BEYOND CHECKING THE BOXES: A DISCUSSION ON EDUCATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

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BEYOND CHECKING THE BOXES: A DISCUSSION ON EDUCATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

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Poll 1

I have hosted educational programs for adult learners:

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not sure
Poll 2: Check all that apply

If yes, I have evaluated my educational programs:
- When I start to design an education program
- Throughout an educational event
- At the end of an educational event
- After an educational event
- I do not conduct evaluations.
Impediments to Evaluation

• Evaluation always takes a back seat to training
• Training has little value unless what is learned is applied and the learner’s performance helps to contribute to your larger goal.
• Fears around evaluation
  • Budgetary concerns
  • Failure
  • Lack of knowledge
  • Complexity
Evaluation: Why?

• Improves programs
• Helps make info stick ("learning transfer")
• Demonstrate value to funders/stakeholders/others

• “Move beyond the event and become involved in creating and showing value.”
• -Kirkpatrick’s Four Levels of Training Evaluation
Types of Evaluations

- Needs/Asset Evaluation
- Process Evaluation
- Outcome Evaluation
- Impact Evaluation
The Questions

• Where are you going?
• How will you get there?
• What will show that you’ve arrived?
• Always involve your stakeholders in asking the questions and planning your program

“If you don’t know where you are going, how are you gonna’ know when you get there?”

Yogi Berra
A logic model is...

• A depiction of a program
  • what resources you have to work with
  • what the program will do
  • what it hopes to accomplish
    • for whom, and when

• A series of “if-then” relationships

• The core of program planning and evaluation – helps to develop a thorough understanding of a program
The logic model & evaluation

• In conducting an evaluation, it is tempting to focus most of your attention on data collection.
• Your evaluation efforts will be more effective if you start with a logic model.
• Going through the logic model process helps ensure your evaluation will yield relevant, useful information.
• The figure on the next slide illustrates how a logic model can serve as the foundation for future evaluation plans.
Review and affirm the descriptions of the logic model with stakeholders to ensure it accurately represents the program and the relationships among the components.
Logical chain of connections showing what the program is to accomplish

- **Inputs**: Program investments
- **Outputs**: Activities → Participation
- **Outcomes**: Short → Medium → Long-term

What we invest → What we do → Who we reach → What results
A series of if-then relationships

A Tutoring Program

Some students are struggling to keep up with their work and are not ready to move into the next grade at the same time as their peers

IF

We invest time and money

then

We can provide tutoring 3 hrs/week for 1 school year to 50 children

then

Students struggling academically can be tutored

then

They will learn and improve their skills

then

They will get better grades

then

They will move to next grade level on time

How will activities lead to desired outcomes?
Situation Statement: Workplaces are unprepared to deal with domestic violence when employees are experiencing abusive behaviour, witnessing abusive behaviour or engaging in abusive behaviour or when there is the potential for this to happen.
Assumptions & External Factors

• Assumptions underlie much of what we do
  • hinder success
  • produce less-than-expected results
• Logic models help to make our assumptions explicit
• External Factors over which you have little or no control but which may affect your program’s outcomes
• These factors may require you to make program adjustments
• You need to be aware of them to make the needed adjustments
Situation Statement

• What is the *problematic* condition?
  • Critical first step
• If you don’t understood the situation correctly
  • everything that flows from it will be wrong
• Review research, build your knowledge-base
• What is the *programmatic* response?
  • Why does your program exist?
  • For whom does it exist?
  • Who has a stake in the problem?
  • What can be changed?
• Situation statement $\rightarrow$ Needs Assessment
  • Informal or formal; based on research and/or stakeholder knowledge
## Inputs

### What we invest

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Time
- Money
- Research base
- Materials
- Equipment
- Partners
Inputs

