Program Evaluation and Logic Models

ScWk 242 – Session 10 Slides
Review – Program Evaluation

• Seeks to answer the overall question of whether a program (or policy, initiative, project, etc…) is effective or not.

• How is program evaluation different from group research designs, which also seek to determine program effectiveness?
  
  • **Generally larger in scope and goes beyond testing two groups for statistically significant differences on a few outcome measures**
  
  • **Uses a variety of research methods to assess a variety of questions**
Program Evaluation Tasks

- Program evaluation also can include research activities focused on:
  - collecting information about the needs of a community to inform program development (formative evaluations),
  - documenting the types of services delivered, how they are delivered, and the number and type of participants (process)
  - As well as short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes.

- Used in both government and not for-profit organizations. In for-profit organizations it is easy to determine effectiveness since the goal is money, in other programs it may be more difficult to determine what the program should be achieving.

- In order to determine program effectiveness, program evaluation strategies usually involve the creation of a logic model.
Logic Models and Evaluation

Logic models typically provide a comprehensive description of three core aspects of a program (or policy, initiative, project, etc...):

- **Inputs**: Concrete things that are invested in the program—these are the core aspects of a program that allow the program to actually be implemented (e.g. funding, staff, office space, etc...).

- **Outputs**: Include the activities (e.g. actual services) that are delivered by the program (e.g. counseling, education, training, etc...), and participation in these services by clients.

- **Outcomes**: Includes short-term outcomes (e.g. acquisition of knowledge) intermediate outcomes (e.g. changes in behavior), and long-term outcomes (e.g. larger-scale outcomes related to the ultimate impact on the program).
Types of Logic Models

- **Community/Local Logic Model**
  - Depicts a community’s theory of change to address a particular problem of focus, the behavior(s) contributing to the problem, the local factors thought to contribute to the behaviors. These local contributing factors present opportunities for intervention using evidence based strategies (programs, policies, practices)

- **Intervention-Specific Logic Model**
  - Depicts how a set of activities associated with a given intervention (program, policy or practice) are related to the outcomes that result from implementing the intervention
Sample: Community Logic Model
For Preventing Alcohol-Involved Traffic Crashes

Substance-Related Consequences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance Use</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underage BINGE DRINKING</td>
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<tr>
<td>Underage DRINKING AND DRIVING</td>
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<td>Young Adult BINGE DRINKING</td>
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<td>Young Adult DRINKING AND DRIVING</td>
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Intervening Variables

| Easy RETAIL ACCESS to Alcohol for youth |
| Low ENFORCEMENT of alcohol laws |
| Easy SOCIAL ACCESS to Alcohol |
| Low PERCEIVED RISK of alcohol use |
| SOCIAL NORMS accepting and/or encouraging youth drinking |
| PROMOTION of alcohol use (advertising, movies, music, etc) |

Strategies (Examples)

| Retailer Education |
| Enforce underage retail sales laws |
| Social Event Monitoring and Enforcement |
| Youth Education |
| Media Advocacy to Increase Community Concern about Underage Drinking |
| Restrictions on alcohol advertising in youth markets interventions |
**Prevention Interventions**

*Interventions may combine various strategies…*

- Participant based **programs**, typically guided by curriculum or manual
- **Policies** that affect how, where and under what conditions substances are sold, purchased, possessed, and used
- **Practices** include rules and standards for implementing policies as well as non-participant based universal approaches for communicating prevention messages to target populations
Interventions – Logic Models

- What outcome(s) is the program aiming to achieve among which population(s)? Why?
- What theories is the program based on?
- What activities are implemented to accomplish this outcome?
- What are the immediate effects of these activities?
- What underlying factors (e.g. risk and protective factors) does this outcome contribute to over time?
- What long term changes or impacts does the program contribute to?
Logic Model Elements

- **Inputs** - what is invested by the implementing organization(s)
- **Outputs** - program activities, who and how many reached
- **Outcomes** – immediate results of program activities
- **Impacts** – cumulative changes to community conditions (e.g. changes in risk/protective factors, substance use and consequences)
**Intervention-Specific Logic Model**

