesn't interrupt program or client's routine in program -information already exists -few biases about information	-often takes much time -info may be incomplete -need to be quite clear about what looking for -not flexible means to get data; data restricted to what already exists
Observation	to gather accurate information about how a program actually operates, particularly about processes	-view operations of a program as they are actually occurring -can adapt to events as they occur	-can be difficult to interpret seen behaviors -can be complex to categorize observations -can influence behaviors of program participants -can be expensive
Focus groups	explore a topic in depth through group discussion, e.g., about reactions to an experience or suggestion, understanding common complaints, etc.; useful in evaluation and marketing	-quickly and reliably get common impressions -can be efficient way to get much range and depth of information in short time -can convey key information about programs	-can be hard to analyze responses -need good facilitator for safety and closure -difficult to schedule 6-8 people together
Case studies	to fully understand or depict client's experiences in a program, and conduct comprehensive examination through cross comparison of cases	-fully depicts client's experience in program input, process, and results -powerful means to portray program to outsiders	-usually quite time consuming to collect, organize, and describe -represents depth of information, rather than breadth

Source: McNamara, C. (1997-2008). Overview of methods to collect information. In *Basic guide to program evaluation*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Management Library.

A special acknowledgement to: Javier Mignone, Summer Institute in Program Evaluation, The University of Manitoba

Appendix D: Data Collection Plan Worksheet

Evaluation Question (What do you want to know?)	Indicator (How will you know it?)	Stakeholder Perspective (Who will have this information?)	Data Collection Methods (How will you gather the information?)	Schedule (When will the information be collected?)
To what extent has the program (8 months long) declined social isolation for children participating in different program activities?	- level of engagement in different program activities over time - level of engagement in other community activities over time - level of socializing with family members, friends, and classmates	- Parents/guardians - Program staff/volunteers - Friends and classmates - Program participants	1. Parent/guardian interviews (sampled) 2. Program staff/volunteer interviews or focus groups (sampled) 3. Program staff/volunteer survey (all staff/volunteers) 4. Participant focus groups (samples) 5. Participant case study (sampled)	1. Program entry, 4 & 8 months thereafter 2. Program entry, 4 & 8 months thereafter 3. Program entry and 8 months thereafter 4. Program entry and 8 months thereafter 5. At the end of the program

Appendix E: Program Evaluation Plan Worksheet with Questions and Prompts

Evaluation Component	Key Plan Information	Actions	Considerations	Who Is Responsible?	Timeline
Phase 1: Laying the Foundation					
Stakeholder Mapping (see p. 3)	6. List of key stakeholder groups 7. List of Steering Committee Members (and the groups they are representative of) 8. Date/time of Orientation session 9. List of evaluation expectations (based on consensus) 10. Regular Steering Committee meeting dates/times	a. Identify program Stakeholders b. Choose a representative group of stakeholders to form a community-based evaluation Steering Committee c. Host an orientation to community-based evaluation for the Steering Committee d. Clarify expectations around the evaluation e. Incorporate the expertise each Steering Committee member in the development of the Evaluation Plan f. Ensure that the Steering Committee comes to consensus about the Evaluation Plan	• Ensure that people with lived experience of the program topic(s) are well represented on the Steering Committee • Are there other important considerations (age, gender, home community, language, etc.?) • Agree on a regular meeting schedule early in the process to ensure Steering Committee member availability • Agree on the best methods of communication between meetings (ie. email updates)		

Evaluation Component	Key Plan Information	Actions	Considerations	Who Is Responsible?	Timeline
Phase 1: Laying the Foundation					
Create a Logic Model (see pp. 4-5)	2. Logic Model	a. Identify program Inputs, Activities, Outputs and Outcomes (Immediate, Intermediate and Ultimate)	The Evaluating Refugee Programs Outcome Inventory includes key indicators for the refugee-serving sector		
Create a Purpose Statement (see page 6, Appendix A)	2. Purpose Statement	a. Develop the purpose statement for your community-based evaluation	- Ensure that the purpose reflects the interests of all stakeholder groups (see: Appendix A) - The purpose statement should be clearly worded		
Phase 2: Evaluation Planning					
Develop Your Main Evaluation Questions (see p. 7)	3. 3-4 Main Evaluation Questions 4. Sub-questions, as appropriate	a. Identify the 3-4 main questions you want the evaluation to answer. b. Be clear about how answering each question would help to fulfill the purpose of the evaluation.	If the 3-4 main evaluation questions are big picture questions, consider developing sub-questions to which the evaluation can find concrete answers.		