What we invest

• Grant from the Government of Ontario
• 3 years to complete deliverables
• Research
• Curriculum on how to teach about warning signs and risk factors
• Project manager
• Trainer
• Outreach worker
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Train, teach</td>
<td>- Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Deliver services</td>
<td>- Clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Develop products &amp; resources</td>
<td>- Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Network with others</td>
<td>- Decision makers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Build partnerships</td>
<td>- Policy makers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Assess</td>
<td>- ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Facilitate</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Work with media</td>
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<tr>
<td>- ....</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Resource and Tool Development</td>
<td>- Women’s Shelters</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Work with Women’s Shelters to build capacity to conduct risk assessment &amp; safety planning for workplaces</td>
<td>- Marketing and Communication Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Work with Women’s Shelters to build capacity to deliver training</td>
<td>- Union leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Develop a Marketing &amp; Communications Plan</td>
<td>- Employers (including small and medium sized businesses)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Engage workplaces</td>
<td>- Human Resources Professionals</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Deliver Training</td>
<td>- Health and safety experts</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Outcomes: What results for individuals, organizations, communities, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term (Learning)</th>
<th>Medium Term (Action)</th>
<th>Long Term (Conditions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changes in:</td>
<td>Changes in:</td>
<td>Changes in:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Awareness</td>
<td>- Behaviour</td>
<td>- Social conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Knowledge</td>
<td>- Decision making</td>
<td>- Health conditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Attitudes</td>
<td>- Policies</td>
<td>- Economic conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Skills</td>
<td>- Social action</td>
<td>- Civic conditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Opinion</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Environmental conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Aspirations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Motivation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Behavioural intent</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Outcomes: What results for individuals, Women’s Shelters, Workplaces & Society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term</th>
<th>Medium Term</th>
<th>Long Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Women’s Shelters increase capacity to conduct risk assessment &amp; safety planning for workplaces</td>
<td>- Workplace stakeholders develop collaborative relationships with women’s shelters</td>
<td>- Reduction in the incidence and prevalence of domestic violence in the province of Ontario</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Women’s shelters increase capacity to educate workplaces on recognizing, responding, referring and reporting in situations of domestic violence.</td>
<td>- Survivors of domestic violence receive support, including risk assessment and safety planning through their workplaces</td>
<td>- Sustain the MIOB program</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Workplace stakeholders improve their knowledge and skills to provide effective support to victims, abusers and bystanders in situations of domestic violence.</td>
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Outputs vs. Outcomes

• Example:
  Number of participants who attend a training is an output.
  Number of participants who have a better understanding of warning signs and risk factors is an outcome.

  Not how many worms the bird feeds its young, but how well the fledgling flies
  (United Way of America, 1999)
Focus the Evaluation

4 Important Standards

- **Utility**: Who needs the information from this evaluation and how will they use it?
- **Feasibility**: How much money, time, skill, and effort can be devoted to this evaluation?
- **Propriety**: Who needs to be involved in the evaluation to be ethical?
- **Accuracy**: What design will lead to accurate information?
Process Evaluation Questions

Relate to the Outputs in your logic model

• What strategies and activities did you use to implement your program?
• Was [specific] activity implemented as planned?
• What factors prevented the activities in the focus from being implemented as planned? Were [specific inputs and moderating factors] responsible?
• What was the cost for implementing the activities?
Outcome Evaluation Questions

*Relate to the Outcomes in your logic model*

• To what extent did knowledge increase?
• To what extent did skills increase?
• What lessons were learned from the program implementation?
• What were the major barriers and challenges?
• Did [specific] outcomes occur and at an acceptable level?
• What factors prevented (more) progress on the outcomes in the focus? Were [specific moderating factors] responsible?
• What was the cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness of the outcomes that were achieved?
Indicators

• Your logic model lays out the broad parameters of:
  • what resources you have to work with
  • what the program will do
  • what it hopes to accomplish - for whom, and when

• Indicators are markers of accomplishment or progress
• They are specific, observable, and measurable accomplishments or changes
• They show the progress you have made toward achieving a specific output or outcome in your logic model or work plan
• The indicators you select should answer your evaluation questions
Examples of process indicators