Theoretical Framework on which intervention is based

- **Inputs**
  - Program investments
  - What we invest

- **Outputs**
  - Activities
  - What we do
  - Participation
  - Who we reach under what conditions

- **Outcomes**
  - Short
  - Medium
  - Long-term
  - What results
Theoretical Framework

- Explains established the theory that the intervention is based on
- Theory should be empirically tested and empirically supported in multiple research studies
- Logic model details how the proposed intervention applies and incorporates established theory
Organizational Inputs

What we Invest:

- What investments does the strategy require?
- What organizations make/will make these investments?

Consider:

- Staff
- Expertise (including needed training)
- Partners and volunteers
- Time
- Money
- Technology/equipment
- Space
- Materials
Organizational Outputs

What we do

- Actions taken to accomplish outcomes
  - Training
  - Education
  - Presentations
  - Facilitate
  - Work with media

Who we reach

- Characteristics of target population
  - Geography
  - Age
  - Universal, selective, indicated
  - Other characteristics
# Outcomes and Impacts

**Short Term Outcomes resulting from outputs**

- Awareness
- Knowledge
- Opinions
- Attitudes
- Aspirations
- Skills

**Intermediate Outcomes and Impacts that occur over time**

- Decision making
- Action, Behavior, Practice
- Policies
- Social Action
- Consequences (health, social, economic, etc.)
**Example: Intervention-Specific Logic Model**

- **Inputs**
  - Staff
  - Money
  - Training
  - Partners
  - Research
  - Space
  - Materials

- **Outputs**
  - Develop parent ed curriculum
  - Deliver series of interactive sessions focused on child development, parenting styles, and parenting practices
  - Facilitate support groups where parents problem-solve

- **Targeted parents attend**
  - Parents increase knowledge of child dev
  - Parents better understand their own parenting style
  - Parents gain skills in effective parenting practices including family management

- **Outcomes/Impacts**
  - Parents identify appropriate actions to take
  - Parents use effective parenting practices
  - Improved child-parent relations
  - Reduced social access to alcohol
  - Reduced youth alcohol use
  - Reduced consequences

- **Outputs**
  - Reduced youth alcohol use
  - Reduced consequences
Benefits of Establishing Evidence

- Helps to maximize evaluation resources by identifying key outcomes for evaluation
- Helps to identify evaluation questions of interest
- Helps to identify evaluation methods, instruments and measures
- Helps to plan for timing of evaluation data collection
Logic Model & Evaluation Questions

- **Needs assessment:**
  - What are the characteristics, needs, priorities of target population?
  - What are potential barriers/facilitators?

- **Process evaluation:**
  - How is program implemented?
  - Are activities delivered as intended?
  - Are participants being reached as intended?
  - What are participant reactions?

- **Outcome evaluation:**
  - To what extent are desired changes occurring? For whom?
  - Is the program making a difference?
  - What seems to work? Not work?
  - What are unintended outcomes?
EVALUATION: What do you (and others) want to know about this program?

Potential Evaluation Questions:

What amount of $ and time were invested?

What did partners do?

How many sessions were actually delivered?

Lessons delivered as designed? # Support groups delivered

Who/how many attended/did not attend?

Did they attend all sessions?

Were they satisfied? Will they come again?

To what extent did knowledge and skills increase? For whom? Why?

What else happened?

To what extent did behaviors change? For whom? Why?

What else happened?

To what extent are relations improved? Does this result in stronger families?
Developing an evaluation plan for your logic model

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<th>1. Goal/Theory:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Data Sources</td>
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**Inputs**

**Outputs**

**Outcomes**
Logic Models - Summary

- Demonstrates accountability with focus on outcomes
- Links activities to results: Prevents mismatches
- Integrates planning, implementation, evaluation and reporting
- Creates understanding
- Promotes learning
- A way of thinking – not just a pretty picture