Evaluation Component	Key Plan Information	Actions	Considerations	Who Is Responsible?	Timeline
Phase 2: Evaluation Planning					
Decide on Your Methods (see p. 8, Appendix B, C, D)	3. Data collection method(s) for each of the main evaluation questions 4. Sampling and recruitment strategies for each method	Evaluation Methods: d. Identify the most effective data collection methods for each of the 3-4 main evaluation questions e. Clarify how the methods compliment each other (ie. focus groups may explore themes of a survey in-depth) f. Plan the order of evaluation methods (ie. if focus groups will clarify themes arising from a survey, then the survey must happen first) Sampling g. Identify which stakeholder perspectives are needed to answer the main evaluation questions, and how you will include a sample of each relevant stakeholder group Recruitment h. Identify recruitment strategies for those stakeholder groups (ie. inviting known experts on a topic, choosing a random sample for a large group of potential participants, etc.)	- Identify what information you already have or collect and how it helps to answer your main evaluation questions - Identify gaps between existing data and the data needed to answer your main evaluation questions so that you know what information you want to collect through the evaluation for each question		

Evaluation Component	Key Plan Information	Actions	Considerations	Who Is Responsible?	Timeline
Phase 3: Information Gathering and Analysis					
Develop Your Data Analysis Plan (see p. 9, Qualitative Data Analysis ppt)	2. Data Analysis Plan	a. Review the 3-4 main evaluation questions b. Identify data analysis strategies for qualitative data, if applicable c. Identify data analysis strategies for quantitative data, if applicable d. Identify strategies for analyzing data across methods	• Data analysis should answer the 3-4 main evaluation questions • What kind of data are you working with (# of surveys, transcripts, audio files, etc.) • What impact do you want the research to have on whom? (Who will read/use the research products, how, and what will they find persuasive?) • What resources do you have access to (ie. transcription is time-consuming; be realistic) • Decide whether you will use deductive analysis (you determine the information you are looking for before reviewing the data), inductive analysis (key themes arise from the data gathered) or a balanced approach		

Evaluation Component	Key Plan Information	Actions	Considerations	Who Is Responsible?	Timeline
Phase 4: Acting on Findings					
Create a Sharing Plan (see pp. 13-14)	2. Sharing / Knowledge Mobilization Plan	a. Identify each target audience for the research and the communication format / research product(s) you will create for that audience b. Identify key dissemination strategies or activities you will use to get those research products to the key target audiences	• What are the key messages you want to share with each audience? • What are the goals for each message (ie. raise awareness, engender particular actions)? • What are the most effective ways to communicate each key message to reach your goals? • Are there local or national events or activities that would be strategic places to disseminate the research to particular audiences? • Are there websites, blogs, newsletters or other online spaces that will help you to reach one or more target audiences? • How will you know if you have reached your goals?		

Evaluation Component	Key Plan Information	Actions	Considerations	Who Is Responsible?	Timeline
Phase 4: Acting on Findings					
Create an Action Plan (see p. 15)	2. Action Plan	a. Identify the actions that will need to be taken in order to begin and continue implementing the evaluation recommendations?	- Which Steering Committee members are positioned to do what? - How can partners help and support? - What initial steps can you take based on the evaluation results and what further information do you need to gather before you can take additional steps?		

Appendix F: Evaluation Capacity Readiness Tool

Please rate your skill with the following:

	Not at all Skilled (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Very skilled (5)
1. Developing an evaluation plan	()	()	()	()	()
2. Clearly stating measurable goals and objectives	()	()	()	()	()
3. Identifying strategies to collect information	()	()	()	()	()
4. Defining outcome indicators of my program	()	()	()	()	()
5. Deciding what questions to ask in an evaluation	()	()	()	()	()
6. Deciding from whom to collect information	()	()	()	()	()
7. Collecting evaluation information	()	()	()	()	()
8. Analyzing evaluation information	()	()	()	()	()
9. Writing an evaluation report	()	()	()	()	()
10. Conducting an evaluation	()	()	()	()	()