- Program reach indicators:
  - Number of participants
  - Proportion of the target population participating in the program
  - The proportion of the program that participants attend or are involved in (dose received)
  - Dropout rate
  - Number of key stakeholders involved.
Process indicators

• **Participant satisfaction indicators:**
  - Do participants feel comfortable, listened to and understood?
  - Are other participants and staff friendly and approachable?
  - Is the venue and set up appropriate to the audience and the group activities?
  - Is the program affordable and run at convenient times?
  - Do the topics covered meet the program’s purposes, and are they interesting and relevant?
  - Are the topics too confronting, too complex or covered adequately?
Process indicators

- **Program implementation indicators:**
  - Number of workshops conducted
  - All activities were implemented
  - Material used caught people’s attention
  - Materials were easy to comprehend
  - Materials used were appropriate for the target audience
  - Media coverage achieved
Outcome indicators

• Measure whether the program is achieving the expected effects/changes in the short, intermediate, and long term

• Some programs refer to their longest-term outcome indicators as **impact** indicators

• Because outcome indicators measure the changes that occur over time, indicators should be measured at least at baseline (before the program/project begins) and at the end of the project
Outcome indicators

• Long-term outcomes are often difficult to measure and attribute to a single program

• However, you can try to determine if a program has contributed to the impact of interest (e.g., decrease in morbidity related to particular health issue)
Outcome indicators

Short term
• Changes in awareness, knowledge and skills
• Changes in intended behaviour

Medium term
• Changes in individual capacity, i.e. confidence, self esteem, social skills, problem solving skills, help-seeking behaviour, coping skills and optimism
• Changes in social networks
• Changes in relationships
Impact Indicators

• Changes in mental wellbeing
• Changes in physical wellbeing
• Changes in engagement – for individuals, communities, organizations
• Changes in education levels
• Changes in employment rates
Selecting Indicators

• Review the logic model
• Literature review
• Consult with stakeholders
• Develop a list of possible indicators
• Assess each indicator
Sources of Information

• Existing data
  • Program records
  • Evaluations
  • Tracking charts
  • Reports
  • Etc.

• Program participants
• Key informants
• Partners
• Staff
Methods of Data Collection

• Surveys
• Interviews
• Focus groups
• Teleconferences
• Structured observation
• Document reviews
• Registrations
Knowledge, Awareness, Skills Change

**Hard data**

1. Measured scores on tests, scales of learning, etc.
2. Self-reported change in learning, skills, etc.
3. Supervisor/leader reports of learning change (the transfer of learning)

**Soft data**

1. Self-reported learning, skill, attitude/value change.
2. Feelings of increased competence
3. New motivation
## Behaviour Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hard data</th>
<th>Soft data</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Direct observation by supervisor, colleagues of new learning or practice</td>
<td>1. self-report of different outcomes at work, home, community</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Collected data about change (increase, improvement, etc.)</td>
<td>2. Interaction with others about new practice change</td>
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</table>
End Results

**Hard data**

1. Changed numbers re. relevant life / work / community aspects
2. Direct reported changes, new results, etc.

**Soft data**

1. Self – reported changes in life, work, community environments
2. Feelings of renewed quality of life (personal, work, community)
Draft the evaluation plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Questions</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Data Sources(s)</th>
<th>Data Collection Methods</th>
<th>Timing, Duration &amp; Frequency of Data Collection</th>
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No Budget to Big Budget

• What can you do?
Investment of Resources

• The amount of resources (e.g., funds, personnel, time) needed for data collection, analysis, and use of data or findings

• What resources are needed to collect and analyze the data?

• This includes consideration of the knowledge or skills necessary to use an indicator

• In many cases, discussion of investment of resources results in identification of hard choices to be made regarding feasibility, quality, and timeliness of the data
Thank you!

Please complete the evaluation. ILED staff can be reached at

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rdelrossi@futureswithoutviolence.org