Please indicate how likely you are to do the following:

	Very unlikely (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Very likely (5)
11. Use evaluation to determine the effectiveness of my organization	()	()	()	()	()
12. Use evaluation findings to benefit my sponsor(s)/funder(s)	()	()	()	()	()
13. Use evaluation to improve transparency in my organization	()	()	()	()	()
14. Use evaluation to assess the effectiveness of activities my organization engages in	()	()	()	()	()
15. Participate in evaluations as needed	()	()	()	()	()
16. Get staff members involved in evaluation	()	()	()	()	()
17. Oversee an external evaluator	()	()	()	()	()
18. Use evaluation findings in decision-making	()	()	()	()	()
19. Make organizational level changes based on evaluation findings	()	()	()	()	()
20. Adopt new ideas in my day-to-day activities based on evaluation findings	()	()	()	()	()

Please indicate how often your organization/supervisor is likely to do the following:

My organization/supervisor...

	Almost never (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Almost always (5)
21. encourages staff to express their opinions.	()	()	()	()	()
22. involves staff when making long-term plans.	()	()	()	()	()
23. gives staff the opportunity to reflect on organizational goals.	()	()	()	()	()
24. reviews mission, vision, and values with staff.	()	()	()	()	()
25. dedicates funds to conduct an evaluation.	()	()	()	()	()
26. allocates resources to undertake evaluation on an ongoing basis.	()	()	()	()	()
27. builds ideas in collaboration with staff.	()	()	()	()	()
28. resolves inter-personal conflicts in a positive manner.	()	()	()	()	()
29. celebrates staff members' achievements.	()	()	()	()	()
30. promotes evaluative thinking.	()	()	()	()	()

My organization/supervisor uses evaluation findings to...

	Almost never (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Almost always (5)
31. report to a funder.	()	()	()	()	()
32. improve services or programs.	()	()	()	()	()
33. get additional funding.	()	()	()	()	()
34. design ongoing monitoring processes.	()	()	()	()	()
35. assess implementation of a program.	()	()	()	()	()
36. assess the quality of a program	()	()	()	()	()
37. improve outreach.	()	()	()	()	()
38. make informed decisions.	()	()	()	()	()
39. train staff.	()	()	()	()	()
40. develop promising practices.	()	()	()	()	()

How familiar are you with community-based evaluation?

- () Not familiar at all
- () Slightly familiar
- () Moderately familiar
- () Very familiar

Scoring Guide

Overall *Individual Capacity* = Sum of question 1-20

(Individual Evaluation skill = Sum of questions 1-10; Individual Evaluation behavior = Sum of questions 11-20)

Overall score between 0 and 39 –**Entry** level individual evaluation capacity. You have limited knowledge of evaluation and limited experience with evaluation. You may require more substantial training and/or support to conduct evaluations.

Overall score between 40 and 59 - **Novice** level individual evaluation capacity. You have emerging knowledge of evaluation and some experience with evaluation but could use training with evaluation to develop skills further before conducting evaluations.

Overall score between 60 and 79 - **Proficient** level individual evaluation capacity. You have basic evaluation skills and a moderate amount of experience with evaluation. You can likely conduct effective evaluations with minimal support.

Overall score between 80 and 100 - **Mastery** level individual evaluation capacity. You have extensive evaluation knowledge and/or experience and can conduct effective evaluations on your own and may even be able to provide evaluation support to others.

Overall *Organizational Capacity* = Sum of questions 21-40

(Organizational Environment = Sum of questions 21-30; Organizational Evaluation use = Sum of questions 31-40)

Overall score between 0 and 39 - **Entry** level organizational capacity. Your organizational environment is not conducive to conducting evaluations and if evaluations are conducted, your organization is unlikely to use evaluation findings.

Overall score between 40 and 59 - **Novice** level organizational capacity. Your organization has some limited organizational capacity for evaluation and some capacity to use evaluation findings; however, use of evaluation findings is inconsistent.

Overall score between 60 and 79 - **Proficient** level organizational capacity. Your organizational environment is conducive to evaluations for the most part and some use of evaluation findings is apparent.

Overall score between 80 and 100 - **Mastery** level organizational capacity. Your organizational environment is conducive to evaluations and organization consistently and effectively uses evaluation findings.